

Newark Congregational Church

The Envoy



Church Directory



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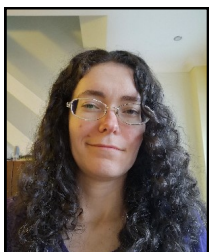
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If you have any articles or photographs you think may be suitable for our magazine, we would love to receive them. Please email them to the editor.

Back Cover: Autumn on London Road, Newark from Lorna Caddy

***The deadline for submissions to the Winter 2025 edition of the magazine is
1st November 2025***

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Website: newarkcongregational.com

Facebook: Newark Congregational Church

What is a Congregational Church?

A Congregational Church is one that believes in the Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Congregationalists share and respect each other's gifts, and worship, serve and decide things together as guided by the Holy Spirit at church meetings.

There are three principles:

- A church where Christ is the head, with no external hierarchy
- A church based on a covenant relationship with God and with one another, where seeking the mind of Christ is the basis of all that is done
- A church where all members are considered equal before God, and all skills and giftings are valued and recognised

London Road Congregational Church Services

Services are now taking place in the church building for those who wish to attend in person, and are live on Zoom at the same time for those who are unable to attend in person.

To receive links to join the services, please contact
newarkcongregational@virginmedia.com
or scan the QR code.



Please keep an eye on our social media or website for information about services in the church building. Alternatively, please contact the above email address to be added to our mailing list. Your email address will not be shared.

Newark Congregational Church

Services

07-Sep-25	Church Service with Communion	Victoria Bunn
14-Sep-25	Service with a Difference	Mark Taylor
21-Sep-25	Church Service	Trevor & Lorraine Pailing
28-Sep-25	Café Service*	Mark Taylor
05-Oct-25	Church Service with Communion	Janet Wooten
12-Oct-25	Service with a Difference	Mark Taylor
19-Oct-25	Bible Guys & Gals Service	Richard Gascoyne
26-Oct-25	Café Service*	Mark Taylor
02-Nov-25	Church Service with Communion	Victoria Bunn
09-Nov-25	Service with a Difference Remembrance Service	Mark Taylor
16-Nov-25	Church Service	Irum Anjum
23-Nov-25	Café Service*	Mark Taylor
30-Nov-25	Church Service	Julie Hill
07-Dec-25	Church Service with Communion	Victoria Bunn
14-Dec-25	Service with a Difference	Mark Taylor
21-Dec-25	Church Service	Irum Anjum
28-Dec-25	Café Service*	Mark Taylor

All Services start at 11am unless otherwise stated.

**Cafe Service is held in the Church Hall from 10.30am. Bacon baps, sausage baps, croissants, tea, coffee (cost - cash donation).*



It's now well over a year since we made our decision to join the Inclusive Church Movement. Time to review what's been happening as a result.

First let's review what we have committed to. We have said we won't discriminate against anyone on any of these grounds: disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality. It's not just about sexuality – welcoming gay people into our fellowship – it's also all the other things. My guess is that there are several people in our congregation that fall into one of the other categories and don't realise that the commitment refers to them too. And of course, unlike some churches, we certainly don't discriminate against women – who make up the majority of our fellowship.

But returning to the sexuality issue I am really pleased that our commitment is being noticed in the wider community and that a number of people have been in contact with me/our church because they know about our commitment. This included a few weeks ago a newly married straight couple who are seeking a home church that would welcome their friends whether gay or straight.

One real bonus arising out of our decision has been that I have formed links with the other churches in our area that have made the same commitment – The Anglican 'B.B.C.' Churches (St Giles, Balderton; All Saints, Barnby in the Willows; and All Saints, Coddington.) It has been a real blessing for me to be working with the group's vicar Rev Louise Holliday. We've had a couple of meetings and a real meeting of minds over how to be church in the 21st Century.

Elsewhere in this edition of 'The Envoy' is news of the Pilgrimage from Navenby to Lincoln Cathedral on 10th September. We will be using this event to promote Inclusive Church. I'm hoping that those walking from our church will all be wearing Inclusive Church t-shirts, and that when we sit down in the cathedral for Evensong after our walk our inclusivity message will be obvious to everyone there.

This message means a lot to me. I'm sad that so far there are no other inclusive churches within Newark. I am convinced that one day, hopefully soon, all churches will come to realise that opposing homosexuality 'because the Bible says so' is unsupportable and hypocritical. I recommend that people watch an extract from TV series 'The West Wing' on the subject where the fictional President Bartlett demolishes someone who calls homosexuality an abomination by making comparisons with other biblical texts that we ignore. You can find it on YouTube by searching for 'Bartlett and the Bible' or use this URL <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CPjWd4MUXs&t=33s>

Another source that's worth watching looks at the impact of church anti-gay policies on the life of 14-year-old Lizzie Lowe, a member of an Anglican church, who committed suicide because she was unable to reconcile being a Christian and being gay. A moving, though harrowing, video looks at her case and the changes her church made as a result. Again find it on You Tube – search for 'Lizzie Lowe's story' or follow this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Wz2ylsz9-l>

I read my Bible through the lens of Jesus Christ. Jesus made a point of including those who society excluded. He preached that we should love one another and that we should love ourselves. He told us that our neighbours could be people who aren't like us. In the words of theologian Marcus Borg 'Jesus trumps the Bible'. Surely we must recognise Jesus as the definitive revelation of what God is truly like. Would Jesus want a young girl to kill herself because of church doctrine?

Those churches that uphold 'traditional' church views on sexuality are making an active choice. They can choose to be inclusive instead. There's nothing stopping them.

I pray that in another year's time we might have been joined in Inclusive Church by other Newark Churches. I'll keep working towards that end.

One day Christians will look back with disbelief that sexuality was ever an issue for the churches. May that day come soon.

Yours, in His service

Mark

We Are Going on a Pilgrimage

I have to admit that the only two things I really knew about being a Pilgrim or about going on a Pilgrimage come from my childhood, and that is a long time ago. At Junior School, we were forced to read *The Pilgrims Progress* by John Bunyan and to sing "To be a Pilgrim" and I was not impressed by either. Then a little later in Senior School, Geoffrey Chaucer came along and we got to read parts of *The Canterbury Tales*, but not, unfortunately the juicy bits. I still haven't read them so maybe it was for the best.

However, my interest in Pilgrimages has been somewhat opened up of late, due to a number of things. First there is the "Pilgrim" series on BBC where 8 individuals walk a pilgrimage in different parts of the world whilst exploring their own faith (or non) and often finding a new way to experience God. In our Bible Book Club, we read and digested the excellent book by Bishop Stephen Cottrell, "Striking Out", and then there is the film "The Way" which gives an interesting slant on walking the Camino.

Friends and colleagues have also walk all or part of the Santiago de Compostela, finishing in the ancient Cathedral in Santiago, where they all said that they were incredibly moved. So maybe I was far too young back in the 1960s and 70s to actually understand the relevance of walking with others on some sort of spiritual journey. Giving yourself a gift of time, time to think, to talk and listen, and to pray.

That is why I am now becoming very excited about the Pilgrimage that members of Newark Congregational Church, along with other individuals are going to undertake. Using the “Journeys of Faith Guidebook”, we intend to have a one-day Pilgrimage to Lincoln Cathedral starting in the lovely village of Navenby. It is an 11-mile hike through some of the most beautiful Lincolnshire countryside, stopping at 8 churches and 1 Cathedral and finishing the day with Evensong, and possibly a cup of tea or a beer. The shortest section of the walk is 0.8 miles long with the longest being 4.1 miles. During each stage of the walk there will be time to ponder on what we have learnt at each church we visit. We can walk in silence or take time to talk to a fellow pilgrim about faith, spirituality or any subject that is in your mind at the time.

And you are all very welcome to join us for all or part of the experience. We have set the date for 11th September, starting at 9.30am in the grounds of St Peter’s Church Navenby. If you would like to join us in any way you feel suitable, please contact either Mark Taylor or myself. Our details are in the front of the magazine.

I hope to see some of you on the day.

Rich Gascoyne



Above: St Peter's, Navenby

Right: Lincoln Cathedral



Live at London Road



We are getting very excited about our next concert on 30th August. At the time of writing there are still a few tickets left for the wonderful Winter Wilson. The last time Kip and Dave played in Newark Congregational Church they went down a storm. Even though it was during the easing of covid restrictions the audience really took them to their hearts.

This critically – acclaimed duo have recently released their 11th Album “Home”. With stunning harmonies and superb musicianship of songs of love, loss and social comment the album has become something of a “Must Have” to those who love such engaging music. We are lucky to have them play for us again and I know they will go down a storm. Tickets are just £12.50 from ricthevic53@gmail.com

On 18th October we also have a very special ‘Local’ band coming to play for us. Sherburn • Bartley • Sanders were magnificent at the recently held Southwell Festival. I know from the lucky folk who got to see them that they are a very special trio indeed. Due to an unfortunate situation at home, we could not get along to the festival so both Julia and I are really looking forward to this special evening of Soul-searching songs and exhilarating tunes. Again, tickets at £15 are available from the address above.

Live at London Road is always looking for new musicians or actors to come and entertain us. If you know an act that you think would be ideal for our venue, please do let me know, thanks.

Anyway, I do hope to see you at our gigs, we will always have tea and coffee plus home-made cakes for sale. Our raffle money will continue to support a charity and you are encouraged to bring your own alcohol to help the evening go with smile.

Live at London Road is for everybody of all ages, it is truly a community event.

Rich Gascoyne

Men's Group

The Men's Group have had another interesting and I hope enjoyable year, meeting together each month, usually for breakfast and some sort of event.

At present we have fourteen people on our 'Membership List', but we usually have between eight and ten people attending meetings where we continue to enjoy a varied programme.

In the last twelve months we have visited Whisby Nature Park where Neil led us on a short but interesting walk. We also visited The International Bomber Command Centre, which was a very sobering experience. We have enjoyed listening to local speakers including Glyn Hughes, the curator at the NCWC, Kevin Winter on England's bloodiest Battle Towton, and John Jupp, a retired RAF Fighter Pilot.

We hosted a morning with the author Dave Tomlinson, held a Christmas quiz, and looked at how different newspapers tell the same story. Our trip to the Newark Air Museum was particularly special as just as some of us were leaving a Lancaster actually flew over us.

One of the strangest events has to be Fun with Linguini, where teams of two had to build a self-standing tower made out of nothing but linguini and marshmallows.

We start again in September and have a full programme into the New Year:

13th September in the hall at Newark Congregational Church from 9am to 10.30am — How to do Cryptic Crosswords

25th October we will be visiting the Nottingham Caves and going for a beer afterwards.

8th November in the hall at 9am. We hope to have a presentation from the Salvation Army.

6th December in the hall at 9am for a Board Games morning

31st January we will be visiting the Holocaust Museum at Laxton.

New members are always welcome, as long as they are male! If you are going to come along it will help to know if you have any special dietary needs, I do try to cater for all. Please contact me on ricthevic53@gmail.com to let me know if you're coming and any dietary needs.

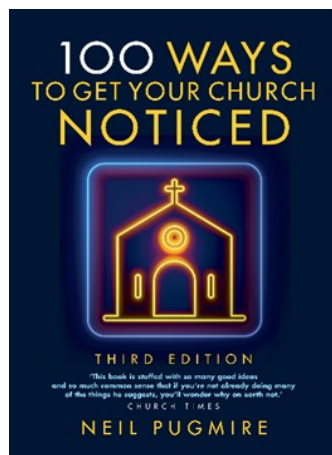
Rich Gascoyne

Getting Our Church Noticed

I love reading. I read all sorts of books – crime fiction (current favourite the Inspector Gamache books by Louise Penny), biography (I recommend particularly 'King: the life of Martin Luther King' by Jonathan Eig), thrillers, history, just about any genre.

As well as reading just for pleasure I also read a significant number of books related to my faith. You'll find many of these in the church library.

One book that has made an impact on me recently is '100 Ways to Get Your Church Noticed' by Neil Pugmire.



This is a brilliant book packed with ideas (a hundred of them you may not be surprised to hear) of how to better promote your church. It covers categories like;

- Noticeboards and displays
- Use of Social Media
- Magazines and other church publications

- Use of logos
- Liaison with local newspapers and other media etc.

I think it's fair to say that we have got better at what we do in a range of these areas in recent years, but reading the book made me recognise just how much more we could do.

I'm really pleased that when I mentioned the book to the Deacons they agreed that it would be good if they all read the book too and we set up a working group to identify ways in which we could realistically improve our visibility in the local community. The Church has bought a few copies of the book for the Deacons and a spare one for the Church Library. I've asked everyone to make a list of the top ten changes we could reasonably make. We'll then meet to agree the way forward and to draw up an action plan to report to the Church Meeting.

It's worth saying that the reason for undertaking this project isn't primarily to get 'bums on seats' on a Sunday morning. I think that we have a lot to offer as a church, particularly in relation to our modern outlook on Christianity and through initiatives like Film Club, Pub Theology, and Bible Book Club. But as well as these there are a range of activities, such as the Just Sing Choir, Coffee Craft and Conversation and, of course, Live at London Road that are primarily recreational but still offer something that improves the quality of life in the community around us.

If you'd like to help the Deacons to move this forward we would love to get you involved. Just have a word with me or one of the Deacons (Christine, Julia, Julie, Rich, Val or Victoria) and we'll make sure you get the chance to read a copy of the book and to put your ideas forward. That's what being a Congregational church is all about.

It would also be great to get a perspective from people who are not currently involved with the church. If you are one of those people I'd be pleased to hear from you. Just send me an email to newarkcongregational@virginmedia.com and I'll be happy to involve you too.

Mark

Prayer Trellis Initiative: A Call to our Community

I am thrilled to share an inspiring initiative at Newark Congregational Church — our Prayer Trellis. I wanted to create a special project which would be designed to engage our entire community, inviting everyone to participate, regardless of their church faith.

The concept is beautifully simple. We encourage individuals to write their prayers on tags and attach them to our Prayer Trellis. Each night, I will gather these prayer tags and lift them up in prayer during our Sunday morning services. It's a wonderful way for us to come together and support one another in our spiritual journeys.

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, I warmly invite you to contribute to this initiative. Whether it's a personal struggle or a prayer for someone else, this is a space where we can share our hopes and concerns, bringing them before God. Let's come together as a community in faith, trusting in His love and grace. Over the last three weeks we have had so many people use the prayer trellis and I am so happy that we can do this for everyone. We look forward to seeing the Prayer Trellis flourish even more with your heartfelt prayers!

God Bless

Victoria Bunn



Newark Foodbank Update



FOODBANK SHOPPING LIST

August 2025

**PLEASE DO NOT DONATE ITEMS
CONTAINING ALCOHOL – THANK YOU**

Shortfall Items

Also check our website for other items we need

Food

- Long Life Fruit Juice
- Tinned Soup
- Tinned Potatoes
- Tinned Fruit
- Sponge Puddings
- Tinned Rice Pudding

Other Items

- Toilet Rolls
- Male and Female Deodorant

PLEASE!

Do not donate fresh food items without checking with us first.

**Check that your donation is well inside its use-by date.
It takes time for us to process donations and too often they pass the use-by date before
we can distribute the food to our clients.**

We cannot distribute out of date food.

We have plenty of: Tinned Spaghetti

- Our warehouse stock is being depleted due to demand. We appreciate any donations we receive.
- Please take your donation to one of our many collection points in supermarkets. See our website for a complete list.
- To donate money, which we can use to purchase stock, please see our website.



<https://newark.foodbank.org.uk/>

