



# Connecting with food - and at Christmas

A weekly community meal at New Mill Baptist Church in Tring helps to alleviate loneliness – and a farm animal event at Christmas has become a community attraction. By Jackie Buie

**A**t New Mill Baptist Church in Tring, our greatest connection on a weekly basis is via our community café which we run on a Thursday. Over the last years the number of regular attenders has grown to around 25, most of whom are not our own church folk. Having a three-course home cooked meal is a great attraction, as well as the fact we don't charge, but only ask for donations: no one needs to feel awkward or excluded.

It's a firm favourite and alleviates, for that day, the feelings of loneliness we know is such an issue for the elderly.

Our greatest attraction to the local community is our petting farm animal event which happens in our graveyard area, on the Sunday afternoon closest to Christmas.

In conjunction with the High Street Baptist Church, we provide a free entrance to the event, where the small children get a donkey ride and dress up in nativity costumes, while enjoying warming hot chocolate. In 2025 we must have had around 200 come over the afternoon, some of whom stayed around for our Carols by Candlelight later in the afternoon.

It was such a buzz, and lots of fun was had by the children.

**The Revd Jackie Buie,  
minister at New Mill  
Baptist Church**

**'We want to show the  
love of Jesus to all'**

New Mill Baptist Church is a group of ordinary people aiming to follow an extraordinary God. We are a friendly, caring church whose aim is to serve and honour God as we lovingly support one another and the community around us. We want to show the love of Jesus to all ages of people and welcome any who choose to visit us, regardless of their background.

As New Mill Baptist Church, we aim to be good news people by seeking to:  
***Glorify God  
Grow in Grace  
Go with Good News***

