



## Weekly Prayer Focus: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023

### Bowthorpe Church

This week's Prayer Focus takes us to Bowthorpe, a suburban village west of Norwich, and to Bowthorpe Church.

As a local ecumenical partnership, the church gathers local Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans and the United Reformed Church under one building. The church was planted in the middle of a housing estate which has in recent times has seen over 1,000 new homes being built nearby.

Their vision is "Christ in the Community and the Community in Christ," and this is reflected by the various activities provided throughout the week. These include a friendship cafe to connect lonely people, a toddler group and a Foodbank, which originally began with the church delivering food parcels to the neediest families in the community, but expanded so rapidly that it evolved into a Foodbank in partnership with The Trussell Trust.

Most recently the church has been encouraged by engaging with a local hotel which has been filled with 200 asylum seekers. Six Iranians have begun attending the church, with two baptised last year and an Alpha course now being run in Farsi, with another due to be run in English.

Bowthorpe is led by Revd Mark Elvin, a URC minister, alongside a team of lay leaders. Alongside his regular duties, Mark visits the local primary school every week and leads Walk Through The Bible sessions.

The church also supports Saint Michael's Workshop, which is the sole supplier of Godly Play materials in the UK. The charity has a number of employees and trainees, including adults with learning and/or physical difficulties.

#### Prayer Points

- Join us in giving thanks for the recent replacement of eight Velux windows, following several years of trouble with a leaking roof.
- Pray that the church can develop its gifts for compassion and hospitality by maximising the use of its building and continuing to grow relationships and share the gospel with its community.
- Pray for the asylum seekers at the nearby hotel. That they can have their applications processed quickly and for their safety as they await a decision from the Home Office.
- Please pray for Saint Michael's Workshop which has been hugely impacted by reduced orders due to the cost of living crisis, Brexit etc.