



## **A new church is born...**

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2011, Advent Sunday, a service of celebration and commitment was held to mark the signing of a covenant between Birmingham's Methodist Central Mission and Carrs Lane United Reformed Church and a new church was born:

### **The Church at Carrs Lane.** **'united in Jesus, serving the city'**

The day began with a pilgrimage around the city centre, led by Revd Neil Johnson, tracing the history of Methodism in Birmingham. Singing and praying at each of the many significant sites marked an historical journey from Steelhouse Lane, where John Wesley was first welcomed to the city in 1745, to Carrs Lane Church where, since the 1970s, ecumenical cooperation in mission and ministry between URC and Methodist Christians had led to this moment of joining in covenant together.

Fellowship over a roast lunch was followed by worship, a service led jointly by Revd Bill Anderson, Chair of the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church, and Revd Roy Lowes, Moderator of the West Midlands Synod of the URC; Revd John Marsh, Former Moderator of the General Assembly of the URC, was the preacher. 160 people joined the celebration, most of them recording their support by adding their names to the huge covenant document, the formal signing of which marked our joining in partnership together. The story of that partnership and of the naming of the church was told. An act of commissioning of our two ministers, Revd Neil Riches and Revd Neil Johnson, was held and a prayer of dedication invited us all to commit to being 'your church in this place'.

'For this day of new beginnings, thanks be to God...' words written by the late Fred Kaan, much loved former member of Carrs Lane, began our service and the joy of that hymn resonated throughout the afternoon as we marked a significant step in a long and continuing journey together and the beginning of a most exciting future.

The Church at Carrs Lane was legally established with the formal signing of its governing documents, including its Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) Constitution, on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2013.