Mansfield Road Baptist Church

NOTTINGHAM

MRBC news



DECEMBER 2026 – JANUARY 2027

DIARY DATES

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

Evening Communion Service—Wednesday 2nd December & 6th January—7.00pm

Drop in Prayer– each Monday in December & January—12.00 noon–1.00pm

Shalom Fellowship—Sunday 6th December & 1st January—3pm

Christmas Services –

Sunday 13th December - All age Nativity Service

Saturday 19th December – 4.00pm – Carol Service

Christmas Day Service – 10.30am

Sunday 27th December – Songs of Praise – 10.30am

Link-up Christmas Lunch—Wednesday 23rd December at Turquoise Kitchen

Toddler Group—Monday 7th & 14th December & 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th January—10.00am-11.45am

Renew Wellbeing Café—Thursday 3rd, 10th, 17th, 31st December & 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th January—1.30pm-4.00pm

Small Group Network @ MRBC:

Tuesdays – Alexandra Park Home Group at 7.00pm with Jennifer
1st, 15th, 29th December & 12th, 26th January

Thursday Fellowship – 11.00am at church with Ceinwen
3rd, 17th, 31st December & 14th, 28th January

Deacons' Meeting—Wednesday 13th January – 7.00 pm

Coming in 2027

In the new year we'll be hosting a games night and there will be a series of Exploring Church Membership and Leadership sessions. Then in the summer we look forward to a church weekend, 2-4 July. Look out for more information...

Minister's letter for December / January

The cost of Christmas?

I've just been reading an article from BMS World Mission (our global Baptist Missionary partner) about working conditions for those who work in clothing factories in Dakar. The report highlights the story of one particular worker who earns the equivalent of £4.50 for a long day's work and also suggests that *88% of fashion companies don't pay a living wage in any of their facilities*.

The reality is, that due to the demand of shoppers to get the best value they can, coupled with the expectations from company owners and directors to maximise their profit, the people behind many of the clothes we wear and other products we buy live in terrible poverty.

Contrast this, with data which reports that the UK household spends over £700 extra in December alone in preparation for Christmas, and no doubt that figure would be significantly higher if you include all the present shopping that takes place in the preceding months! Think about this for a moment – we spend the equivalent of 6 months wages for the average textile worker in Dakar to help prepare for Christmas.

And when we look at the circumstances of the story we celebrate at Christmas, there's a disturbing irony – Jesus wasn't born into wealth and extravagance, but into poverty – homeless and a refugee. How far from the reality our Christmas that seems.

Why am I sharing this? Well, not to suggest we shouldn't enjoy and celebrate Christmas, and not to suggest you can't appreciate a few luxuries or treats at this time of year. But to consider the impact of our spending: the pressure many face as this time of year puts them into deeper poverty and debt, the contrast of our celebrations to reality of the stable birth, and the power of our spending choices. Might we need to buy less or spend a little more in order to buy more ethically? Can we contribute some of our Christmas budget to those in need?

BMS World Mission have developed an ethical spending guide which you can view on their website: https://bmsworldmission.org/ethical-fashion

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and a blessed 2027.

Matt Jones

Prayer Points

1) Let's pray for all those who are cold, homeless, and lonely and are separated from loved ones at this time of year.
2) Pray for discipline in our daily lives not to be distracted and upset by things that will not build us up as believers.
3) Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are struggling with their faith in their journey with all of life's pressures.
4) Pray for our link missionaries, "Arthur and Reeta" and "Andrea and Ian" in their work with BMS World Mission.



Diana Fritz-Palmer writes:

Nativity Service- 13th December 2026

All children and young people are requested to be at church for 10.00 am prompt.

Christmas lunch follows for all.

Christmas Cards

As in previous years, Joan Sheppard has organised a board for us to attach a Christmas card with a message for friends in the church family.

The money you save on buying separate cards may be given as a donation to BMS World Mission.

Mary who found favour with God

At this time of year, we rejoice to read, and have read to us, the scripture passages relating to the birth and childhood of Jesus.

Firstly, is the announcement by the angel of Mary's task for God, and how it would come about. Luke 1: 26-38 gives the whole story. Of particular interest is Mary's response in verse 38: **"I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."**

Secondly, Luke 2: 8-20 gives the account of the angels' appearance to some shepherds, and their visit to the Holy family. Of particular interest is Mary's response in verse 19: **"Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."**

Finally, for this piece, the closing section of Luke 2 deals with a Passover visit to Jerusalem, at the end of which Jesus, at that time 12 years old, stays behind to converse with the teachers in the temple courts. His parents had an anxious time before they found him, and a few words were spoken on both sides! Verse 51 says: **"Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart."**

So, there you have this woman whose response to a clear statement from God is complete acceptance and obedience, and, when confronted with divine but less obvious things, treasures and ponders on the experiences. Surely, a lesson to us all.

John Sheppard

NEVER LOSE FOCUS

The journey toward fulfilling your purpose and receiving your inheritance is not a sprint but a marathon. It requires discipline, perseverance, and unwavering focus. Whether your goal is to build a successful business, buy a home, advance your education, grow spiritually, or fulfil a God-given vision, lasting success demands commitment and consistency.

Paul writes in **2 Timothy 2:4**, *"No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer."* Just as a soldier remains focused on the mission, believers must avoid distractions that can pull them away from God's purpose.

Focus is the fuel that drives progress. Athletes do not win races by constantly looking around them; they keep their eyes fixed on the finish line. Likewise, we must remain focused on the promises and opportunities God has placed before us.

Consider the story of a tiger pursuing a deer. Along the way, it caught the scent of a rabbit and abandoned the deer. Soon after, it detected a mouse and left the rabbit to chase it. Just as it was about to catch the mouse, it disappeared into a hole. In the end, the tiger caught nothing because it continually shifted its attention. Its lack of focus cost it every opportunity.

Many people experience the same frustration in life. They start well but allow distractions, setbacks, or the pursuit of something else to divert them from their goals. As a result, they miss opportunities and become discouraged.

Stay committed to the vision God has given you. Adjust when necessary, but do not abandon your purpose. Remain steadfast when the journey becomes difficult and persistent when progress seems slow. Every step in the right direction brings you closer to your inheritance.

Stay focused, stay faithful, and stay determined. The finish line is closer than you think, and your reward awaits those who refuse to quit.

'Gbade Dawodu

GET UP AND PRAY

When I was a child in the West Indies, my mother taught us to pray. We had to pray for everything - everything we ate, drank and wore - we have to give God thanks. I have never forgotten my prayers, for myself, my children and others, especially those who are sick.

So what is prayer? Prayer is talking to God, and listening to God. When we pray we always draw strength from Him, and we need it!

Jesus told his disciples to pray, and **the Bible** tells us to pray without ceasing.

Prayer strengthens us when we face temptation, or are low in spirits. In the past few years and months of my life my heart has been so broken. I lost my husband and two sons, and if I had not had Jesus in my life, I wouldn't have been able to cope.

My faith, my belief, my trust and my prayers gave me the strength I needed.

For me, praying is very important. We don't have to pray just in church! We can call upon Jesus anywhere we are walking, working, driving etc. We can pray in all situations. Put your trust in Jesus for he is our only hope and salvation. Keep on praying at all times and on all occasions, for our God answers prayers and our God is good.

Hazel O'Connor

PS As the song says, what a friend we have in Jesus ..... take it to the Lord in prayer.

A 'thank you' from Operation Agri

Thank you very much for the gift of £450 to Operation Agri from Mansfield Road Baptist Church.

The money will go to the Nicaragua project "Healthy food and water for families". This is greatly helping our project partners to show Christian love in action, as they enable people to gain the skills to lift themselves out of poverty.

The Autumn edition of our Operation Agri magazine is now available for reading online or downloading from our website. You can find it at:
https://operationagri.org.uk/magazine/

Reflecting Isaiah 43:19, Jo Jackson, Editor, Outreach Abroad, writes in the magazine: *"Just as each plant reflects the nature of its seed, God's 'new thing' flows from His love, mercy and grace. He is the God of the 'new thing'."*

This edition explores how God is bringing 'a new thing' to many people through the projects supported by Operation Agri.

MRBC Link-Up

Christmas Link-Up Lunch

will be on

DATE: Wednesday 23rd December

TIME: 12:00 noon

PLACE: Turquoise Kitchen,
326 - 330 Hucknall Road. Sherwood.
NOTTINGHAM. NG5 1FS

Please let ME know asap if you are coming and I will book your seat.

We are looking forward to seeing YOU.

Please click on this link to find menu and restaurant details

https://turquoisekitchens.co.uk/special-mainmenu.html

Jeniba Grant



Love in a Box

"A big thank you from all of us at Teams4U for your filled shoebox donations – you are helping us to make a big difference to our neighbours in other parts of the world who have little!"



Sponsored Swimathon

Susan and Andrea are taking part in a **Community Swimathon** and invite 4 others to join us to make a team of 6. We will be raising funds for the **MRBC roof fund**.

The sponsored swimathon will take place at Harvey Haddon Sports Centre on the afternoon of **Saturday 20th March 2027.**

Would YOU like to join us? We will have 1 lane for 1 hour and how many lengths you swim is up to you - 10, 20, 30,.... the choice is yours.

Please let **Susan or Andrea** know if you are interested in joining us.

If not participating, then look out for our sponsorship forms in the new year!

ABOUT OUR CHURCH

If you are new to the church or just visiting .....

You can expect a warm welcome and a friendly group of people of all backgrounds and ages gathering to learn more about God. **Sunday Services are at 10.30**. During school term time two groups for children and young people from 4 - 18 are held downstairs, with a crèche available for under fours. Stewards in the Welcome Hall will be happy to show you where to take your children. Coffee/tea and biscuits are available after the service.

Offering – the church operates solely on the financial giving of its members and congregation. An offering is taken during the morning service, or non-cash donations can be made on-line or via the SumUp station in the Welcome Hall.

Evening Communion – On the first Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm

The Shalom Fellowship meets one Sunday each month in the afternoon for worship and teaching in Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

Drop-in Prayer – each Monday from 12.00noon to 1.00pm.

Toddler Group meets on Mondays during term time from 10.00am to 11.45am.

Small Group Network – Two groups meet fortnightly

Renew Wellbeing Café meets on Thursdays from 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

Room Hire: Different rooms are available for hire.

For specific dates of the above and other activities please see the Diary section.

Church contact details: ***Email:*** **admin@mrbc.org.uk**

***Phone*: 0115 9604304 office hours—Mon-Fri 9.00am-2.30pm**

Car Parking is allowed on a Sunday in the Page Kirk / Jarodale House car park along Gregory Boulevard. Disabled parking only on the church forecourt.

A big "thank you" to all contributors this edition. 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 January for the February edition.

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Website: www.mrbc.org.uk