

# Affinity



WINTER 2025

**OADBY TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH**

## **Oadby Trinity Methodist Church**

Minister: Rev Derek McLean

Website: [www.oadbymethodist.org.uk](http://www.oadbymethodist.org.uk)

### **Contact details**

**Minister:** Rev Derek McLean 0116 2712404

minister@oadbymethodist.co.uk

### **Room booking:**

bookings@oadbymethodist.co.uk

**Food Bank:** Contact number: 07723 121794

info@oadbyfoodbank.org.uk

**Zeph's Café** 01162717575 <https://www.zephscafe.co.uk>

Guides/Brownies/Rainbows: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk>

Brownies Guides: Nicky Calow 07727432120

[OadbyTrinityGuides@hotmail.com](mailto:OadbyTrinityGuides@hotmail.com)

### **Office holders**

**Minister :** Rev Derek McLean

**Senior Steward:** Diane Price

**Safeguarding Officer:** Michael Elliott. [078834 952263]

Cover photograph "Winter Sun" courtesy of David Calow.

## **Neve Shalom –Response to the attack on Heaton Park Synagogue**

Following the devastating terror attack on Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester earlier this year, Rev Derek McLean sent a letter to the Synagogue Leaders expressing our support for them in the wake of this appalling attack. He has received a letter from them, thanking him for our support and concern, which is reproduced here.

Dear Friend,

Thank you so much for the message of condolence, support and good wishes that you sent us in the wake of the attack on the Heaton Park Synagogue.

Of course we were shaken, devastated and quite fearful when we heard the news on the day; to have such violence occur on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, intensified the sense of pain we felt in our community. As Rabbis Charley Baginsky and Josh Levy who Co-Lead Progressive Judaism said:

*"In moments like this, our instinct can be to turn inward. Yet the messages of care and solidarity we have received from colleagues of all faiths and communities remind us that we are not alone, that we are bound together in a shared society."*

In keeping with our namesake [Neve Shalom](#), Oasis of Peace, after whom our community is named, we now look to ensure that these kinds of actions do not split our communities or look to blame others. Our Jewish values call us to believe that even after deep darkness, peace is possible.

B'shalom

*Deborah*

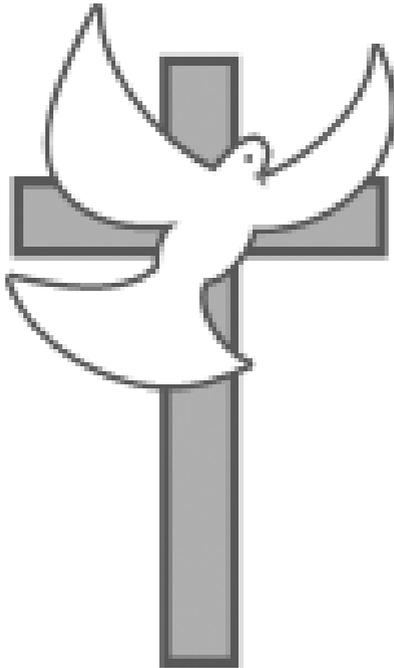
on behalf of Naomi Diamond, Chair

LPJC

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## DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday 7th

8.30 Rev Kim Alexander –Holy Communion

10.30 Richard Gill

6.00 Rev Andrew Farrington –online circuit service

Sunday 14th –Advent 3

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –Nativity Service

6.00 Rev Derek McLean -online circuit service

Sunday 21st –Advent 4

10.30 Rev Liam Dacre-Davis –Holy Communion

6.30 Rev Derek McLean –Candlelit Carol Service **[also available online]**

Sunday 28th –Christmas 1

10.30 Heather Corlett

6.00 **No online circuit service**

Midweek Worship @ 11.30 am on 1st & 3rd Wednesday every month.  
All welcome

Saturday prayers 10.30-11.00 am every week in Meeting room. . All  
welcome

## **Christmas Eve services**

### **Houghton on the Hill**

6.00 pm Rev Andrew Farrington -Carol Service

### **Great Glen**

7.30 pm Rev Andrew Farrington - Carol Service with Holy Communion

## **Christmas Day service**

### **Oadby Trinity**

10.00 Rev Derek McLean –Christmas morning Worship

## **Other events in December:**

11<sup>th</sup> December – visit by Gingerbread Nursery.

14<sup>th</sup> December – Nativity service. [So 7<sup>th</sup> December will not be AAW].

14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December – Crib festival

21<sup>st</sup> December @ 6.30 pm –Candlelit Carol service

Monday 22nd December 9.00-11.00 Breakfast with Santa.  
Ticketed event. Booking [with Zeph's Café] essential.

## JANUARY SERVICES

### **Sunday 4th –Covenant Sunday**

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –Covenant service & Holy Communion

6.00 Rev Andrew Farrington -online circuit service

### **Sunday 11th**

10.30 Service led by 3Generate team from Uppingham Road MC – All age worship

6.00 Rev Ian Hu - online circuit service

### **Sunday 18th –Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

10.30 Pulpit exchange

6.00 Rev Ivan Bennett –online circuit service

### **Sunday 25th**

10.30 Oscar Fortune

6.30 CTO United service for Week of Prayer for Christian unity at Trinity led by Tricia Lockley and Graham Austen

**[also available online]**

**Note:** There will be no 8.30 am service of Holy Communion in January

Midweek Worship—1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11,30am. All welcome

Saturday Prayers @ 10.30-11.00 am each week in meeting room. All welcome

## **FEBRUARY SERVICES**

### **Sunday 1st**

8.30 Rev Derek McLean- Holy Communion

10.30 Dr Miriam Stevenson –all age Worship

6.00 Rev Kim Alexander –online circuit service

### **Sunday 8th –Racial Justice Sunday**

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –Holy Communion

6.00 Rev Derek McLean –online circuit service

### **Sunday 15th**

10.30 Howard Smith

6.00 Rev Andrew Farrington - online circuit service

### **Sunday 22nd -Lent 1**

10.30 Michael Mays

6.00 Rev Ivan Bennett –online circuit service

Ash Wednesday [18th February] - Midweek Worship at 11.30 am.  
Ashing available

CTO evening united service for Ash Wednesday at Church of the  
Immaculate Conception. Ashing available.



Heather Corlett: Editor

## Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2025 issue of Affinity., which covers the months of December 2025, January and February 2026.

We look forward to our Crib Festival which is being repeated this year, as it was a great success last year. Also our traditional Christmas services, including the Nativity service on 14th December and our candlelit Carol service on 21st December. It will be Rev Derek's last Christmas as our Minister as he retires next year. [or "Sits Down" in Methodist parlance!]. It doesn't seem 8 years since his first Christmas with us! So we hope this one will be extra special to give Derek and Chris some lasting memories to take away with them.

The deadline for the Spring 2026 edition of Affinity , which covers the months of March, April and May 2026, is **Sunday February 8th**. All contributions to Heather Corlett [Editor] by that date please. Please use the same email as for the weekly notices and state that your contribution is for Affinity.

Articles need to be 250 words [1 page], 375 words [1 1/2 pages] and 500 words [2 pages]. **Please** try to keep articles as close as possible to these lengths.

**Heather Corlett [Editor]**

**Email: [notices@oadbymethodist.org.uk](mailto:notices@oadbymethodist.org.uk)**

## Message from the Manse



Rev Derek McLean

Dear friends,

This has been a difficult time in the life of the church. In quick succession, we have heard of the deaths of four men who have each made a significant contribution to this community of faith.

Julius James had been a Steward here, Alan Smith played the organ for many years, David Frost was our treasurer, Ron Lang (at almost 102 years old) was an Aigburth resident with long connection to Oadby Methodists. Each is remembered with great affection.

We move into the season of Advent, where once again we are using resources produced by the Methodist Church to guide us. This year, the theme is “Gifted”. We look forward to the gifts we receive in the presence of Jesus, born in poverty and squalor, two-thousand years ago.

We will begin 2026 (first time I’ve typed that) with our Covenant service. We recommit to our Christian pilgrimage, seeking to follow Jesus wherever He may lead us.

We already know that 2026 will bring some new joys into our journey of faith. We’ve got two weddings booked, one baptism pencilled in, and two more to be arranged.

In this season, remember God came to be with us in human form, God’s Spirit is with us still, and God travels with us on the journey.

God bless you

**Rev Derek**

## Eight lessons and some carols

Christians love traditions – especially at Christmas. However, we sometimes lose track of where those traditions come from, and we don't always think whether they are still relevant, particularly in a culture which is far less familiar with the Bible, or the basics of Christianity.

Many of us look forward to the annual festival of Nine Lessons and Carols coming from King's College, Cambridge. The nine lessons (readings) are always the same. Five set out the key elements of the Christmas story: the Annunciation to Mary, the birth of Jesus, Shepherds, Magi, and the grandeur of the opening of John's Gospel. Three come from Luke's Gospel. (Luke has the lambs, Matthew has the magi.)

Even from the Christmas story, this leaves out some important elements. We skip the interwoven story of John the Baptist's birth, we hear of the Annunciation, but not Mary's response (the Magnificat) or the visit to Elizabeth, we omit the way Matthew recounts Joseph's reaction, and nobody wants to hear about the Massacre of the Innocents. Yet, each of these parts of the story tells us something significant about the Incarnation.

If we want to add readings to include something more about the Christian message, we might choose to say something about Easter. The most obvious way to do that might be to include the naming of Jesus, and the Presentation in the Temple.

Instead, the 'Nine Lessons' includes two readings from Genesis, and two from Isaiah. I'm always hesitant to include any of these in a carol service.

Sadly, in contemporary dialogue, choosing a creation account from Genesis too readily reinforces a presumption that you must choose between Genesis or science. A carol service isn't the place to challenge or unpack that. Worse, the first story is that of the Fall, which carries the impression that there is only one way to understand the mission of Jesus, and the atonement.

The second reading is a blessing on Abraham's descendants. That's fine if we understand that the blessing is through the Jews – and via Jesus the Jew in particular – and that it is a blessing on all God's people, whether they are Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or none of these. This isn't the service to explore Israel as a contemporary nation, or its role in God's promises and eschatology.

The Isaiah readings present a different problem. Yes, quite rightly, we Christians understand them in terms of the Incarnation of Jesus. "Unto us a child is born" and we've "seen a great light". However, for too much of Christian history this has been taken further. The roots of antisemitism thrive here if we imply that the Jews were foolish when they failed to understand these verses as unambiguously pointing to Jesus. Any rational reading of Isaiah gives no such certainty.

Come along to our carol service on 21<sup>st</sup> December. You can be confident of five readings which will be included. Hopefully you will value the other choices!

**Rev Derek**

## **Crib Festival – Christmas 2025**

Following the success of last year's event, we are holding a Crib Festival again this year from 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December. The times are as follows:

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> 2pm – 4pm

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> 10am – 4pm; with an additional slot on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> from 6pm – 8pm

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> 3pm -6pm

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> 10am - 4pm

If you've not experienced this before, or missed it last year, it is simply a display of a variety of Christmas cribs in various styles. They will be displayed around the church and will be accompanied by appropriate text to stimulate thoughts, prayers and reflection.

We are appealing for suitable cribs to display. Please let Rev Derek know of any suitable contributions. However, please note that it is inadvisable to offer anything especially valuable: we intend the event to be stewarded whenever it is open, but we cannot rule out loss or breakages.

Volunteers to help with setting up and help with publicity would also be much appreciated. Please speak to a member of the leadership team if you are able to help in any way.

## Nativity Cribs



## One starry night

I was there in the fields on that dark wintry night.  
I did shiver and shake when I saw that strange light.  
I heard angels singing their song of great joy,  
Proclaiming to all the birth of a boy.  
An I rushed into town, as the angel had said;  
And there found the baby in his manger bed.  
What gift could I offer this baby so small,  
As I stand in the chill of this cold cattle stall?  
I gave him a smile then whispered "goodnight".  
Then I must return in the new morning light,  
Remembering all I had witnessed that night.

**Margaret Cartwright**



## ***The Gospel according to Saint Matthew***

*Year A of the three-year lectionary cycle begins on Advent Sunday (30th November 2025). For the following 12 months until the Sunday before Advent (22nd November 2026) **Matthew** is the 'controlling' gospel, although on some Sundays, particularly during the Easter season, the Gospel is taken from St John.*

**Date:** Although Matthew's Gospel is the first book of the New Testament it was written later than the Gospel of Mark and is almost certainly a product of the last quarter of the first century of the common era (AD). It was written after the fall of Jerusalem (70AD) and is usually dated c85-100AD.

**Authorship:** Despite the tradition that Matthew the gospel writer was the same person as Matthew the tax collector who is listed among the twelve disciples in 10.3, the gospel is anonymous. The author is not named within the text and the superscription 'according to Matthew' was only added during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century. The author was a Jewish Christian whose was writing for an audience made up largely of Jewish Christians.

### **Matthew's Sources:**

- **Mark's Gospel:** The writer of Matthew's Gospel used Mark as a primary source: 606 of Mark's 661 verses are included in it. (Luke makes similar use of Mark).
- **'Q':** About 200 further verses consist of material not found in Mark but which is common to Luke. This unknown source is referred to as 'Q' (*from the German 'quelle' = source*). The contents of 'Q' include the mission of John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus, the temptations of Jesus, much of the Sermon on the Mount, several of the parables, and the lament over Jerusalem.

**'M':** This leaves another 220 verses of peculiarly Matthean

material. Examples of passages which are unique to Matthew are the genealogy and birth narrative (in Chapters 1 and 2); the Parables of the Ten Bridesmaids, the Talents, and the Sheep and the Goats; and the closing verses (28.16-20).

### **The key features and special interests of the Gospel:**

**1 Its Structure:** The arrangement of material is carefully planned: six sections of narrative are interspersed with five blocks of teaching (Chapters 5-7 – Sermon on the Mount; 10 – directions about proclaiming the kingdom; 13 – Parables of the kingdom; 18 – greatness and forgiveness; 23-25 – the coming of the kingdom). (The Old Testament has five books of Jewish Law – the Pentateuch).

**2 Fulfilment of the Scriptures:** Because Matthew was writing for Jewish Christians he uses ‘proof texts’ to show that the birth, life and death of Jesus were consistent with Old Testament prophecy. (See especially 1.23, 2.5-6,14-15,17-18,23). In doing so he draws on Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, Zechariah and Psalms.

**3 Strong ecclesiastical interest:** This is the only gospel which uses the Greek word ‘ecclesia’ = church, congregation. (16.18, 18.17). There are references to ‘worship’ (2.11; 14.33). Church discipline is addressed in Ch 18. The author is clearly interested in the missionary activity of the Early Church and refers to baptism and to eucharistic practice.

**4 The second coming:** Only Matthew uses the technical term *parousia* (24.3,27,37,39). The final section of teaching (Chs 23-25) is dominated by what will happen in the ‘last days.’ As one commentator has pointed out, each of the five discourses ends with a reference to the rewards and penalties of the day of judgement. (See especially 25.31-46).

**The Passion narrative and the ‘Great Commission’:** The events of the final week of Jesus’ life occupy a third of the gospel and are described in greater detail than in other gospels. The final paragraph

(28.16-20) prepares for the life and work of the Church in future ages. It is also the point at which we, the readers, are most clearly addressed as the writer in effect says... *"Over to you, folks!"*

**Howard Smith**

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### **A Warm Space**

The Warm Space at The Immaculate Conception church, Oadby opened on the 31st of October this year with a resounding welcome from the local community. Over a hundred people joined us to celebrate the opening of this wonderful opportunity to answer our call "To serve one another" as Christ served us, through welcoming our neighbours.

It is a safe space for everyone, regardless of background, age or interests. It offers leaflets with local information about useful services as well as refreshments, activities, guest speakers and a friendly face with a cuppa in a warm, safe environment.

It is a vital spot for the community for connection, conversation, and improving personal well-being. The community resource enables people to come together; and ensures that support is available when needed through appropriate signposting and individuals making contact with one another.

One of our guests was the local community support officer for Oadby and Wigston, PCSO Nad, who enjoyed the company of the individual group members and joined in for a chat. He will be returning to give a talk on security and safety.

There is a varied programme of events, including the regular bingo, raffle and games, as well as an up and coming Christmas carol

Concert/singalong with a buffet for the 19th Decenber, [Bookings are advisable].

The group meets every Friday from 11.30am to 1.30 pm. Please join us at the Immaculate Conception church parish rooms, 54 New Street, Oadby LE2 4LJ.

If you would like to join us as a volunteer or helper, we would be very grateful too. It is a friendly and welcoming opportunity to meet and get involved with a vibrant community resource in Oadby and the neighbouring communities

**Alka Hyams**

**Project Lead Warm Space at**

**The Immaculate Conception Church Oadby**

### **The Warm Space**



## Oadby Trinity Methodist Memories by Neil Graham

We had a friend's 60th birthday celebration in Quorn, so I said to my wife, Ann "This is a chance for me to see Oadby Trinity since I left some 40 years ago.

I wasn't aware of Zeph's Café addition, but we sampled the excellent tea and cakes. Noticing the lobby through to the Church, we myself, Fiona and Robin, found a welcome at Oadby Methodists, led by Rev Trevor Paine. We three soon joined the children's choir, led by Pauline Gardiner. As we grew up, the next Manse incumbents were Philip and Sue Beuzeval. We were soon involved with Mum collecting for Christian Aid week [and doing an annual 24 hour sponsored walk]; or helping Mum produce the Church Newsletter on an old stencil machine in the vestry, As children we also remember collecting among the congregation for JMA [Junior Missionary Association]. "Bread and cheese lunches after services are also fondly recalled.. Mum enjoyed the WOW [Women on Wednesday] meetings. It was a lovely tribute by Stella Orbell in the Autumn issue of Affinity about the end of the group.

As youth groups evolved, we enjoyed meeting at the Manse after evening services with Sue Beuzeval providing drinks and biscuits. On occasions the group would visit Aigburth to meet the residents.

Then I noticed the lobby photo of Michael Elliott [Safeguarding Officer]. That brought memories of going with him, Helen Smith [then Earp] and Jane Amos to Abbot Hall, Grange-over-Sands to enjoy a week-long Methodist Guild holiday. [Sorry I couldn't see you Michael. I understand you were in the Church

doing Food Bank when we dropped by].

Later, encouraged by Gerald Gardiner, I got involved in Oadby services and eventually became a local preacher.. On return from university, I ran a business in Leicester, and we all enjoyed going to the pantomime with Graham Austen as the Dame. One year, encouraged by Gwyneth Sutcliffe, I was recruited to play 2 parts in a later Panto. I still have some photos of me dressed as a space man[?] and King of the Fairies.

Then Robin my younger brother was married by Rev David Wood to Heather from Wigston.

I picked up the 2nd November Memorial Service leaflet and found so many names I recall so well. What a great way to remember people. I shall send in the details of Mary, my Mum as she passed away, aged 93 in July this year,

Ian and Barbara, so good to meet you. You remembered me and I recall you. However we both agreed that we didn't recognise each other after so many years!

**Neil Graham.**

## **Church Council Report 9.10.25/10.11.25**

Due to the high pressure of business this Autumn Church Council was held on two evenings.

On the first occasion we were given a list of the work undertaken by Vincent Price and his property team, together with those professionals employed for the purpose. The sheer volume of work undertaken on our behalf was hard to take in. This ranged from the renewal of white edging to the external steps , through servicing of boilers and fitting of new extractor fans in Zeph's kitchen, to two days of electrical work throughout the premises and re-furbishment of the Worship Area windows. Altogether 21 completed items were listed together with ongoing work and future plans. The 5 yearly inspection which all Methodist Churches need to undergo revealed possible costly work on our flat roofs may be needed.

After many years of keeping our front garden looking attractive Ian and Barbara have decided that it is time to step down. If you have green fingers and could help to keep this area looking good please tell Vincent. He continues with mowing the grassy areas for us.

You may be also interested to know that we are arranging to buy a new electronic organ. The expense of trying to keep the present one in a playable condition is no longer acceptable. It is much more than 100 years old as we inherited it second hand from a church which closed in Leicester in 1931.

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After getting our breath back we moved to financial matters and consideration of the unaudited accounts. It was agreed that the 10% of our income which we have to date donated to various charities every year should be put on hold for this coming financial year of 2025/26 as we need to look carefully at our increasing expenditure before making the commitment. We will re-visit this in the summer.

The second half of our meeting was initially marked with a respectful tribute to our treasurer, David Frost, and to Ron Lang, both of whom recently died. We had done the same for our late organist and to Julius James on the first evening.

We are blessed that John Cooper has generously agreed to take on David's financial work and we unanimously elected him as Church Treasurer. He presented updated figures for us for the accounts.

A discussion regarding how we might become a more welcoming church then followed together with reports from our various teams.

It was agreed that LOROS will be the beneficiary of this year's charitable fund raising.

We thank all those who put so much effort in to making our church a very special place for everyone.

**Stella Orbell, Church Council Secretary.**

## World Aids Day 2025

World AIDS Day has been marked on December 1<sup>st</sup> every year since 1988.

AIDS has not gone away – there is still the need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education.

The theme for 2025 AIDS Day is:

***“Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.”***

This year funding cuts from international donors have led to a historic funding crisis. This threatens to unravel decades of progress. HIV prevention services are severely disrupted and community - led services which reach out to marginalised populations are no longer prioritised. Alongside this there is a rise in punitive laws criminalising same sex relationships, gender identity and drug use, making HIV services inaccessible to many.

The international community must come together to bridge the finance gap. Political leadership is paramount; transformative solutions are needed to eliminate discrimination and enable access to HIV services.

This World AIDS Day we remember all those who have lost their lives as a result of AIDS. We pray for all those affected by AIDS today and for all those committed to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

(Information taken from UNAIDS website)

**Diane Price**

## ZEPH'S UPDATE

Zeph's has again organised a great selection of events for Christmas this year. Please do your best to support them and book well in advance to avoid disappointment. The events are:

From 1 December to 23 December – Christmas Afternoon Cream Tea (£18.95)

From 1 December to 23 December, Mondays to Saturdays, 12 to 2.30 pm - Christmas Fayre Lunch (£19.95 for two courses, £22.95 for three)

5 December at 6.00pm – Festive Fish Fryday with festive music from Musicamici woodwind ensemble (£12.95)

12 December and 19 December at 6.00 pm – Christmas Fayre (£24.95)

Monday 23 December at 9.00 am - Breakfast with Santa (£11.95)

And more events are organised for January. Further details will follow but the dates are:

9 January - Fish Supper

23 January – Italian Night

6 February -Fish Fryday

20 February – Pie Night

6 March – Fish Fryday

20 March – American Diner Night

I'm pleased to be able to report that David Calow has joined us as a Director of Zeph's. David has a long association with Zeph's. His business skills and experience as a professional designer make him an excellent addition to the Board.

On a sad note, the Directors and Staff at Zeph's were very sorry to hear about the death of David Frost. David had been not just a long-term supporter of Zeph's but a much-valued adviser and help on matters financial. This included advising on our annual accounts, submitting them to Companies House and dealing with the complicated issue of Corporation Tax. We are very grateful for all of David's help. Our sincere condolences to all his family.

As always, my thanks to Michael, our staff and volunteers for all they have done for Zeph's over the year. Thanks also to the Zeph's Directors for their hard work and, of course, a very big thank you to all our customers who continue to support us so well.

Very best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

**Frazer Robson, Chair of Board of Directors**



## **Church Charity for 2025/6 - The Leicestershire and Rutland Hospice [LOROS]**

At the November Church council we voted to support LOROS, our local hospice, as our local charity for the year ahead.

LOROS are really struggling financially and are experiencing a £2million shortfall in their annual income. The increase in National Insurance contributions and also in the minimum wage, as well as a reduction in the number of gifts received in legacies from Wills has contributed to their serious financial problems.

2025 is the Hospice's 40th anniversary of providing first class palliative and end of life care to the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The staff should be celebrating, but they are not. Several of their vital services which provide comfort and respite for patients and carers have either been closed or drastically reduced. The Home visiting service, complementary therapy and Day therapy are operating at a reduced level, and some of their dedicated, caring staff have lost their jobs already or are facing redundancy.

When the hospice first opened its doors to patients in 1985, they had 25 beds. Over the years the number of beds increased to 33 in order to cope with the ever-increasing demand for palliative and end of life care in our two counties. LOROS is the only inpatient hospice for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Now the bed occupancy has been reduced to 18 beds, but the need for palliative care continues to increase.

LOROS holds a special place in the hearts of so many people who have experienced the first class care offered by the hospice, either first hand or for a relative. Having worked there for 14 years both as a nurse and as a complementary therapist, I have seen the positive difference that LOROS makes to peoples' lives. They care for the whole family, not just the patient; and they help patients to experience the best quality of life possible within the limits of their condition.

Last year we raised over £1300 for the Leprosy Mission. We cannot hope to meet the massive cash injection that LOROS needs. However we should be able to support one of the services they provide such as the Home visiting service. This provides vital support from volunteer carers going into patients' homes to give their family carer[s] a few hours respite so that they can have time away from their caring role and enjoy relaxing pastimes. Or perhaps the monies we raise will enable someone to experience Day therapy or to receive a complementary therapy treatment, thus improving their quality of life.

So watch out for news of planned fundraising events in the weekly notices and in Affinity.

The Outreach team plan to liaise with the fundraising staff at LOROS to let them know of our intention to support the charity and to find out how effectively the money we hope to raise can benefit their patients. LOROS is one local charity we just *cannot* afford to lose.

**Heather Corlett –on behalf of the Outreach Team.**

## A small (Methodist) world

During the Thanksgiving Service celebrating the life of Alan Smith, it was mentioned that Christine & Alan Smith were married by a Methodist Minister by the name of Revd David Smith. By a lovely coincidence, that is the same Revd David Smith who married Christine & Derek McLean, albeit in a different circuit, more than a decade later.

Looking up further details about David Smith, we find that he was born in Leicester and attended Wyggeston School. It also transpires that he was on the team at the Methodists' West London Mission when a certain Howard Smith (no relation!) lived in London and attended services there.

Small world Methodism – do let us know if you know of any other strands in this web!



## **Festive Lights**

Once again, it was a joy to take part in the Oadby Festive Lights switch on. As usual, we joined with our friends as Churches Together in Oadby. There was a stall on the Parade with games, and lots of Christmas-themed activities at the Baptist Church. It is always powerful to hear the question, “Which church are you from?” and to explain that the six churches love to work together on these occasions.

It was also good to hear the message of Christmas sounding out from the stage with the performance of the Community Choir.

Inevitably there was some comment online objecting to it being called “Festive Lights”. Supposedly they should be “Christmas Lights” as we are in a “Christian” country.

However, “Festive Lights” seems a good name. Because this is a commercial venture led by the Oadby Town Centre team, it is always far too early to call it Christmas – even Advent is weeks away when the lights go on. Similarly, it is a time of year when many different faiths celebrate light-themed festivals so Festive Lights more fully reflects our joyous multicultural community.

It was however, lovely to see one of the comments on behalf of the local Hindu community who wanted to encourage the use of the word Christmas.

**Rev Derek**

**Oadby Trinity Methodist Church**

**Harborough Road LE2 4LA**



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## **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026**

The theme for 2026 is “One Body, One Spirit”; the resources have been prepared by the church in Armenia.

Once again, the highlight of the week for Churches Together in Oadby will be the Pulpit Exchange which takes place for the main (morning) services on 18<sup>th</sup> January.

During the week, there will be activities most days, largely in the regular activities taking place in the different churches. We will host during the midweek service on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January, and the Saturday prayers on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

We will conclude the week with our united evening service which will be hosted by Trinity Methodists at 6:30pm on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

Final details will appear in our weekly notices.



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