



**Warwick Methodist Church**

Barrack Street

Warwick

CV34 4TH

Dear Friends

I am writing to inform you of our plan to reorganise the way in which Warwick (Northgate) Methodist Church operates its pastoral care system as well as the way in which we keep members and friends informed of news and happenings in the church's life.

For many years, Northgate has operated the traditional Methodist system of pastoral care. Every church member, and others with connections to the church, has an allocated Pastoral Visitor. The visitor delivers a copy of Northgate News to the person's home each time it is published, and where convenient had a conversation with the person being visited.

Times and needs change, however. Today's society is much more mobile and flexible than the one-size-fits-all system we have operated until now, and the average age of our congregation is rising, including our Pastoral Visitors. We think we should concentrate regular visits on those who most need and value them. We also believe we can make more use of the phone and electronic media to keep in touch.

With this letter is a questionnaire which invites you to say how you would like to receive Northgate News in future, and whether and how often you would like to receive visits or phone calls from the church. **If you are a church member, you will continue to receive an annual visit from your pastoral visitor to give you your membership ticket.** Beyond this, you may opt in or out of visits, and change your preference at any time. If you are housebound, either permanently or during a period of recuperation after illness, there is an option to indicate that you would like to receive Holy Communion at home.

Alongside the visitor system, we are launching a system of Phone Friends. These are people who will phone you at a frequency of your choice to ask how you are and for general conversation. Your phone friend will be someone other than your pastoral visitor, although your visitor may phone as well. Again, you can change your preference for receiving phone calls at any time.

In order for this new system to operate, we need to recruit a few people to deliver Northgate News to those who only want it delivered, and others to act as Phone Friends. The questionnaire therefore invites you to indicate if you are willing to offer in either of these roles, or as a Pastoral Visitor. If you are not already a pastoral visitor, we will take you through the church's Safer Recruitment policy for these roles before you take on the responsibility.

Finally, a word about membership. Membership of the Methodist Church is open to all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and acknowledge the obligation to serve him in the Church and the world. You do not need to be a church member in order to attend worship, or any of the other activities we offer - all are welcome. Membership implies a commitment to support the life of the church through participation in whatever way is appropriate for you.

If you would like to explore the implications of membership more closely, or discuss anything else contained in this letter, please feel free to phone me. We plan to launch the new system of pastoral care and contact in the Spring. In order to facilitate this, **we would be grateful if you could return the questionnaire to the church no later than Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.**

Every blessing,

Rev Barbara Greenwood

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