



Beeston **Methodist** Church

Newsletter

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February / March 2026

Happy New Year

A belated welcome to the New Year and to the first BMC Newsletter of 2026.

As always, the newsletter has updates from a number of church groups including the Leadership Team, Worship Group and Redevelopment Group. There is news from Gaza, and you can see what some United Methodist churches are doing in the United States. And hear how South Bedfordshire Craftivists are creating a message of hope.

If you are a Traitors fan, find out what the Celebrity Traitors can teach the faithful about creating safer spaces, and read details about local safeguarding.

Finally, find out the climate take-away from COP30 and then why not put A Rocha's eco tips into action.

Mark Ramsey – Editor

Beeston Methodist Church Newsletter – Feb / Mar 2026

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Any articles for inclusion in the next issue should be emailed by 16th March to newsletter@beestonmethodist.church. Articles may be edited for space.

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Cover image: BMC church banner, photo: Mark Ramsey

Leadership Team update



The Leadership Team meets every two months; our last meeting was on 7th Jan. The agenda is always wide-ranging and we discussed a number of issues.

We talked about the **liturgy used during Advent and Christmas** (*Gifted*) which had been prepared by the UK Methodist Church. We agreed that it had been good to follow the same pattern as other Methodist Churches, and we should follow this in future, if the material is helpful. If anyone has any views about the Advent liturgy please let us know.

We heard about the progress with the **redevelopment** and plans to return to using the sanctuary when works permit (hopefully around Easter). A Service of Celebration is to be held on the afternoon of Saturday 20th June.

Funding has been secured for the recruitment of a **Young Person's Worker**. A meeting has been arranged for 29 January for a final review of the job/person specification after which the role will be advertised.

We are trying to progress the review of the **BMC Mission Plan** and objectives have been received from the Worship and Care & Nurture groups. When responses are received from other groups then the Leadership Team will draw up our revised Mission Plan document for Church Council to review.

We considered issues raised by the **Transition Group** regarding future storage of hymn books, service books, and bibles, and the role of the Church library. These will require further consideration in the coming weeks.

Our minister, **Andrew**, reminded us that we need to pass on information to him (with individuals' permission) regarding health issues, hospital stays etc. so he can take appropriate action. He noted that in recent weeks there had been a significant number of deaths among church members and those on the community roll.

We reviewed notes from meetings of the **various church groups and committees** as we seek to keep abreast of what different groups are doing.

The performance of the **sound system in the Guild Room** (for evening services) is not always ideal, and we are looking into ways to improve it.

We remain **short of two stewards** (we should have eight but only have six) and would welcome anyone who feels called to the role, or indeed any of the other vacancies within the church. Please speak to a steward if you feel you can help in any way.

Martin Weir, on behalf of the Leadership Team

BMC Church Charities 2025-26



The total raised by January 6th was £4490.75

ebay	£1375.75	Money jars	£43.13
Other items	£69.50	Recycled books and CDs	£105.39
Coffee mornings	£557.29	Coffee bar	£315.49
Donations	£705.54	Wishing well	£675.00

Recent contributions include £175 from ebay sales, £145 from the Friday Group Progressive Dinner, and £100 from the sale of mince pies.

Recycling of foreign and old coins

This is just a reminder that foreign and old coins can be handed in so that they can be exchanged and the money donated to the Church Charity.

Among the coins in the Carol Choir collecting tins was €5.20 in euros and 2 Swiss francs. There was also an ALDI shopping trolley token. Together they contributed £6.00 to the Carol Choir collection for the Benevolent Fund.

Colin Firbank

Beeston Methodist Carol Choir: A Christmas 2025 Review



After a Christmas season in 2024 when the calendar proved difficult for the Carol Choir's activities, 2025 turned out to be very successful for us.

We were able to start with a practice in the Epworth Room on Sunday 7th December. It not only gave chance to go through the less-familiar 'village-style' carols, but it was also an opportunity for members to sing who are no longer able to go round the streets on cold winter's nights.

On Wednesday 10th we were at The Crown Inn and entertained a packed house who joined in very enthusiastically. We sang all twenty six of our carols, and raised £88.70 for the Lincs. and Notts. Air Ambulance. The following afternoon a small group of us met at the Memory Café in the Beeston Resource Centre and led some carol singing for their Christmas party, and on Sunday 14th we sang *Sweet Bells* as the introit for the BMC morning service led by Andrew Davies.

After that we were out on the streets, singing along our traditional routes on Thursday 18th, Monday 22nd and Christmas Eve. The weather was reasonably kind to us, although it rained on us for the last fifteen minutes on the Thursday evening. However all three evenings went well, and the size of the choir and quality of the singing on the Monday and Christmas Eve were exceptional. People must have liked what they heard, because donations over the three evenings totalled £991. Being able to finish with hot drinks and warm mince-pies at Jen's on Christmas Eve was of course, lovely.

The Carol Choir's three-part mission is to bring our carols about the birth of Jesus to a wider community; to raise money to help those in need locally through the work of the Benevolent Society and other charities; and to support each other and enjoy our own fellowship through the singing. We are grateful to have been able to achieve all these again this year, so thank you to everyone who has sung, collected, conducted, donated or who has helped in any way.

Andy Taylor

How to keep your hope alive in a time of despair

As I write this blog the world feels like it's falling apart. Just this week I have read headlines of Trump waging war in Venezuela, the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and most recently the unlawful cold-blooded murder of Renee Nicole Good by ICE officers in Minneapolis, to name but a few. When faced with the current state of the world, it is hard to have hope that things could ever be better. Your light may feel dimmed by sheer exhaustion, and the hopelessness of not knowing what you could do to affect change.



An original song written by Kata in the aftermath of Good's murder and shared on his social media (@thekatamusic) sums it up perfectly: "when will it end? When will we start learning. I'm not 17 and it's still the same yearning." I'm not here to offer simple solutions or quick fixes as, to be brutally honest, there aren't any, but I do hope to offer some suggestions for what you can do to remain hopeful and protect yourself, so you have the strength to keep going even when the darkness feels overwhelming.

Lament

I want to start by stressing that it is ok, and natural even, to feel angry or upset by events we see on the news or in our own lives. Lament is Biblical. In fact, there is an entire book dedicated to lamentations of people expressing their deep grief and despair as they long for things to get better. We hear this same cry in Psalm 13: "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" Naming these feelings, and the situations that cause such emotional discomfort, gives us power and agency over them, helping us validate both our emotions and why we feel them so strongly.

Boundaries

While lament is natural, the act itself can be as exhausting as the situations on our hearts and minds. With that in mind, my first piece of advice is that in this

modern world where we have unlimited access to global affairs at our fingertips it is crucial to have boundaries in place to protect ourselves. It is not healthy to constantly consume news and information (good or bad) and we need time to switch off and focus on ourselves, those around us, and the things that bring us joy. Boundaries will look different for all of us, and we may feel the need to adapt them at various times in our lives, but they are important for our mental and emotional health. Boundaries are not avoidance, but rather an act of self-preservation. Some examples of boundaries to consider include limiting screentime, choosing not to listen or watch certain channels, or carving out time in our days to switch off and do some self-care, something creative, or spend time with our loved ones. Another suggestion could be to find a source of positive news stories (like the appropriately named *Positive News* at www.positive.news) that shares the stories that are often overlooked in the mainstream media and can offer some much-needed hope that all is not lost.

Nourish Yourself

With boundaries in place, my next piece of advice is to be mindful to continue to nourish yourself and spend time on things that replenish your spirit. Before we can seek to try to make the world a better place and banish the despair, we need to ensure we are not pouring from an empty cup. So often in our state of lament and frustration we can be so focused on others and the world around us that we lose track of ourselves, and this can be harmful. Nourishing ourselves can be as simple as ensuring we are eating and drinking properly throughout the day, taking any required medication and taking care of all our basic physical needs but it can (and should) be fun too! Are you an artist? A musician? A writer? A sportsperson? A baker? Do you love going for walks and being out in nature? Do you like going to the theatre or watching a certain film or tv show? What are those things that make our heart sing and make us feel fully ourselves? Those are the things we need to hold onto to when we fall into despair. We can also nourish ourselves in prayer, meditation and reflection to help us stay grounded and spiritually nourished. If you struggle with finding quiet to reflect and meditate, you can find some guidance and tips on our blog at www.movement.org.uk/resources/meditation-some-basics-0.

Community



At times where we feel overwhelmed by hopelessness, it is easy to feel like we are alone in the world and the only one who is feeling the way that we are, but we are not. I strongly encourage you, if you haven't already, to find and engage in community with those who feel the same as you (whether that is your local SCM group or something else) so you can build connections, be supported and support others. After all, we are stronger together than we are alone. In community we can grieve and despair together, but we can also come together in solidarity and talk of the world we long for and how we go about achieving it, even in our small way in our own contexts, and let this inspire our actions and activism.

Cat Whitehouse, SCM Faith in Action Project Worker, 14 Jan 2026. From www.movement.org.uk/blog/'when-will-it-end-when-will-we-start-learning-i'm-not-17-and-it's-still-same-yearning'-how-keep

Meanwhile in America...



Churches across the country are putting “ABOLISH ICE” on their signs. Our faith calls us to resist systems that harm, separate families, and terrorize communities. This is what faith looks like when it refuses to be neutral.

From www.facebook.com/MFSAVoices

Worship Team update



The BMC Worship Team continues to meet quarterly to discuss arrangements for services over the coming months, and other worship related matters. Our latest meeting was on 4th December.

At our last meeting we agreed our objectives for the **Church Mission Plan**, which are linked to the re-opening of the church sanctuary – promoting and planning varied styles of worship. We noted that it is hoped that the redeveloped sanctuary might be available for worship around Easter but that there are a lot of issues still to be resolved.

A **Service to celebrate the re-development** has been arranged for the afternoon of Saturday 20th June. Details of the service are still to be worked on, but we will be joined by our District Chair, Andy Fyall, together with representatives from the various contractors who have worked on our project, the funders which have supported us, the NTV Circuit, local community and of course ourselves. Please put this date into your diary.

We reviewed the arrangements for the services in the current quarter which runs to the end of February. We noted that services in the hall continue to be well received and offer the chance to trial different styles and layouts in preparation for returning to the sanctuary.

We will shortly be moving into **Lent** and a number of services are being planned e.g. a joint choral service for Passion Sunday. On Maundy Thursday we will be joining our friends at Toton MC for a communion service led by Andrew. A service of music and meditation for Good Friday (7.30pm) is being arranged. And on Easter Sunday there will be a dawn service at Toton, as well as our usual 10.30am morning service.

On 10th May (am) we will be joined by the **British Methodist Choral Society** at the morning service, which will be led by their conductor, Rev Jason McMahon.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 5th March at 7.30pm, and anyone is welcome to join us.

Martin Weir, Chair of the Worship Team

Bible study

Recently our minister, Rev Andrew Checkley, helped us to explore this passage during a morning service, so here is an opportunity to explore it further.

Mathew 4:12-23

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. (v12)

Background

Earlier in this chapter, Matthew described Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. He now describes news of failure, of disaster, of the arrest of John the Baptist, the one who was preparing the way for Jesus. I'm wondering what lessons we can take from the reaction of Jesus to this news. We have no shortage of news of failure and disaster in our own times, whether it's the climate and the cost of living crisis; a winter of strikes, hunger and cold; wars in Sudan and Ukraine; or declining church attendance, and more.

Jesus responds to this crisis in three ways.

First, there is a retreat, regroup and launch (verses 12-17). Jesus takes the news seriously, He does not ignore it or try to carry on as normal. Jesus uses the withdrawal to reconnect with the prophetic call, perhaps it is a source of inspiration and renewal. Most likely he uses some of this time for prayer, to listen and be refreshed as he does so many times. Notice that this is not delaying or avoidance as verse 17 makes clear, "From that time ...".

Second, Jesus builds a team (verses 18-22). By writing about this, maybe Matthew is showing Jesus learning from the vulnerability at the end of John's mostly solo ministry. So he shows Jesus making building a team a top priority. Right at the beginning of his ministry Jesus has a focus on security and continuity.

Third, Jesus gets on with mission (verse 23 and beyond). There is an urgent and practical approach to the choice that Jesus makes. However, given the mistakes the disciples will make and how they struggle to understand, we might wonder why he didn't choose to put off mission and instead first focus on teaching and training, to get his team prepared. Does this approach of immersion, practicality and 'getting on with it' have lessons for us today?

As a response to bad news and a crisis, Jesus sets us a model that is dynamic, rapid and effective. It is one that prepares for an uncertain, even dangerous future.

To Ponder

- How might Jesus' three-part response apply to some of the crises we face?
- How do you respond to bad news? Can the way Jesus responds help? How?

Prayer

Loving God, as we look at Jesus and see how he responded to crises may your Holy Spirit inspire, challenge and strengthen us for the crises we face. Amen.

From www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources/bible-studies/sunday-25-january-2026

Christ Church Long Eaton presents
An evening with Devon Malcolm OBE



Saturday 7 March 2026, 7.30pm

At Long Eaton Soldiers + Sailors Club,
421 Tamworth Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 3JS

Tickets £15.00 plus Raffle

Tickets available from Soldiers + Sailors Club or <https://www.ticketebo.co.uk/christchurch-long-eaton/an-evening-with-devon-malcolm>

Conditions in Gaza are a “war after a war”



All of Embrace’s partners in Gaza are telling us of the incredibly difficult conditions there. Although some aid is now getting in, it is not nearly enough to cover the overwhelming need. As temperatures drop, families are facing a daily struggle to survive. Today, we received this stark assessment from *Caritas Jerusalem*:

Although the war is officially over, our colleagues describe the current reality as a “war after the war.” Food has become somewhat more available – fruit, vegetables, frozen goods, and nuts can now be found – yet prices remain extremely high and beyond the reach of most families.

Housing is the biggest suffering for families. Entire neighbourhoods are completely destroyed – empty, uninhabitable, lifeless. Tents offer little protection, especially with winter conditions, and our colleagues report seeing heartbreaking scenes every day in the streets... Hunger, cold, illness, and the lack of basic necessities continue to place enormous pressure on everyone...

As long as there is no clarity on who will govern Gaza, insecurity remains the greatest concern. The opening of crossings, the flow of aid, the availability of medicine and food, the price of fuel — all of these depend on who will take control in the coming period.

Despite the immense challenges, our teams continue to serve with courage and dedication. We remain at their side, committed to bringing hope and relief wherever possible.

5 December 2025. See more news about the situation in Gaza and the rest of Palestine at www.embraceme.org/partner-updates/#newsfeed

BMC Mission Possible 2



Inevitably, fundraising for BMC Mission Possible 2 slowed down in the run up to Christmas. However, we now have several events coming up in 2026:

- Glenda will be running a stall full of **unwanted Christmas presents** in the coffee mornings on January 31st and February 28th. There is still time to hand over any unwanted gifts.
- The **book of memories** from BMC and our predecessor churches is well under way. Once the building work at church has been finished, we would like to take a picture to include on the back cover of the book. We are now aiming to get this done by the time our new sanctuary is open in June.
- Andy and Glenda are planning that BMC will take part in the **Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail** this year. It takes place over the weekend of 13th and 14th June. We are hoping to be able to invite people to look in our refurbished church at the same time. If you are able to help in any way, please let Andy or Glenda know.
- Elaine Liquorish will be running a **craft fair**.

Thanks to everyone at BMC for their continued support.

Glenda Taylor (on behalf of the Fundraising Team)

Recycling of postage stamps

Last year we were able to send stamps to the Royal National Institute of Blind People and will be doing the same this year. There is a box at the coffee bar entrance. It is helpful if the envelopes can be trimmed so that approx. 1 cm remains outside the stamp. In the parcel we do separate out overseas stamps as this helps the RNIB sorters. Apart from current stamps it was clear that some people had cleared out old stamps, some of which were in old stamp albums and, presumably, could have some extra value.

Colin Firbank and Sandra Elliott

Redevelopment update



It really does feel as though we are getting into the final stages of the building work. The builders are now finishing the plastering and painting, sorting the locks for the new doors and the Redevelopment Group are making decisions on things like the signs for the toilets.

Front entrance

The 'no-step' approach to the front of the building is now being finished and kerb stones have been fitted. The path down the far side of the church is also being improved.

Doors

We have been made aware of some problems that can be encountered with automated doors in a building like ours. As a result, the necessary wiring has been installed but, until we know how best to proceed, we will have doors that 'hold open' instead. We are getting advice on the best solution.



Heating

The heating is now fine for much of the time in most of the rooms at the rear of the premises, but the hall continues to be difficult to heat adequately because it is such a big space. We're working on finding a good solution.



The **memorial stones** have been placed in the wall at the bottom of the stairs under the tower and the plaques in the vestibule have been replaced.

The **fire alarm system** is nearing completion. You may be wondering why this involves the whole church premises. Part of the building requirements for the new sanctuary are to have an up-to-date fire

alarm system that includes the whole premises. This was timely since the old system is quite old and needed updating at some stage soon. The red wires sticking out of the walls have now largely changed to red 'buttons' which are the alerts.

Artefact of the month

This vessel was found under the tarmac at the front of church. The builders called it a tankard, but we think it's more of a can for carrying something. Any ideas? No prizes, but we will feature suggestions (to Connie or Chris please) in the next Newsletter!



Connie Pullan and Chris Bridges, on behalf of the Redevelopment Group.

LEAVING CHURCH

SOMETIMES IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO LEAVE AFTER A SERVICE BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN HAVING SUCH A GREAT TIME. THESE ARE SOME OF THE TACTICS THAT THE CHURCHWARDENS ADOPT:



Craftivists create anti-war messages



South Bedfordshire Craftivists are a group of Methodists who use their craft skills for social justice, engaging in a gentle form of activism that still intends to create positive change.

For their most recent project they have created four large collages depicting a war zone. Entitled *From Devastation to Hope*, each picture shows the dove of peace ever present as a sign of hope.

“Our aim is to promote the stopping of wars and urge peace at a time when war seems to be filling the headlines. We want to encourage those with power and authority to change things for the better of all,” says organiser, Jenny Spouge.



“We used collage for this project as it enabled a number of people to be involved who don’t necessarily believe they are artists, but the works have recently been included in an international art magazine! They were also used for a service on Remembrance Day and were on view at a meeting with one of the 6 constituency MPs covered by the members of the group.”

Jenny came across the Leeds Craftivists group during the Covid pandemic and contributed to their work. She explored working with people local to her who were interested in forming a similar group. The new group, South Bedfordshire Craftivists, is currently only made up of members from the South Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit.

Christian faith and denominational commitment to social justice is at the heart of the work the group undertakes. The group are people from the circuit, among them a lay pastor, a hospice nurse and a retired headteacher. As a Christian, Catherine Roots has tried to support peace using skills and logic she developed as a street pastor. “I never felt that marching or ‘sit-ins’ were quite in my nature,

but The Craftivist group has allowed me to use my creative skills to express to others what I feel strongly about and also to raise awareness of the issues.”

“This is for those people who don’t feel they can march or demonstrate. It can involve a wide range of people with a variety of skills. The collaborative process is encouraging and enables the best results for what we aim to do,” says Jenny.



The group have contributed to a panel of the Stitches for Survival Project that created a gigantic ‘scarf’ that wrapped around an area of Glasgow during COP26 in 2021. The panels were made into quilts and blankets for people who are homeless or displaced.

Model houses and tents were made to create a townscape that became part of an open-air service focussing on housing issues. Green hearts have been sent to

MPs to register concerns about climate change, and the travelling ‘Tent of Hope’ prayer tent (see www.southbedsmethodist.org.uk/creationcare.htm) was made of woven hoops created by all ages, also to raise awareness of the issue. This has been much used in church and circuit services. Last Lent, tote bags were made for foodbanks and the issue of food poverty raised with MPs.

The group’s next project will focus on water, a huge topic starting with the use and misuse of water and the pollution of watercourses.

Jenny sees God and Methodism at the heart of what the group do. “God is a God of justice and Methodism is a justice-seeking Church so we seek to use this work to engage in social justice, not ‘just’ social action. We all feel committed to assisting to change the world for the better as part of our Christian faith.

“God has given us the craft skills we possess – so why should we not use them in commitment to the Kingdom and its work?”

21 January 2026. From www.methodist.org.uk/about/our-stories/craftivists-create-antiwar-messages

“Oh Alan!” What The Celebrity Traitors can teach the faithful about creating safer spaces



The Celebrity Traitors was unlike any other series of *The Traitors* for me – not just because of the dazzling cast. For my new role as a Regional Officer for Safeguarding in Training, I am spending a lot of time learning about grooming, power, and who we listen to. I watched the series open-mouthed with all my developing safeguarding senses tingling – as Kate Garraway would say, I was flabbergasted.

In case you haven't seen it, *The Celebrity Traitors* is a BBC TV series where 19 celebrities are put in a castle together, with three people being secretly chosen as 'traitors'. The 'faithfuls' have to work out who the traitors are, while the traitors have to 'kill off' the 'faithfuls' (who then leave the show). The last person standing is the winner. It is everything and more. Secrets, alliances, betrayals, fabulous outfits, beautiful scenery, ridiculous challenges. It's camp, it's goth, and even features a national treasure nervously breaking wind.

But as well as all of this, for nine hours of incredible TV, we watched 16 famous people be mercilessly groomed, power being exploited, and voices being ignored.

The question of how Alan Carr pulled off his victory is bouncing around the internet. Celia Imrie summed it up perfectly in a post-show interview on spin-off show *The Celebrity Traitors Uncloaked*; “You just think why didn't I see that – it's ridiculous you know but everyone was very good at covering up.” As I mulled this over, it dawned upon me that this quote could have been taken from any number of cases in the Methodist Church's Past Cases Review.

Let me be very clear – *The Traitors* is just a game. It would be offensive to compare the horrors of experiencing abuse to a reality TV show. But as I watched it, it got me thinking about what we can learn about protecting our church communities. So, please humour me for a few minutes while I dissect the first series of BBC Celebrity Traitors for hidden shields about safeguarding.

How did the sweating, giggling, nervous-cheese-eating Alan Carr slip under everyone's radar? How did Jonathan Ross survive so long, despite being suspected by just about everyone? Everyone was groomed.

Previously, we have understood grooming to be about the way that perpetrators build up a relationship with victims/survivors to exploit them. It is now recognised that to gain and maintain access to victims/survivors, perpetrators have to groom everyone around the victim/survivor. In many cases looked at in the Past Cases Review, church folk were groomed – or manipulated into trusting and valuing perpetrators, meaning that they gained access to people to abuse, and that any suspicions were easily brushed away.

This year, the faithful were not just average people, they were celebrities; academics, actors, journalists, comedians – professional people-readers. More than that – they were also all aware about the possibility of being groomed and trying to look out for signs of it – but just couldn't see it. Everyone was friends, and within those friendships, the attitude of 'it couldn't happen here' pervaded.

We need to be honest about the reality of abuse in churches – it has happened, and does happen – it could happen here, and does happen here.

That's the dirt, but where are the shields?

1. Work as a team

Something about power skews our judgement of people. Jonathan Ross as the 'Big Dog' leader of the game, Cat Burns' sheer coolness, and Alan Carr's smooth charisma all threw the faithful off the scent. The faithfuls mostly just couldn't see past it.

However, as we saw, when the faithfuls started to work together, to share concerns, to listen to each other, and to suspend disbelief that powerful people they respected could be traitors – even big dogs – they were cooking on gas.

As the Past Cases Review pointed out, safeguarding is a team activity – we can't reliably make good judgements about people based on what we are presented with – we need systems to provide a foil to our sometimes questionable judgements. We need to be following safer recruitment policies, we need to be

clear about appropriate boundaries and behaviours for different roles in the church, and we need to be talking things through with our Regional Officers for Safeguarding to get a second opinion.



2. Reflect on your power

One of the beauties of *The Traitors*, is that we get let into the turret, and get to see how the power and responsibility of being a traitor changes people.

Watching the three traitors plan their first ‘murder in plain sight’ was hilarious – they were all flapping (and sweating) with nerves. Several episodes later, watching Alan murder Celia in plain sight, it was a breeze. The traitors were so aware of their power, and self-consciousness at first, but by the end of the game it had gone to their heads.

As the *Theology of Safeguarding* report recognises, power is part of church life, and something that we all have in different ways. We might have power because of our role, personality, or expertise – these sorts of power are often easier to spot: e.g. he’s a knight of the realm of course Sir Stephen Fry should lead Round Table discussions! However, there are other kinds of power that we might hold that can be harder to spot; we live in an unjust world, so we know that just by being white, non-disabled, male, of a higher socio-economic status, older and wiser (or younger and fitter depending on the situation), you hold power over others.

We see in the *Theology of Safeguarding* report that “the key question is whether power is being exercised responsibly, wisely and lovingly.” Praise be to God, we aren’t using our power to murder people every night. But are we self-aware about the power we hold, and the impact it has on others? As I’ve been mulling it over, I’ve been reflecting on who do I rush to talk to at the end of a service, and who do I ignore? Who do I listen to in a meeting, and who do I talk over? Who have I ‘written off’, having decided that they have nothing much to contribute?

The more we can be aware of these power dynamics and challenge ourselves and each other each when we don’t use our power responsibly, wisely and lovingly, the safer our communities will become.

3. Get better at listening

I can't have been the only one shouting at my screen when Nick Mohammed voted to banish Joe Marler at the 11th hour. In the last episode, Nick seemed to be hearing Joe but not listening to him.

From day one in the castle, people listened to some voices, and ignored others, and it cost them. Is there something about power here? Were the more well-known and better-connected voices more credible and therefore listened to more?

Time and time again, we see this pattern play out in safeguarding, where survivors of abuse have the courage to speak up, and are ignored. In fact, Past Cases Review workers worked with many, many survivors of church-based abuse who said that it was the first time that they had been properly listened to in the Church.

One of the key recommendations was that we need to all get better at listening. As part of my training as a Regional Officer for Safeguarding, I get the privilege of sessions run by the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group. At the last session, one of the members pointed out that most of us think we are good at listening, but most of us aren't actually – it's a skill to learn. They are so right. I work in safeguarding; I like to think I am top class at listening, but I know if I'm honest, I'm mediocre at best. I'm too busy thinking about whether to buy digestives or hobnobs, or waiting for the person to stop talking so I say something that's a little bit relevant but is mainly just to make me look clever/funny. When we don't listen properly, we miss important things, and this has devastating consequences.

The Past Cases Review summed it up by saying that local churches will not become really safe places until "the understanding of safeguarding, and abuse of power in relationships, is understood by the whole congregation."

The uncomfortable truth that emerged from *The Celebrity Traitors*, and the Past Cases Review, is that we tend to show a bias towards the powerful. Thankfully for us, the Gospel in Jesus consistently shows a bias towards the powerless, and this is what we are striving for as a Church.

There will be people in our communities intent on causing harm, but when we recognise this, treat safeguarding as a team activity, and learn to listen better, we can make our communities safer.



Rachel Bourne, Regional Officer for Safeguarding - North East, 13 November 2025. From www.methodist.org.uk/about/our-stories/oh-alan-what-the-celebrity-traitors-can-teach-the-faithful-about-creating-safer-spaces

The Theology of Safeguarding report can be found at www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/the-theology-of-safeguarding

A prayer for Holocaust Memorial Day

Holy God,

On this Holocaust Memorial Day we remember the six million Jewish persons whom the Nazis murdered. Some names known to us but all known to you. We remember, too, those who survived and bore the physical and emotional consequences. We pray for our neighbours today, our Jewish communities who still feel the effects of the Holocaust and the fear that antisemitism continues to bring.

We remember, also, the thousands of other victims of the Nazi regime. Those who were disabled, gay, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents, and those who were brave enough to stand up and say that what was happening was wrong. As we think this year of the need to 'bridge the generations', forgive us when we have allowed ourselves to hate others. Forgive us when we have chosen not to stand up against hatred, and forgive us when we choose to forget because it's more comfortable than remembering the horrors of what has happened.

Yesterday, today and forever you are God. Your love endures forever. We hold before you all victims of genocide and hatred and ask that you bring peace and justice. May we never forget and may we be equipped to make a better world.

Amen.

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place every year on 27 January. From www.facebook.com/MethodistGB

A Rocha Easy Eco Tips Calendar 2026



February

This Lent, take part in Climate Steward's Carbon Fast. Lent is a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God. The Carbon Fast will help you consider ways to live more simply, give you new ideas to cut your carbon footprint and invite you to focus on God and consider the whole of his creation. Beginning on 5 March, you'll receive a weekly email containing key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint and a prayer to lead you through this Lenten season. Each week features a different theme designed to help us take climate action in manageable ways that bear witness to a God who has promised to restore all of his creation. Find out more and sign up at www.climatestewards.org/carbon-calculators

March

Take part in a local litter pick or beach clean during The Great British Spring Clean (Friday 13-Sunday 29 March), the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Litter

picking benefits the environment by removing rubbish that can be hazardous for wildlife and helps bring people together. See if there's a litter pick in your local area or consider organising your own – after church on Sunday or with a youth group for example. Pray for your local area as you do the litter pick and ask God for opportunities to share why you are doing it. Find out more and pledge to pick up a bag at www.keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean



For more practical ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature, sign up to A Rocha UK's Wild Christian email: www.arocha.org.uk/wild-christian

From www.arocha.org.uk/easy-eco-tips-2026-calendar

COP30's fraught finale masks a quiet surge in global climate progress



The final hours of COP30 in Belém were as tense and unpredictable as any seen in recent climate diplomacy. The closing plenary veered from delay to confusion to open anger, before an exhausted room finally agreed a text that almost fell apart at the last moment. Yet behind the procedural drama lay a more significant truth. For all the political struggles, nations once again chose to stay in the room and keep multilateral climate action alive. And beyond the headlines, the economic story emerging from Belém is far more optimistic than most coverage suggests. It is an astonishing good news story of the economic transformation already reshaping energy systems at extraordinary speed, driving down the cost of energy for businesses and individuals and being a liberating force for poor communities across the world.

This news includes: world solar costs falling 12% last year; battery storage costs falling 93% since 2010, and 94% of renewable power built last year was cheaper than the cheapest fossil fuel alternative. This is not idle theory. Spain's industrial electricity costs have flipped from one-third above Europe's average to 20% below after a rapid expansion of wind and solar. Pakistan has installed twenty times more solar in three years than the UK, France, Canada and New Zealand combined. Uruguay now generates 98% of its power from renewables, halving costs and creating 50,000 jobs.

Deployment is accelerating everywhere. India's renewables have met more than half of national electricity demand on multiple occasions this year. Solar mini-grids in Cameroon and Zambia now power tens of thousands of rural homes and businesses. Global transport electrification is already displacing two million barrels of oil a day, more than Germany's daily oil use. It is such economic reality that is driving the political pushback from certain sectors against renewables, financed by oil lobbyists. The writing is on the wall for the oil industry: renewables provide far cheaper energy than fossil fuels.

Meanwhile, COP30 saw a shift toward implementation: billions pledged for forests, land rights, methane reduction, resilient health systems, ocean

protection, clean energy infrastructure and land rights for indigenous people. The trend for the world's forests is in the right direction: worldwide deforestation is down 20% compared to last decade, and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell by 11% just in the past year.

The political outcome in Belém may look fragile, but the economic reality is moving at speed, quietly reshaping markets and bending the emissions curve. If the world paid more attention to this story, the path ahead might feel less daunting, and far more hopeful.

Rev Dr Mike Perry, A Rocha UK Trustee and Bishop's Adviser for Creation Care and Climate Justice, 28 November 2025. Abridged from

www.arocha.org.uk/cop30s-fraught-finale-masks-a-quiet-surge-in-global-climate-progress

40 Acts

Happy New Year! Yes, it's 2026. Christmas is behind us and Cadbury Crème Eggs have appeared in the shops. So that tells us that Easter won't be far away, with Lent starting on Wednesday 18th February. There will be various ways of marking Lent and I'm sure many of us will be taking part in Lent study courses and there will be lots of resources available from the Methodist Church website.

Stewardship (see www.stewardship.org.uk) encourage us to act generously and be the best stewards of the resources that God gives us. And they are the people behind 40acts: Do Lent generously. Thousands of people sign up to this 40-day generosity challenge – building habits, deepening faith, and reflecting the heart of Jesus through everyday acts. Each day offers a simple invitation to give, bless, and grow in generosity – one act at a time.

Every day there will be a new challenge. From writing a note of encouragement to someone, to buying a gift for a friend. All you have to do is sign up (see the 40acts website at www.stewardship.org.uk/40acts) and respond to the daily emailed prompts. Give it a go and see if it doesn't grow your heart in generosity towards your neighbour.

If you need any further information please see me and I'll be happy to help.

Mick Towlson

Praying for the Earth



20: Trees

Father of Creation, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
You created a world of wonder, You declared it to be good.

The world was formless and void, and you spoke and breathed life into being.
On the third day, you made trees.

You declared them to be good. And we declare them to be good.
For our lives are inexplicably linked with theirs.

For deciduous and evergreens, we give thanks,
A stunning array of designs that sustain life.

Fruit trees & Fig trees, Ash and Aspen,
Willow and Walnut, Cyprus and Cedar,
We declare them to be good.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.
The Giant Redwood, the Monkey Puzzle, the Peppermint tree,
Praise your name, through root, trunk, branch and leaves.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.
The Sweetbay Magnolia, the Coconut Palm, the flowering Dogwood,
Praise your name, through root, trunk, branch and leaves.

In this time of climate breakdown,
The trees are our allies, the Lungs of the Earth, forming Habitats of Hope.
The Forest is our friend, the Woods our co-workers, the Jungles work for justice.

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
We have moved East of Eden, we are Homesick Exiles,
Creation groans, the Tree of Life is no more.

We have opened the door to the sin of ecological violence,
And it has overwhelmed us.
Through the greed of exploitation, Slash and Burn, Over Consumption
Unrestrained Capitalism has unleashed hell against Forests, Woods and Jungles.

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
We have sinned and done evil in your sight.
As unrestrained capitalism, fed by consumerism and profiteering,
Plunders and Pillages, Ransacks and Rapes the Woods, Forests and Jungles.

What have we done? Have mercy on us.
What have we done? Have mercy on us.

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
We remember your son who was nailed to a tree,
Whose blood was poured out on the wood of the cross,
To remind us, in bloody technicolour, of the evil of empire & violence,
and the butchery and barbarity of man.
It was our sin that held him there.

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
We remember your son nailed to a tree,
Whose blood poured out on the wood of the cross,
To remind us of self-giving sacrificial love.
In his glorious resurrection, we are offered hope,
And called to a new way of being,
A Priestly calling to tend and keep.

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
You have not abandoned us,
But are working through us and in us to bring your kingdom.
A kingdom of Justice and Peace,
A kingdom in which is to be found, a tree for the healing of the nations.

We pray for the trees, the Woods, Forest and Jungles.
Call us afresh to tend and keep, guard and protect,
Until that day when we shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace,
The mountains and hills shall burst into song,
And the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Rev Jon Swales, April 2021. From <https://atyourservice.arochoa.org/en/26-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency> Creative Commons License

Fifth Anniversary of the Global Nuclear Ban Treaty



The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW, or more easily known as the Global Nuclear Ban Treaty) has reached its fifth anniversary, having entered into force on 22 January 2022 after Honduras became the 50th state to ratify the treaty.

The treaty, which was originally adopted at the UN in 2017, is a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons and other related activities. This includes developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, possessing, installing or deploying nuclear weapons. It also bans states which are party to the treaty from using, or threatening to use, such weapons. 122 countries voted in favour of the treaty.

Currently, 74 states have ratified or acceded to the treaty, with a further 21 having signed it but not yet ratified it. However, none of the nine states holding nuclear weapons have done so, and only five European countries have done so, the main ones being Ireland and Austria. The UK government refuses to engage with the treaty and would not even participate as an observer state at the Meetings of State Parties to the treaty, the most recent of which took place in March 2025.

The Methodist Church has consistently held the position that any use of nuclear weapons would be immoral and catastrophic, and that sustaining the threat of indiscriminate destruction is totally contrary to the peace to which Christ calls us. If you agree, please write to our MP calling for the UK to sign the treaty and begin to remove its nuclear weapons, and sign the petition at www.cnd.eaction.org.uk/TPNW.

Mark Ramsey

Information from www.christiancnd.org.uk/ban

www.icanw.org/signature_and_ratification_status_v1

www.banmonitor.org/tpnw-status

www.methodist.org.uk/about/our-stories/80-years-after-the-hiroshima-and-nagasaki-atomic-bombs

Safeguarding update



BMC safeguarding policy

We have a church safeguarding policy that is based on the one that the Methodist Church recommends. It is updated by us each year and submitted to Church Council for agreement. Once it is agreed it will be available hanging up on the safeguarding noticeboard (in the corridor opposite the vestry). Some of the things that will come up for discussion this time are

- A reminder that it is Church Council that is responsible for safeguarding in the church
- Confirmation of Doreen Corlett and Connie Pullan as safeguarding officers
- A reminder that each group within the church is responsible for safer recruitment to responsible positions
- A discussion about risk assessments both of premises and of activities.

Training update

Foundation training:

Saturday 21st March 2026 10am-12.30pm at Grangewood Methodist Church.

Thursday 26th March 1.30-4.00pm at Breaston Methodist Church.

Tuesday 16th June 2026 7.00-9.30pm at Beeston Methodist Church.

No online ones available at the moment.

If you want to book into one of these please let Connie Pullan know.

Advanced training:

You can find out times and dates of Advanced training via the Nottingham and Derby District website (Safeguarding Hub, Training Dates). Click on Book Sessions.

Please let one of us know if you have any queries or concerns. If you just want to sound something out, that's fine.

Connie Pullan and Doreen Corlett, BMC safeguarding officers

Embrace the Middle East

Prayer Diary – February 2026



1 February

In Cairo's Zabbaleen community, long working hours recycling rubbish and low earnings often leads to stressful home environments. Children can end up living in chaotic situations or sent to orphanages by parents who feel it is their only option. We pray for Life Vision's project, The Rock, which helps families stay together and provides the holistic support they need to create safe and stable homes for their children.

8 February

Palestinians in the West Bank frequently face travel bans, often seemingly arbitrarily imposed, which impact on their freedom to work, visit family, attend the mosque or church, and access vital health services. We pray for the Society of St Yves, which offers legal advice to help individuals challenge these bans and assert their human rights.

15 February

As Lent begins this week, and we reflect on the role of food and fasting in our faith journey, we pray for those facing food insecurity. In an economically deprived area of north Lebanon, an agriculture project led by Middle East Revive and Thrive (MERATH) produces organic vegetables, dairy products and eggs for families with low incomes.

22 February

Although the Middle East's wars often hit the headlines, communities there face an additional devastating prospect – the impact of climate change. We pray for the work of the Ankawa Humanitarian Committee, in Erbil, Iraq, which educates young people about climate challenges, which range from loss of farmland to desert expansion. The scheme encourages students to write proposals for environmental initiatives and put them into action in their communities.

From www.embraceme.org/s/Embrace_Prayer_Diary_Feb26_July26_Web.pdf

Dates for your Diary

February 2026

- Mon 9th **Knit, Natter and Crafts** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 14th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10am-12 noon
 Table Top Time – family board games at BMC 3-5pm
- Mon 23rd **Knit, Natter and Crafts** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 28th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10-11.30am

March 2026

- Mon 9th **Knit, Natter and Crafts** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 14th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10am-12 noon
 Table Top Time – family board games at BMC 3-5pm
- Mon 23rd **Knit, Natter and Crafts** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 28th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10-11.30am
- Sun 29th **Passion Sunday joint choral service** tba

April 2026

- Thu 2nd **Maundy Thursday Communion** at Toton Methodist Church 7.30pm
- Fri 3rd **Good Friday Service of music and meditation** at BMC 7.30pm
- Sun 5th **Easter Sunday Dawn Service** at Toton Methodist Church
 Easter Sunday Morning Worship at BMC 10.30am

Weekly events

- Sunday* **Morning Worship** at BMC 10.30am
 Evening Service 6.30pm (on 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday of the month)
- Monday* **Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Group** at BMC 9.30-11.15am
- Tuesday* **Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Group** at BMC 9.30-11.15am
 Open Space refreshments and fellowship at BMC 11.15am-12.15pm
 (lunch at 12.15pm every second Tuesday of the month)
- Wednesday* **Wholly Ground Café** at BMC 11am-1pm (including a short act of
 worship at 11.15am on the first Wednesday of the month)
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Beeston Methodist Church

Here for You: God is calling us to

- Offer **spiritual nourishment** and **growth** to all
- **Welcome** and **nurture** everyone
- **Serve** those in our local community
- Be a strong voice for **Justice**.

Beeston Methodist Church is an Eco Church

From meditation to insulation, from location to invocation, loving God and His creation should impact everything in our church lives. **Eco Church** is a scheme to help churches demonstrate that they care for God's earth, to help them 'go green' in all areas of church life.



Beeston Methodist Church has gained the Eco Church Bronze Award and is now working towards the Silver Award.

ecochurch.arocha.org.uk



Beeston Methodist Church is an Inclusive Church

We believe in **inclusive church** – a church which **celebrates and affirms every person** and does not discriminate.

We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of **disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality**.

We believe in a Church which **welcomes and serves all people** in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.

www.inclusive-church.org