

January 2026

Month of Prayer

Whenever we make space to seek the Lord,
He never wastes a moment.





Spring is Coming!

It might feel a bit early to talk about spring in January, when the days are still short and the air's still cold, but across our nation it is beginning to feel that way spiritually, with signs of new life all over the place. In a spiritual sense, it feels as though winter is over and spring is coming. Seeds that have lain dormant are stirring again. People who have grown weary of a materialistic, self-focused culture are searching for something deeper, something more. And we know that the meaning and truth people are searching for is only found in the person of Jesus. God is at work and so what better way to start 2026 than on our knees in prayer, re-centring ourselves on Him and surrendering our will to His. When we pray, we declare our dependence on God, not ourselves; we invite Him to breathe life into our church, to refresh weary hearts, to bring His light to our city and to transform lives like only He can. As we pray together this month, let's ask for more of what God already seems to be doing, trusting that He is at work and building His Church.



- Ben Topliss
Senior Pastor

If you missed it, I preached on this cultural moment before Christmas. Scan the QR code to listen



What's On | Chances to Pray

Week 1: 4th – 10th

Sunday – Normal Sunday Services, including 8.45am & 6.30pm Prayer Huddles
(Abiding in the Vine series begins)

Monday – Staff Prayer, 9.30am
Prayer & Worship Night, 7.30pm

Tuesday – Contemplative Prayer, 12.30pm

Wednesday – 12 o'clock Service (including 11.30am Prayer Huddle)

Thursday – We've signed up to pray for the '100 Homes' campaign today: for children in care, for the provision of foster carers and for social workers in our city.

Week 2: 11th – 17th

Sunday – Normal Sunday Services, including 8.45am & 6.30pm Prayer Huddles

Monday – Staff Prayer, 9.30am
Prayer & Worship Night, 7.30pm with Wendy Mann (from Equip Ministry)

Tuesday – Contemplative Prayer, 12.30pm
Prayer for the Nations, 8pm - Zoom Meeting ID: 879 2180 1706

Wednesday – 12 o'clock Service (including 11.30am Prayer Huddle)

Thursday – Nottingham City Prayer New Year Gathering, 7.30pm (St Nic's)

Week 3: 18th – 24th

Sunday – Normal Sunday Services, including 8.45am & 6.30pm Prayer Huddles

Monday – Staff Prayer, 9.30am
Prayer & Worship Night, 7.30pm at Grace Enterprises' base
(Unit 27, Wilford Industrial Estate)

Tuesday – Contemplative Prayer, 12.30pm

Wednesday – 12 o'clock Service (including 11.30am Prayer Huddle)

Thursday – YA Teaching & Prayer with Fusion, 7.30pm

Week 4: 25th – 31st

Sunday – Normal Sunday Services, including 8.45am & 6.30pm Prayer Huddles

Monday – Staff Prayer, 9.30am

Tuesday – The Staff teams from Grace Connection Churches are gathering together today to worship, pray and be inspired together. Please pray it's a wonderful and helpful time.

Wednesday – 12 o'clock Service (including 11.30am Prayer Huddle)

Thursday – Intercessory Prayer, 1.30pm
Prayer & Worship Night, 7.30pm with Claire Roberts (from
Queensbury Baptist Church)

Friday – Intercessory Prayer, 7pm

We run a fortnightly prayer briefing email throughout the year. If you'd like to be added to this list just email us at hello@gracechurchnottingham.org



Ten Signs of Life

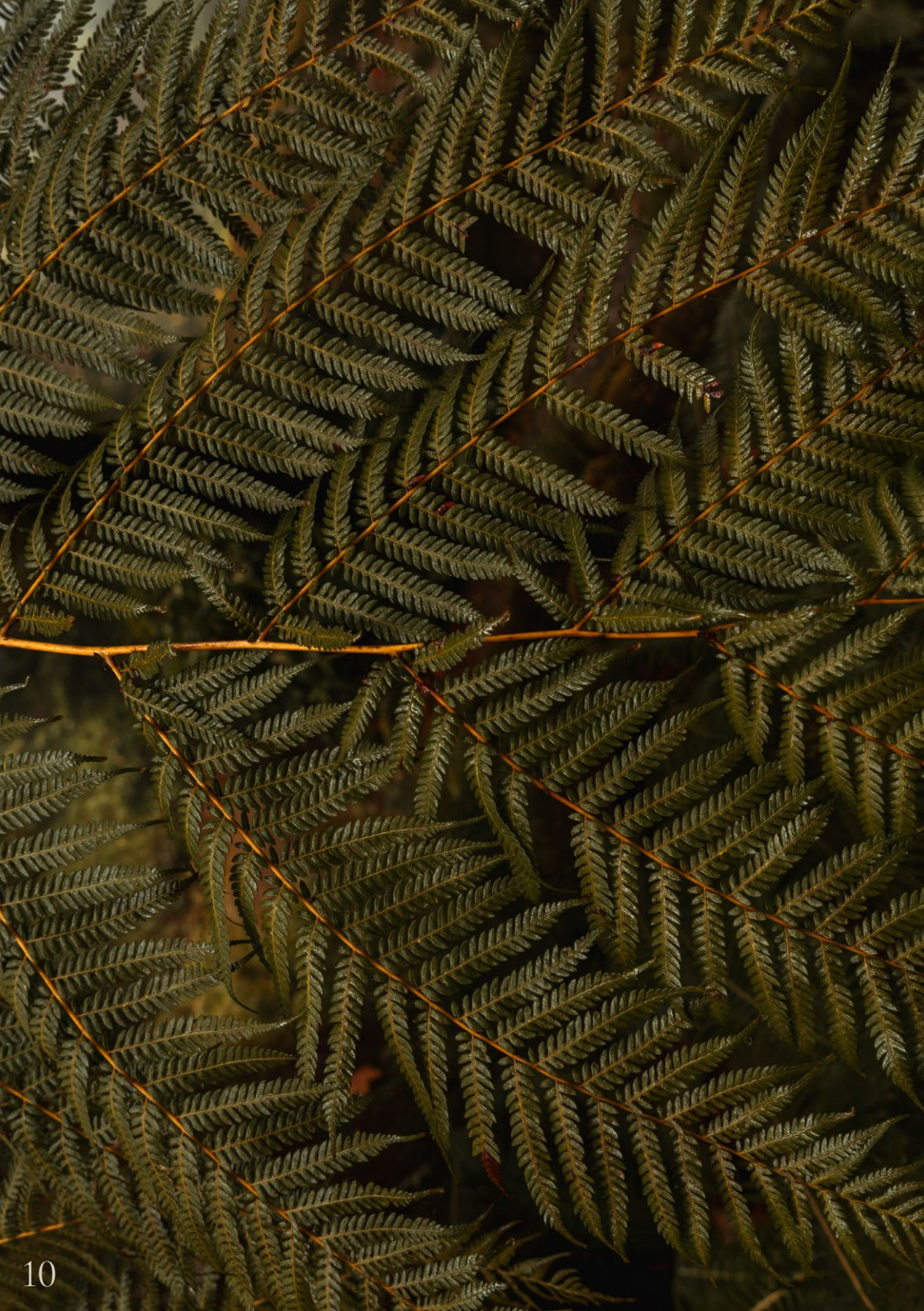
We wanted to give space to pray into ten areas where there seems to be particular opportunity and/or prophetic leading in the life of the church. So we asked someone who leads in each area to give us a glimpse of what's going on and offer suggestions of how to pray.

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Quiet Revival | Gus Bonnington

In August 2025, The Times published an article titled, “Full-fat faith: the young Christian converts filling our churches.” As a lover of both Jesus and good dairy, it immediately caught my eye. Similarly, The Express recently led with “Gen Z Britons are flocking back to our Churches.” Both pieces explored the change in spiritual momentum across our nation.

Signs of this trend are everywhere. The apologist Justin Brierley has remarked on the surprising rebirth of belief in God, even proclaiming the ‘death of New Atheism.’ An unusual number of high-profile figures have publicly declared their faith in Jesus – Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Adam Peaty, Louise Perry – whilst others at the very least seem incredibly sympathetic (Tom Holland, Jordan Peterson, Joe Rogan). This football season, after Declan Rice scored for Arsenal, he celebrated alongside Eberechi Eze – a known Christian – by kneeling and pointing to the sky.

But these aren’t just anecdotes. In March 2025, the Bible Society released data showing that church attendance amongst 18–24-year-olds has quadrupled: 4% in 2018 to 16% today, with young men rising even more sharply (4% to 21%). Bible sales in the UK have almost doubled between 2019 and 2024. And for the fourth consecutive year, the Church of England’s attendance stats, which come out every October, show growth!

We’ve seen some of this ourselves too: increased Sunday attendance, Alpha quickly reaching capacity, newcomers with little church background most Sundays, growing passion for street evangelism, young men with this ‘all in’ attitude, abundant opportunities for one-to-one Bible studies with new believers, even courageous conversions from Muslim backgrounds.

By the time you read this, there will be even more stories from our Christmas services, but one thing is clear: God is moving in our nation. For the first time in my lifetime, the trend is turning towards faith in God. The figures only affirm what we read: the gospel is advancing; the harvest is plentiful. This is not yet a full ‘revival’, but they are often preceded by a prepared and hungry church, seeking transformation through prayer and repentance.

Let's pray for God to:

1. Deepen and increase this trend in our nation.
2. Prepare our hearts for His leading, filled with humility and gospel-readiness.
3. Transform many lives as people come to faith through our witness.



Grace Connection | Ben Topliss

It's a big year for the Grace Connection family of churches! Across our network, we're seeing God at work – building His Church, strengthening relationships, and opening new doors for the gospel. As we make space for more, He is faithfully adding to us. One of the most exciting milestones from last year is the launch of Light Church Leicester, which was the very first time a church was planted from a church plant and not Grace Church! I give thanks to God for the team who stepped out in faith and have moved to be part of that community, including our very own Hannah Hughes and Vicky Maskell. We're praying that this year many will come to know Christ and Light Church Leicester becomes a beacon of hope in the city.

We're also looking forward to Together Weekend 2026, our bi-annual weekend away for all Grace Connection churches. We've moved venues and will be meeting at Uttoxeter Racecourse, a bigger, better, and closer site, making it easier for more people to be part of the weekend. I've no doubt it's going to be an amazing and powerful weekend as we encounter Jesus, connect with one another and celebrate all that God is doing among us.

And that's not all! King's Church Birmingham and Revelation Church Manchester have both just launched their second Sunday services, creating more room for people to encounter Jesus and find community. The River Church has relaunched in a new venue, marking a fresh start and renewed momentum for their mission in Newcastle. It's clear this is a season of growth, grace, and gospel impact and I can't wait to see more!

So please pray for the following:

1. Continued strength and unity across the Grace Connection family.
2. The teams leading new services and church plants. Ask for wisdom, courage, and fruitfulness.
3. God to raise up more leaders and labourers for the harvest.
4. Open hearts in our cities and communities to receive the good news of Jesus.

“I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
– Matthew 16:18 ESV. God is building His Church and I'm so grateful we get to play our part in His beautiful story.





Pledge Days | Chris Barton

Over the last few years we've established what I think is a really healthy rhythm at Grace Church with our annual Pledge Days. If you're not familiar with them, once a year we set aside two weeks and two Sundays to make room for us all to seek God and review what we give to church, with one simple question to frame it all: what's your next step in giving? For some that might be to start giving for the first time, for others it might be a change in the amount because circumstances have changed or you feel led that way – this might be an increase or a decrease in the overall amount. Crucially, it's not about the amount any one person gives but about the posture of our hearts.

The reason why I think they're a good thing is because I know all too well how easy it can be to set something up to give online and then not think about it, when in reality giving our money to Jesus should be a very conscious, sacrificial practice. Or how easy it can be to give money one week but forget to bring money the next and lose any sense of continuity with it.

As we approach these Pledge Days again, I'd love you to pray for two things.

Firstly, please pray that God continues to do a deep work in the hearts of all who call Grace Church home when it comes to generosity. Money can so easily become an idol and distract us from pursuing Jesus, so ask God to realign our hearts, break down idols or strongholds in this area, and grow in us a culture and heart of generosity. I'd love us to be counter-cultural in the whole area of money as a sign to the world that Jesus is worth it all!

Secondly, please pray for God's provision. Back in September we communicated at our Family Meeting that heading into 2025/26 we had a shortfall in our overall giving of roughly £4.5k. That means our current average giving needs an 11% increase to hit the budget for the year. Ask God to come through and provide for us! We of course want to steward what we have, but we also want to live by faith and trust in our ever-faithful God.

Mental Health Support Group | Phil Bryon

Over the past year the Mental Health Support Group has been steadily growing, proving to be a consistent blessing to folk from all four of our Grace Church congregations.

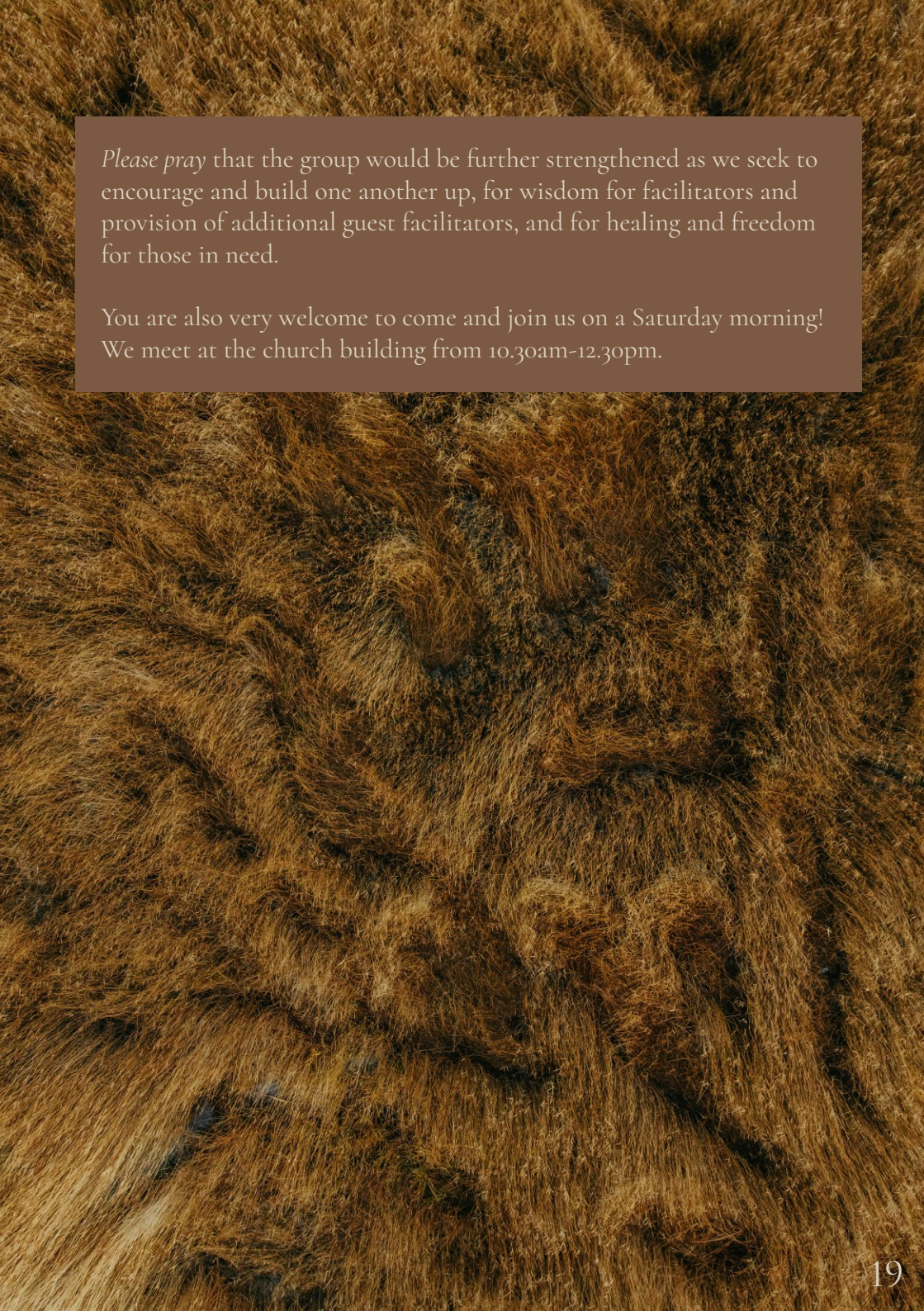
One of the many beautiful things about MHSG is seeing God's glory displayed in the diversity and unity of the group. The group enjoys a safety that comes from shared vulnerability and a rich experience of mutual encouragement and support. We regularly gather people ranging from young adults to senior citizens, and from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, experiencing equally diverse mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, OCD, spiritual affliction, psychosis and low mood.

Our team facilitates the sessions with attentive gentleness and empathy. During 2025 it was remarkable observing how different ones in the group have grown in confidence, sharing the deeper aspects of their stories whilst equally growing in their capacity to listen and care for others in the group. Notably, this has helped some people end their social isolation.

"I feel as a group we really care about each other and really get to know each other. Every time I attend I feel blessed and am thankful for being accepted."
- Attendee

In recent months we have seen the core team double in size, enabling us to go from fortnightly to weekly meetings. This is also enabling us to plan more diverse sessions, incorporating a range of creative and therapeutic sessions, including music, gardening, artistic expression, baking, and occasional outdoor activities. Every time we meet in the church building there are a range of Christian resources available for people to borrow, to encourage people to grow in their faith and understanding.

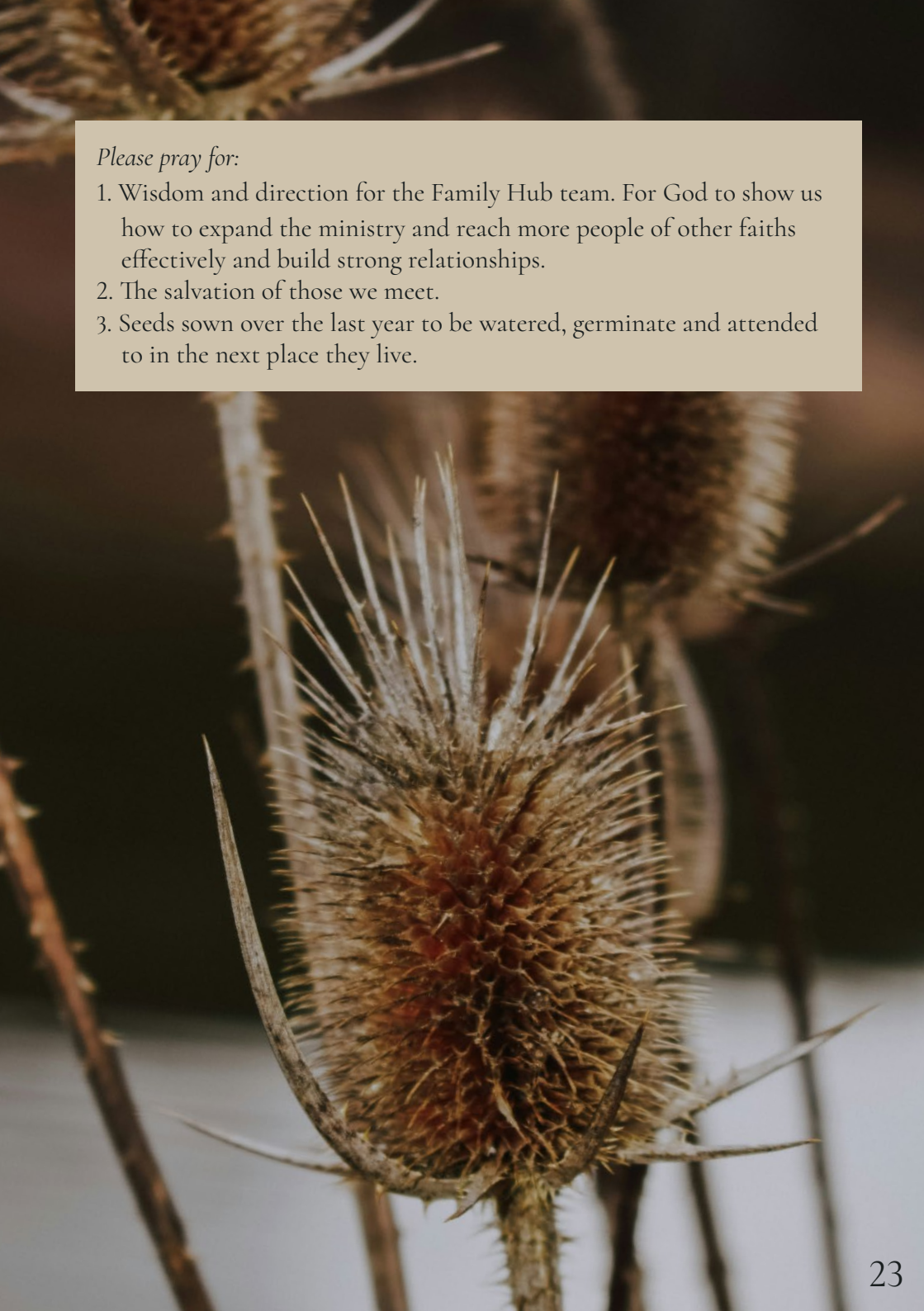
Our priority is building connection and friendship, sharing and carrying one another's burdens. We prioritise unrushed time together, encouraging one another and praying together. It is humbling and powerful being present when someone, from a place of real brokenness, prays for another in the group, and then a week or two later recognises that God has tangibly answered our prayers.



Please pray that the group would be further strengthened as we seek to encourage and build one another up, for wisdom for facilitators and provision of additional guest facilitators, and for healing and freedom for those in need.

You are also very welcome to come and join us on a Saturday morning!
We meet at the church building from 10.30am-12.30pm.



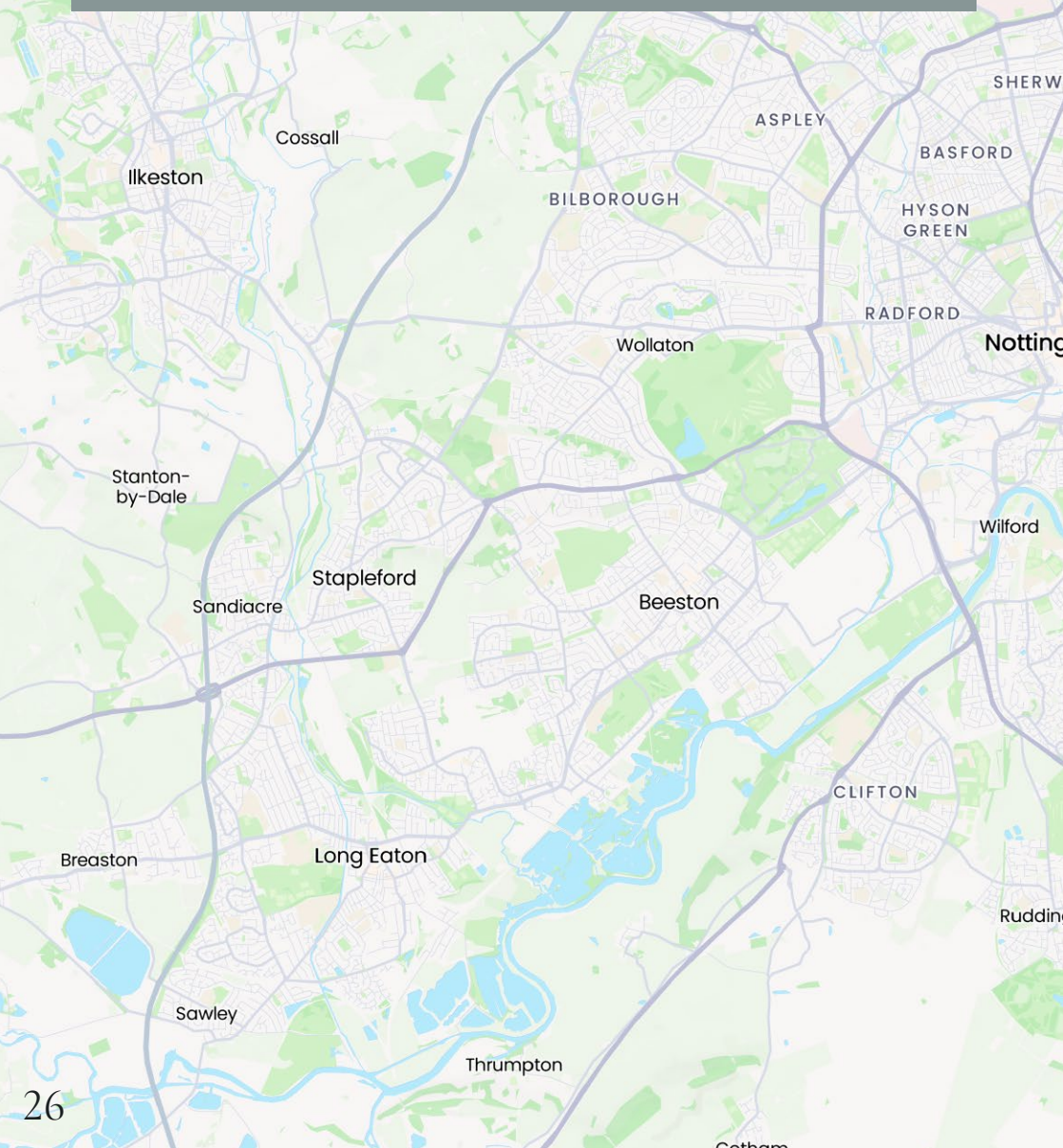


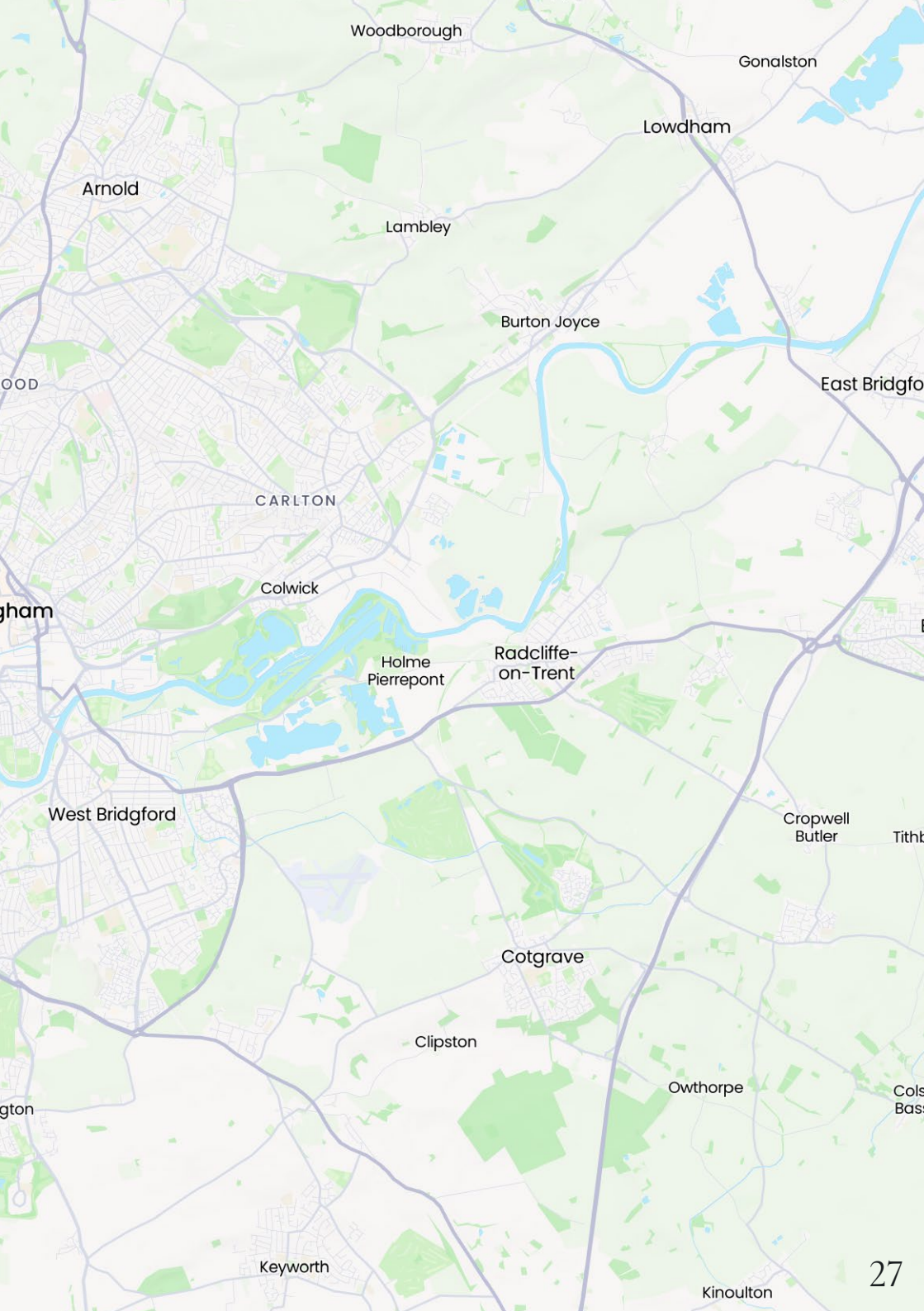
Please pray for:

1. Wisdom and direction for the Family Hub team. For God to show us how to expand the ministry and reach more people of other faiths effectively and build strong relationships.
2. The salvation of those we meet.
3. Seeds sown over the last year to be watered, germinate and attended to in the next place they live.



As well as praying through the Ten Signs of Life outlined in this booklet, we would love to cover our city in prayer over the course of January. Use this map as inspiration for your prayers throughout the month: pray for your area and those nearby; work your way round the city like a clock over the course of January; pray for Home Groups that meet in different parts of the city (find them on our website). Let's pray for God's kingdom to come and His will to be done in Nottingham as it is in heaven.





An aerial photograph of a coastline. On the left, white-capped waves are crashing against a dark, rocky shore. To the right, a dense, vibrant green forest covers a hillside. A large, semi-transparent grey rectangle is superimposed over the center of the image, partially obscuring the ocean and the forest. The word "Reflections" is written in a light-colored serif font in the upper left corner of this rectangle.

Reflections





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Grace Church Nottingham, The Ministry, 1 Castle Boulevard, Nottingham, NG7 1FT

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