
MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—FEBRUARY 2023



Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for February from Hazel O'Connor

New Year—New Vision

The old is gone—presents, food, fun— Christmas is the only time of the year when everything goes, when budgets are thrown out of the window for a few days. Celebrating and generosity, but what does that mean for some people during the cost of living crisis?

When icy evenings mean the choice between a cooked meal or turning the heating on. When every tank of petrol means one less meal for loved ones. When anxiety increases with the supermarket prices, and many have to rely on the kindness of strangers, families and charities.

Who then will we turn to?

“God”

He is our shield and refuge. The world’s treasure is fragile and temporary. Wars, and rumours of wars, sickness and diseases.

Our worries and problems may change from year to year. But the Christmas story remains the same. Jesus, the light of the world, has come into the world and shines on everyone. **John 1:9**

We must put our trust and faith and hope in God. He is our strength and shield, as he leads us forward in this New Year.

We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him.

Romans 8: 28

May God’s blessings be on us all.

Hazel

A Prayer for 2023

Jesus, in this new season, I invite You to shape my life and set the direction of my year. As I read your word I long to imitate your works and I welcome your Spirit as I fix my eyes on you. Amen

CHURCH DIARY for FEBRUARY

Sunday Service each week at 10.30am with groups for the children and young people.

Shalom Fellowship – Sunday 5th February from 2.30 to 4.30pm

Toddler Group - Mondays—6th, 20th & 27th February from 10am to 11.45am

Men's Group – Thursdays 9th & 23rd February from 7.00 to 9.00pm

Church Members' Meeting - Wednesday 22nd February at 7.30pm

Renew Wellbeing Café – Every Thursday— 1.30pm to 4.00 pm

The funeral of Hermin Francis will take place at 10.00 am on Friday 3rd February

PRAYER POINTS— please pray especially for our church this month –

- 1) For our minister, Andy, for his peace of mind and healing as he awaits scan results.
- 2) For enablers to come forward to facilitate prayer meetings and bible studies.
- 3) For those looking after family members and not able to attend church due to responsibilities and illness.

Christmas Card Collection

The annual Christmas Card collection raised £90 for BMS World Mission.

Thanks to Joan Sheppard for organising this.



Advent Coin Collection

In 2022 the church supported the Framework Charity through its annual Advent coin collection. A total of £280 was raised through the Advent season.

Framework was formed in 2001 after the merger of two Nottingham-based charities, Macedon and Nottingham Help the Homeless Association (NHHA). It is a charity delivering housing, health, employment, support and care services to people with a diverse range of needs across the East Midlands.

Regardless of their past, or the challenges they face, the charity empowers people to achieve financial stability, social inclusion and independence, because it believes that everyone has the right and potential to achieve a better future.

Framework supports more than 18,000 people a year providing a network of interlinking services that have the potential to change and even save people's lives.

- It gives support and advice to people facing homelessness
- It helps people off the streets
- It houses people who are homeless and support them to move on to independent accommodation
- It supports people to address their addictions and to improve their mental and physical health
- It empowers disadvantaged and excluded people to learn new skills and find employment

Every person helped is different, with their own challenges and aspirations for the future.

Figures from 2018/19

- * **3,378** the number of people supported in their own homes
- * **2,004** the number of people supported into education, volunteering and employment
- * **3,235** the number of people accommodated in our housing
- * **1,052** the number of people supported to address their alcohol and drug issues.

Why not start saving your coins now for the 2023 charity collection?

Alan Jodrell

Information from The Framework Charity website.



Church Improvements

During the past thirty months we have carried out a tremendous amount of work transforming the main church building and adjacent church house for the benefit of our church members and the wider community.

Church House is now rented providing accommodation for a family and bringing in funds to assist the church in its day-to day activities.

As Christians we are committed to reducing our environmental impact on the planet and so after installing the electric heating system, we have also replaced the gas cooker with an electric one thus making our church free from fossil fuel. In order to successfully complete the above conversion, we had to increase the electricity supply to the building at considerable cost.

The front entrance hall has been fully upgraded to a high standard making it more welcoming and comfortable for our members and the whole community. It is now a multifunctional space that can be utilised for various activities.

Following a structural survey of the building ,and although it was found to be fairly structurally sound, the roof was in a very poor state and needed extensive repairs. Repairs have been done, but as an old building we have to constantly keep an eye on it.

All of the old light fittings (99.9%) have been removed and replaced with LED which is more energy efficient and will save the church long term.

The carpet in the sanctuary was crumbling and that also has been replaced.

Extensive repairs have been carried out on one of the stained glass windows in the sanctuary.

The whole of the church building has been completely redecorated making it comfortable and welcoming to all who access the facilities.

The work that has been done over the last months took a lot of time and effort and although I was leading the push to get these done, thanks must go out to the following: Andrea church coordinator, Andy church minister, Dave former church secretary, Jean church secretary, Mary, Lloyd Burrell, Ryan the roofer, Patrick the handyman, Hermione the interior designer and all the people who donated to the church that allows us to carry out such an extensive piece of work.

Ricky Bennett—Chair PFA

A summary of the latest prayer letter of Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

www.bmsworldmission.org/ptvokuhl
December 2022



In 2022 the INF (International Nepal Fellowship) celebrated 70 years of service in Nepal. The INF is the partner of the BMS (Baptist Missionary Society) in Nepal.



For many Christians in Nepal, the year 1952 marked the opening of the first Christian Churches, as well as the start of faith-inspired medical work. Key to the early leprosy work were the lives of medical missionaries **Eileen Lodge** and **Betty Bailey** (pictured), who overcame many obstacles to establish treatment for leprosy sufferers.

Last November, Pippa and I

were invited to the INF celebration, where reference was made to these early pioneers. We were given tokens of appreciation from the INF which we accepted on behalf of BMS, which has supported the work. Since **you** are the people behind BMS we want to pass on the thanks. Through your prayer and giving you are directly impacting Nepal for the better. **THANK YOU.**



INF have just confirmed that the new leprosy inpatient facility at Green Pastures Hospital, which I have written about previously, will be called the '**Eileen and Betty Centre**'.



The facility is almost completed, and I am looking forward to the commencement of medical work in early 2023. The picture shows me reviewing site matters with the nursing Sister with whom we have worked closely. It is a delight to see the results of the work emerge.

Despite continued growth as a Nepali organisation, INF continues to have a need for expat input. Pippa and I have been invited to continue supporting INF into 2023. With God's grace and your partnership, we want to rise to any challenges which await.

Note: Those who regularly follow the Vokuhls may remember that they were apprehensive about obtaining visas allowing them to stay in Nepal. At the time of writing this letter (early December) the family was, in fact, in Thailand, as visa issues meant leaving Nepal. Toby wrote that they were hopeful of returning in January. He wrote:

The uncertainty leading up to this outcome has been difficult for the family at times. However, we can affirm that God has been faithful, and is providing for us. May we be open to what He wants to teach us during this time. This could be a good time to gain perspective on 2023 plans and intentions.

Toby asked for our prayers:

- 1) May I request prayer for resilience for our children, as home-schooling has never been in favour with them, and the recent relocation means distance learning, and more transitions. **Please pray** for protection for them physically, mentally, and spiritually.
- 2) Having started to make connections in Kathmandu, **do pray** for all naturally emerging relationships in our neighbourhood, and that on return to Nepal we would have wisdom to see where we can be Christ's 'hands and feet', also growing our connections with local Christians and encourage them.
- 3) **Do pray** for INF, and all within the organisation who wholeheartedly carry out their work as ministry with a Christian ethos and mindset. **Please pray** for strong and faithful leadership, to steer the organisation through any challenges which arise from operating within this challenging context, and in face of some anti-Christian sentiment.
- 4) There are many needs in the immediate and wider environments surrounding us in Nepal. **Please pray** that Pippa and I have wisdom to know what to focus on as we, God willing, return to Nepal in January 2023.

With much love from us all,

Toby and Pippa with Jakey, Ella and Millie

Journey to Victory

1st Corinthians 15 v57- “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

Our life’s biggest testimony is that since 2015, me and my family migrated from Tanzania to the UK. The Lord walked us through all challenges! We converted from Hinduism to Christianity and he gifted us with Godly people, connected us to online ministries and gave us a new life to live. After I was baptised, my whole life changed. I grew closer to God and learnt that Jesus is the light of life! He brought me out of the darkness.

After 7 years of waiting, on January 20th, God showed his mercy upon us and **we got granted leave to remain, and a permanent stay in the UK! (The set appointed time for God to show me favour has come)**
Psalm 102 v13

The Lord is truly a way-maker, miracle worker and a prayer-answering God. I would like to encourage everyone who is facing a struggle, fix your eye upon Jesus because **“he is a rewarder to those who diligently seek him”**.

God bless you all! **Sonal Hirani**

Congratulations!

Kunal, Khushi, Mansi and Sonal

All at MRBC are so pleased that this new chapter in your lives is finally here and wish you well for the future.



A big “thank you” to all contributors this month. Please continue to furnish us with YOUR news, YOUR pictures, YOUR poem, YOUR story, any articles of interest to others. Please give to Susan Bye or Sharon Joddrell at church or post or send by email to susan@msbye.co.uk, to arrive by **15th February** for the March edition.

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