



# Contact



## December '25 & January '26 Edition

**WELCOME** to the Festive edition of *CONTACT*, the newsletter for all those associated with Hinckley United Reformed Church and our wider community.

### Advent & Christmas Services

#### **SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER**

**10:45am Toy Service. All welcome to bring new toys to donate.**

**7:00pm Blue Christmas / Memorial Service to remember those we have lost during the year**

#### **SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER (10.45am)**

**Led by Rev Daniel Cheyne (to include communion)**

#### **SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER (4:00pm)**

**Carol Service. All welcome**

#### **WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER (5:00pm)**

**Christmas Eve Communion led by Rev Daniel Cheyne**

#### **CHRISTMAS DAY (10am)**

**Led by Rev Lesley Moseley**



# **Church Secretary's report 2025 (part 1)**

## **Christine Thomas**

2025 has been different in the sense that we have been without a minister since Andrew, Candid and Tavonga left to start a new life and ministry in Colchester. A coach load of us went to Andrew's induction service on 15th February. We have missed them but we have carried on, supported each other, got on with the practicalities of running the church and have been actively seeking God's will for us in the future. When people have asked me about the possibilities of us having a new minister I have generally said, "Don't hold your breath". The Synod has made us aware of the shortage of ministers in the URC as a whole and also, which is probably more significant, the low number of applicants for the ministry. There has to be a change in the way that support for the churches is organised. We have to put this situation in God's hands, keep praying and move on which so far I think we have been doing very well. During the years that Andrew has been with us we have been more connected with the Synod and have benefited from their support and encouragement.

Paul's ministry as our outreach worker, along with the support of Kate has also been a blessing and given us more confidence. Their recent move into the vacant manse will not only give them more space but will enable them to be much more involved in day-to-day contact with local people and events. We are indebted too to Rachel, who leads family ministry and works closely with the Council in organising events. The challenge of engaging in mission and sharing our faith with others have been high on our agenda for some time and we have also been more aware of the need to encourage spiritual growth and provide support for those who are 'seeking'.

In November last year I had the opportunity of going on a course with Paul to explore 'Leading your church into growth' (Lycig). It was intensive and helpful and a great opportunity for meeting other Christians with the same desire to learn and be inspired. As a follow-up from this our elders joined with the minister and members of Groby URC to explore how Lycig can be applied in the context of our local churches. Led by Derek Graham and Tom Donoghue we have enjoyed seven follow-up sessions together during the year and have encouraged our respective congregations to share in this.

We looked at the 4 'P's' - Prayer, Presence, Proclamation and Persuasion, which were the topics considered on the course, and explored how each of our churches are doing with respect to these and how we might make positive changes. Prayer is key to everything we do. We need to pray for growth for our church at every opportunity in addition to other prayers.

Are you or know someone new in their faith? Maybe its time to make a fresh...

# Start ►

## Got questions about life and the Christian faith?

If you're looking for answers then maybe it's time to make a Start. Each session involves video clips, exercises, group discussion and time for reflection and lasts about an hour and is free to attend.

**Starting Weds 7<sup>th</sup> Jan**  
**See Julie P for details**

Dear Friends,  
It is that time of the year again when we all look forward to Christmas and start preparing for that happy time! So do start writing all of your cards and pop them into my Postbox and I will deliver them all for you!! The Postbox will be in it's usual place in the foyer from 23rd November and the last day for posting your cards is Friday 12th December and they will be distributed to you all on the 14th December!! So start writing them tomorrow.

With Love from Postman Pat and Kathy and Ian xx



**The December Prayer Walk** will take place on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> (9am) at the top of Castle Street, Hinckley (where the pedestrian area starts).

This is an opportunity for us to come together, regardless of whatever church (or none) we attend, to pray for our community & the people in it.

**The January Prayer Walk** will take place on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> (9am) at the top of Castle Street, Hinckley (where the pedestrian area starts).



## Church Secretary's report 2025 (part 2)

Presence is all about creating and building relationships through caring for people both in our congregation and in the wider community. We do well at that but we need to be conscious of what we are doing and what we can do better. The Thursday drop-in is a good example of this - it has gone from strength to strength since it started. So is the Hope into Action project. Thank you to the teams who put so much time and effort and prayer into this work. We thank Karen for her leadership in Hope into Action – she is moving away and we wish her God's blessing.

Proclamation is all about presenting or sharing the clear Good News of the basic Gospel message to those with whom we have already established real and caring contact. We need to work on this. It is a priority challenge for 2026 and the upcoming Stepwise course will be a real step in the right direction. Persuasion is the next step – to help those who are interested in, or responding to, the good news of Jesus to find out more.

Again, this will be a target for 2026 and we are hoping to provide some kind of enquirer's group. Julie has volunteered to lead a group for this purpose. Thank you Julie. Paul's ministry as our Outreach Worker and also that of Rachel as Family Worker are key to all these areas of encouraging church growth and we thank them for this most sincerely. But we must not forget to play our part in supporting and encouraging them and owning the work they do. They will both be giving their own reports of the work that they are engaged in and are planning for the coming year. Please pray and talk to them about what they are doing and how you can best support them. How are we getting on with plans to renovate the area around Steptoe's yard? Well, as you probably realise it has been slow going and somewhat frustrating. We want our buildings to be fit for purpose and in good order but it costs money. It is also a big step of faith. We have to trust God that our efforts in doing all the above to support the growth our church fellowship will be fruitful. Hopefully our way ahead as we walk with God will become clearer in 2026. Thank you to all those who are helping to make this happen. Again, please pray. Because we have been without a minister this year our Sunday worship has been led by a variety of different preachers and we have enjoyed a high standard of Sunday ministry. The downside of this is the lack of continuity and ability for forward planning to address our particular needs. The worship team have played a key role in organising pulpit supply and we thank them for their hard work and we are grateful too for those in our own congregation who have stepped in to lead worship. We have also been able to continue to support the Wednesday-at-One services with the help of Sally's husband Charles.

# Church Secretary's report 2025 (part 3)

We are very grateful to him for this but we need to find someone else to take on the organising of preachers as Charles is relinquishing this role. We thank David for his dedication to maintaining a high standard of music in worship, leading the choir and helping to organise the choir festival in Coventry cathedral in October. Our elders, including me as church secretary, have had to take on more responsibility for running the church, and Sally, as our treasurer has been challenged with trying to balance our finances. There are many others who work hard to support the church activities: the Safeguarding team, Rob, who looks after the garden, the church website and does other jobs like clearing the old kitchen in Steptoe's yard. Jobs which often go unnoticed. We thank those who organise the Tuesday event, the teams who take on Sunday stewarding, preparing tea and coffee, visiting people and providing flowers and support for them. Maintaining the church buildings is another important role which is overseen by the Fabric & Finance team. Much of the practical work and liaising with professionals is done by Tony and by anyone else he can co-opt to help him out, go up ladders, unblock toilets, prepare the screen input into Sunday worship, step in with projection during services. We thank him and those who help him for all the time and effort that goes into this. As we move into 2026 please pray. Give thanks to God for being with us and for all that he has given us. Pray for his continued presence and guidance as we move forward. Pray for the faith, courage and inspiration to reach out to others to tell them about the love of Jesus, and pray for the future of our congregation and our buildings here in this place. We are living in a world which is becoming increasingly unsettled and needs the Christian message of hope, love and forgiveness.

## **What is Christmas all about?**

Tradition, not the Bible, dictates when we celebrate Christmas. We live in the Northern part of the world, and when the days are short and the nights long, when our spirits are low and it's cold, there is a deep need to find hope for a new year and for life itself.

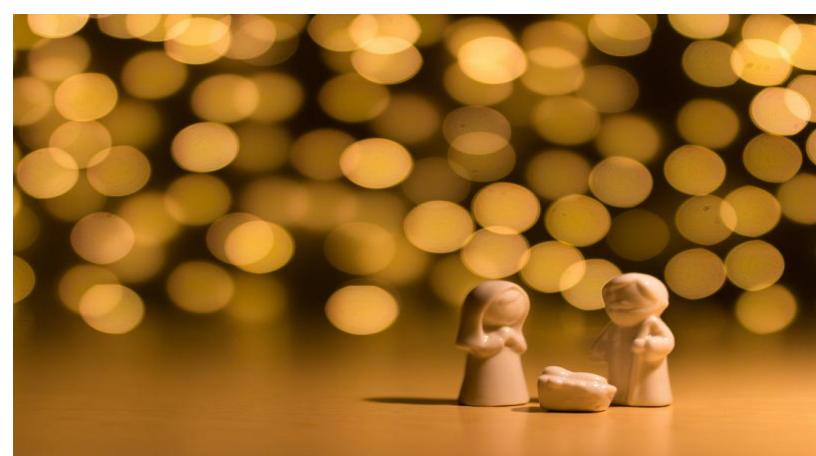
So, we light the lights, we set the table and fill our glasses, and celebrate with friends and family, in defiance of pain and darkness, because we are alive, and love and joy are real.

The church chose this time to celebrate the birth of Jesus..

..and the story that's passed down to us through the years continues to echo with our lives and our hope today.

A child was born in difficult times when the world was ruled by mighty powers not hearing the protests of the poor. And, this child was, according to Christian faith:

**God with us, the light of the world.**



# A prayer for our commercial community from Rev Malcolm Clarke...

Dear Father

*In view of the economic concerns of the world, of our continent, and of our nation, we pray in particular for the businesses of the Town in which we live, some of whom will be stretched to the limit by rule changes made in Business Rates and in National Insurance. We pray for the women and men who run these businesses and for their families, who depend upon them for their everyday livelihood. We pray for the BID Town Centre members and for those who run and support BID.*

*Since we are all residents and workers in this same community help us all to encourage and support one another and help us to express our support in practical ways wherever possible. Come Lord Jesus and bless our Community with Faith, Hope and Love.*

In Jesus' name.

Amen



Dear Friends,

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*With Love from Postman Pat, Kathy & Ian xx*



# THE VINE



It is certainly soup weather and here at The Vine we hand-make all our own from scratch with fresh ingredients. A bowl of soup served with bread roll and butter is £4.25; very popular as the season continues to chill! You will find a cosy place to warm up and to browse the shelves - including Christian gifts which are unavailable in the rest of town - we also sell book tokens and gift vouchers for The Vine itself. We have a wonderful new selection of 'Take Note' - our regular consignment of books for adults - with themes on Advent, Christmas, faith and reflection - please check out our Facebook page for details..

..or drop in for a brochure; copies may also be available in your church as we are distributing them more widely. If you, or someone you know, is able to help with kitchen duties (such as washing up and serving customers) on Mondays or Friday mornings please get in touch - we would make them very welcome and offer a warm atmosphere, free drink or meal depending on shift length and a first look at our lovely books, cards and gifts. Finally, please find details of an evening talk by a local author held at Trinity Community Church - copies of the book are now in stock.

Manager, Grace



***I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.***

**John 15:5**



As our church prepares to grow in serving God by serving and loving our community & seeking His word, please join us in our prayer for growth...



*God of Mission,  
Who alone brings growth to your  
Church,  
Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to  
our planning,  
Wisdom to our actions,  
And power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment to you,  
And in service to our local community,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*



#### **CONTACT DEADLINE**

The deadline for submissions and information for the February edition of Contact will be Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January. The next edition will be available from Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January.

# How are your feet?

*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news.*

Isaiah 52:7



*We are looking for Christians with a heart to serve others to partner in street chaplaincy and working with young people in our community.*



- *Training & support given,*
- *Equipment provided,*
- *Working with other Christians*
- *DBS required with church leadership reference*

A pilot has already been carried out in conjunction with *Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council* and so we are looking for the next phase in partnership with other organisations

- *Hinckley town centre & other locations.*
- *Wednesday early evening (on street pop up youth work)*
- *Friday evening chaplaincy on the street.*



For further information or to apply please contact Paul  
EMAIL [coachwake@aol.com](mailto:coachwake@aol.com) or TEXT 07591 527942



At Rochelle, our aim is to provide children and adults of all ages with training and confidence to achieve their goals within a friendly, fun and hard working environment. Various classes are held in Ballet, Tap, Musical Theatre, Modern Jazz, Freestyle, Acrobatics, Theatrecraft, Hip Hop as well as Insanity and Stretching and Limbering.

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The Borough | Hinckley | Leicestershire | LE10 1NL  
[www.hinckleyurc.org.uk](http://www.hinckleyurc.org.uk)

ROLE	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
FAMILY	Rachel Cobb	07930 628011	<a href="mailto:repooclehcar@hotmail.com">repooclehcar@hotmail.com</a>
OUTREACH & COMMUNITY	Paul Wake	07591 527942	<a href="mailto:community@hinckleyurc.org.uk">community@hinckleyurc.org.uk</a>
SAFEGUARD-ING	Chris Sharrock	-	<a href="mailto:chris.sharrock@ntlworld.com">chris.sharrock@ntlworld.com</a>

### ***Wednesday @One Services***

Wednesday at One services are a half hour ecumenical service available to all, regardless of church or doctrine. Starting at 1pm.

3rd December - David Crick Organist, Hinckley URC

10th December - Robin Hanford (tbc) Great Meeting, Hinckley

17th December - Karl Woodward, Hinckley Baptist Church

24th December - No service

31st December - No service

Teas & coffees are served after the 30-minute service.

*Charles Leggat will be stepping away from arranging the Wednesday at One speakers at the end of December. We thank him for his service and hope to continue to see him when other commitments allow.*

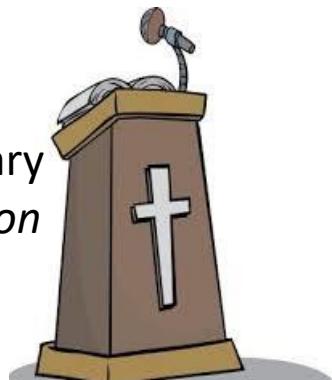
***The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.***

**John 1:14 (NIV)**

MONDAYS	<b>STAY &amp; PLAY</b>   Children's Playgroup Welcome to all with children 5yrs & under 10am-noon (side entrance). Term-time only.
	<b>INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRE</b>   Help & support with practising English for speakers of other languages. noon—2pm (side entrance)
WEDNESDAYS	<b>SPARKLERS</b>   Children's Playgroup (5yrs & below) Group primarily for childminders with 5yrs & under 9:30-11:30am (side entrance). Term-time only.
	<b>WEDNESDAY @ONE</b>   ecumenical service for all 1pm-1:30pm (front entrance).
	<b>FALCON DROP IN</b> 10:30-12:30 Falcon (SS) for advice with housing & support services.
THURSDAYS	<b>DROP-IN</b> Chat & Coffee/Tea. All welcome 2-4pm (front entrance)
FRIDAYS	<b>PRAYER GROUP</b>   All welcome 10-11am (front entrance)
SUNDAYS	<b>SERVICE</b>   All welcome. Children's group. 10:45am-noon (front entrance)
<b>MONTHLY PRAYER WALK</b>   All welcome	
	The prayer walk takes place on the last Friday of the month (except Dec), starting at the top of Castle Street, Hinckley. Starting at 9am and ending at the church.
<b>HOUSEGROUP</b>	Please see David Crick & Rob Cobb for details.
<b>PRAYER GROUPS</b>	Monday (eve) online, Thursday 10-11am (church & community), Friday 10-11am (ecumenical).

## JANUARY CHURCH SERVICE SPEAKERS

Dec 28 <sup>th</sup>	Julie Payne
Jan 4th	Rev Daniel Cheyne
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Wake
Jan 18th	Rev Jenny Mills - URC Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship) - <i>includes Holy Communion</i>
Jan 25th	Margaret Marshall
Feb 1st	Richard Knott (Parade Service)



**Sunday services start 10:45am \ unless otherwise stated**