



Weekly Prayer Focus: 17th March 2024

Bar Hill Church

Bar Hill Church is an Ecumenical Partnership. Bar Hill village is just west of Cambridge, perhaps best known for its very large Tesco and one road in and out! Bar Hill's first residents arrived in May 1967, with the first baptisms taking place in a builder's hut in November that year. The new inter-denominational congregation moved into the school. As the church grew, they moved into their own building and adapted it, with the current one completed in 1995.

The current congregation numbers around 100 worshipping each week from an increasing number of different nationalities and backgrounds, including Hong Kong, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Nigeria, America, Wales and Poland.

Early last year the Rev Wendy Wale was appointed as the new Minister. She joined the church along with her husband, Tom, and cockapoo Jonah. Wendy's arrival coincided with the local hotel being requisitioned to house asylum seekers and a significant number of them joining the church community. Thanks to a local Christian from the same background, the church offered ongoing Bible study, which resulted in the joyous baptism of eighteen asylum seekers, amongst others!

Other highlights have included a Pet Service, an Advent course, and community and Christmas events. Increasing numbers of families has led to the development of a monthly Café church, as well as family afternoons and a youth group. This remains a development focus for the church.

During the pandemic, the church began a village support group which has evolved into 'The Hub'. At its heart is the 'Coffee Stop', where anyone from the community can gather around cake and drinks, lovingly served by a team of volunteers. Alongside this lively and popular space is a Citizen Advice service, food bank, carers café, support and conversation for asylum seekers, a chance to speak to parish councillors and signposting to wider services.

Other community connections include a Knit and Natter group, which draws up to 50 people weekly for crafts, cake, exercise, reflection, conversation and outings. The Olive Tree bereavement group draws people from beyond Bar Hill. Wendy also visits the school weekly for worship.

Bar Hill are exploring fresh ways to communicate, ensure engagement beyond Sundays, support deepening discipleship and be a visible presence in the village and beyond.

- Please pray for the asylum seekers still arriving and Bar Hill church's relationship with them, and for those who are re-located, to find new churches to welcome and disciple them.
- The multiple building works needed, and for the funding bids.
- The developing vision for welcome, discipleship and outreach.
- That all members of the church are able to exercise their gifts and shape the church's future.
- For leaders who are stepping down, and for developing new leaders.
- For the love of Jesus to be visible and attractive to all who live, work, and shop in Bar Hill.