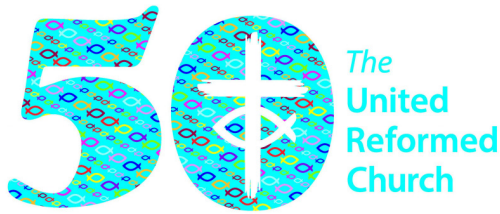


**Part of East Cheshire and Derbyshire  
Borders Missional Partnership  
(United Reformed Church)**



**Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972**

# **THE LINK**

**MAY**



**2026**

**"The East Cheshire and Derbyshire Borders is a Christian Church, living out the love of God by reaching into the heart of each community and responding to its needs"**

## *Dear Friends,*

May is a month where talk of new life feels almost unavoidable. Everywhere we look there are signs of growth, vibrancy and life opening up. And while Easter Sunday may already feel a distant memory, we continue to journey through the season of Eastertide. For much of the month ahead, our bible readings will return us again and again to resurrection. And we are invited to dwell with the mystery at the heart of the gospel, that God brings new life where we had assumed the story was finished.



But the kind of resurrection spoken of in our readings is neither simple nor sentimental. The risen Jesus does not return as though Good Friday never happened. He comes still bearing wounds. For me, this is one of the ways the gospel speaks truth that I can actually believe in. Resurrection is real! Though it is rarely as neat and tidy as we might wish.

Much in life feels like that. Endings and beginnings rarely arrive separately. Gratitude and grief often sit closer together than we might expect. We can be thankful for what has been, whilst saddened by what is passing and at the same time unsure of what lies ahead. And somehow God remains present through it all.

As I write this final 'Dear Friends' I find myself especially aware of that truth. This is a month of change for me and perhaps for others too. I think again about the way God so often meets us way before everything has been resolved and right in the middle of what is unfinished and still uncertain. Proclaiming resurrection does not mean pretending that life is suddenly simple or easy, it means believing that love is stronger than death. And that even a life marked by wounds can be precious, meaningful and blessed by God.

As I think of you this month, I will do so with a deep sense of gratitude and affection. I have witnessed so much kindness, perseverance, good humour and love throughout our churches. I have seen people continue to pray, to care, to serve and to keep going, often under considerable strain. These are things that matter, and I give thanks for them.

And so, as we continue through this season of resurrection, I pray that God will grant grace for all that is changing, peace for what is still unresolved and courage for what lies ahead. And may the risen Christ, still bearing wounds and yet full of life meet us all with gentleness, truth and hope.

*With love in Christ,*

*Jonnie*

## **Finding God in Scripture**

### **HOW TO CONQUER THE FEAR OF FAILING**



*“Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand” Psalm 37 v24 NLT*

Every opportunity in life comes with two things: the possibility of succeeding, and the possibility of failing. When you reach the end of your life, your greatest regrets won't be over your failures, but the opportunities you failed to seize because you were afraid of failing. So here are some principles to help you conquer the fear of failing:

1. Be willing to try and fail at something. And when it happens, tell people. Why? Because that's how you discover failure isn't fatal.
2. Find a project so big that you cannot do it without God's help, then commit to it.
3. Socialise with some impulsive types. Observe how they take risks without dying. Seeing and imitating is a great way to learn.
4. The way we learn to take big steps of faith is by taking small steps of faith. Compliment someone you don't know. Volunteer for an additional task. Go out of your way to help someone in need.
5. Declare war on perfectionism. Instead of waiting until you can do it perfectly, do your best and tell yourself, that's good enough for now.
6. Be afraid, and obey God anyway. You will never totally defeat your fears, but you can diminish them to where they have less control of your life.

Here is a promise for you to stand on: *"The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand"*. Psalm 37 v23-24

*Taken from the UCB Word For Today, written by Bob and Debby Gass. Free copies are available in the UK from United Christian Broadcasters, UCB Operations Centre, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF or at [ucb.co.uk](http://ucb.co.uk). Used with permission.*

## Ridge Methodist Church

Thank you to everyone who came to the 'Afternoon Tea' on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April. £384.00 was raised for Oliver's Dragons' Charity. Brilliant amount.

*From Margaret Bailey (MB)*

### The recorder group

The next meeting will be on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May at 2p.m. at my house.



### CHRISTIAN AID PLANT & CAKE SALE 2026

At Marple Methodist Church, Church Lane SK6 7AW

Saturday 9 May 2026

10.00 am – 12.30



### INVITATION TO GARDENERS AND PLANT GROWERS

It's that time of year again to prepare for the annual Christian Aid Plant Sale. This is a general request to all gardeners and growers. Please can you plan to have some extra bedding plants to sell or find some herbaceous perennials that you can split and pot up for the Plant Sale to support Christian Aid.



*Articles from Members of the Missional Partnership.....  
NB: last date for June is May 24<sup>th</sup>. Would people mind  
sending articles for the Link before this date if possible, as I  
struggle getting it finished for printing. Thanks, Barbara x*

## **Farewell and thank you to Rev'd Jonnie Hill**

A farewell and thank you service will take place at **Marple URC Church** on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 2:30pm** for the Rev'd Jonnie Hill.

Jonnie has worked with East Cheshire and Derbyshire Borders for the past 3 years and is now stepping back from that ministry.

The service will be followed by tea and cake.

Please contact Rev'd Margaret Dexter-Brown for numbers for catering:  
[margaretdexterbrown@icloud.com](mailto:margaretdexterbrown@icloud.com)



12:43

# PASTORATE MEAL AT THE RIDGE METHODIST CHURCH ON SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH

As you will see from the following photos (kindly taken by Colin Hughes) we had a good turn out for the Pastorate Meal organised by Jonnie Hill and Janet Hughes (MB). Thanks to Jonnie for the lovely food (Irish stew and apple crumble) and the Irish-themed quiz.





*Thanks to everyone concerned who helped make this a special afternoon.*

*From Ian Kenna (M)*

## **GOOD NEWS**

UNICEF has signed a long-term agreement with the world's biggest vaccine manufacturer to supply the new R21/Matrix M malaria vaccine through to 2028. Since the turn of this century, 25 countries have attained three consecutive years of zero indigenous cases. Six of those - China, El Salvador, Malaysia, Iran, Belize and Cape Verde have achieved the feat since 2019. It seems likely that Nepal, Bhutan and Saudi Arabia will be joining the list soon.

*Sunday Times Magazine*

*From Linda Lamon-Conneely (MB)*



BBC Songs of Praise will be filming myself and my young musician friend Niall Brett early in May for a new series entitled

'Generations.' We have been busy rehearsing for the show with one of my original tunes that has been adapted with new lyrics to create 'Jesus Shine On'. It is hoped that Short Street URC will be used for the filming and it is not currently known when the episode will be aired.

*From Margaret M Jones (Short Street)*

## ‘Memories’

The shrubs and Spring flowers in my garden are beginning to come into bud and, as they flourish, I am immediately reminded of the many relatives, friends and neighbours who gave me cuttings, plants and shrubs when I first moved into my house, nearly 56 years ago. I am reminded of school friends, college friends, a very special Auntie and my niece, who bought my husband and I a very special bird bath which the blackbirds love and have a great time splashing around happily in the water.



For my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, my son and daughter gave us a magnificent bird table, which is in constant use (as long as I remember to fill it each day) and has pride of place on my lawn.

The pièce de resistance is a very comfortable wooden garden bench, which was presented to me by Mr. Ken Burke from Stockport Education Committee on my retirement after 30 years teaching. It shelters in the garage in the winter and is due to re-appear very soon. Lucky me! Not only is my garden full of beautiful plants, trees, shrubs, happy birds and squirrels, but memories also of some very special times in my life. Thank you also to my gardener who, with God's help, keeps it looking so good!

*From Ian Kenna*

PRAYER FOR MAY ....

## **LOVE WE DARE NOT REFUSE**

Cosmos God,

You have poured yourself into all you have created,  
Thrust out into aeons of time and light years of space  
You have dressed yourself in the colours of earth  
And the shades of sea and sky,  
In poppy seed and mountain peak,  
In rivers' surge and age-old peat.

In wide-eyed youth and wrinkled age,  
You break into our lives,  
Searching for us, to touch us, challenge us, stretch us,  
Waiting for us to watch and listen, move and serve.

In Jesus, man of Nazareth, son of Golgotha,  
You surrendered yourself to cruelty and torture,  
Like innocents in every age,  
You were scorned, defiled, broken,  
And abandoned to death.

And now, our life giver,  
By the power of God,  
You have returned to us,  
With wounded hands  
And a love we dare not refuse.

God in Jesus, we adore you.



*Michael Brueck , URC Prayer Handbook*

## *From Keith Whiting (T&G)*

### **Bits and Pieces**

*From page 18 April Link ...*

*“My interest in the ship is the names of two convicts - Mary WADE and Jane WHITING”*

### **PART 2 .....**

The Lady Juliana arrived in Port Jackson, Sydney, on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1790. The Governor of the colony was not pleased because the ship brought some 250 people, but few supplies to the colony that was close to starvation. Three weeks later the rest of the second Fleet ships arrived Justinian, Surprise, Neptune and Scarborough but one of the Guardians failed to make it. The ships did bring much needed supplies but also many very sick and dying convicts.

Some of the lady convicts had relations with the crew of the Juliana, and five or seven babies were born during the voyage. Others became wives of convicts of the First Fleet that had established the colony in 1788. Over a

hundred of the convicts in August of 1790 were transported to Norfolk Island located 1000 miles east of Sydney. Jane and Mary were included in the transfer.



From a list of convicts, Jane married Thomas Kidney who had sailed with the First Fleet. He had been sentenced to 7 years transportation at Bristol Crown Court for theft. Thomas and Jane were married on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1791, in a mass wedding ceremony on the Island (Jane would have been 16 years). The couple with their two children left Norfolk Island for Port Jackson in October 1805. Thomas moved to Tasmania in 1807. Jane and her daughter followed afterwards but it's not clear if they resumed married life. Jane was granted an absolute pardon on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1810. In 1817 she was assigned a cottage at Collins St. Hobart, capital of Tasmania, by George Clark for services as a Housekeeper. Jane was buried at Saint Davids Cemetery, Hobart on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 1826.

I have researched Mary Wade who had 21 children.... **more next time.**

*From Ruth Miller (Hatherlow and George Lane)*

Craft-a-noon as usual on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in the month from 2.30 - 4p.m.

Tuesday Club on the 4th Tuesday in the month at 2.30p.m. (Tuesday Club are having a talk on 28th April 2.30 p.m. entitled The Art of Comic Monologues)

On Tuesday 26th May at 2.30 p.m. the Tuesday Club will be having a talk describing the work of the charity Reuben's Retreat. All welcome.

Wednesday 6th May - CHRISTIAN AID COFFEE MORNING 10-12 noon. The usual refreshments, plus a couple of stalls and, of course, a raffle. All welcome.

# MARPLE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*wishes in May go to:*

**Delores Newton (7<sup>th</sup>), Rita Newton (10<sup>th</sup>)**

*Services in May - Please note Services start at 10.30am*

**3<sup>rd</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MURC – Rev Jenny Austen**

**10<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE METHODIST –  
Local Arrangement**

**17<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE BRIDGE –  
Rev Jonnie Hill**

**At 2:30pm Final Service for Revd Jonnie Hill at  
Marple URC**

**24<sup>th</sup> Rev Mike Aspinall – AT HOME**

**31<sup>st</sup> WG – AT HOME**

## STRICTLY COME TOGETHER

Wednesday Mornings at Marple URC 10.30am-12.00

**MAY - All are welcome**

- 6<sup>th</sup> 'Scottish Tapestry' (Elayne Mason)
- 13<sup>th</sup> Partial History of Marple Bridge (Stuart Arden)
- 20<sup>th</sup> Marple URC Hand Bell Ringers
- 27<sup>th</sup> Game of Beatele

## STRICTLY COME CRAFT

For children and their families on  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 4pm -6pm -  
at Marple United Reformed  
Church



### – **MARPLE**

£191.24 was collected in March and April, and together with 2 sleeping bags was very well received. The person on Reception and the Manager both thanked us very warmly.

*Ian Kenna (M)*

# MARPLE BRIDGE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*Wishes in May to ....*

**Clive Richardson (5<sup>th</sup>), Helen Brown (9<sup>th</sup>)**

**Sharon Pass (20<sup>th</sup>), Hilary Richardson (22<sup>nd</sup>)**

**Jean Filkins (26<sup>th</sup>), Chris Lomax (27<sup>th</sup>)**

**CONGRATULATIONS...**to Brody and Mark and proud grandparents Martin and Lynne Cruickshank, on the birth of Edie on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 6lb 9oz.



*Services in May*

*Please note Services start at 10.30am*

**3<sup>rd</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MURC – Rev Jenny Austen**

**10<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE METHODIST –  
Local Arrangement**

**17<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE BRIDGE –  
Rev Jonnie Hill**

**2:30pm at Marple URC – a final farewell Service  
for Rev Jonnie Hill.**

**24<sup>th</sup> Rev Margaret Dexter-Brown – AT HOME (followed  
by Church AGM)**

**31<sup>st</sup> Rae Cochrane – AT HOME**

The next Working Party at MB will be on

**Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup> ... All Welcome**



*From Colin and Cath Fox*

### **Latest News from Lend With Care**

Since the last message we have managed to help fund loans to two entrepreneurs from funds collected and repayments from previous loans.

In March we loaned £100 to Randa Qallalwah, who is 40 years old and lives with her family in the north of the West bank, Palestine. She runs an educational centre providing teaching services for children and has managed the centre alone for the past ten years. Before starting her project, she worked as a kindergarten teacher. Randa has requested a loan to expand her centre by adding a new classroom, fully equipping and furnishing it so she can accommodate a larger number of students. Randa hopes that this loan will help her grow her business and enhance the services she provides to children in her community.

In April, we managed to loan a further £75 to Jonathan Alexander who raises free range chickens in Loja, Ecuador. Jonathan lives with his partner and their 4-year-old daughter. He started his microenterprise about 8 years ago when he started to raise chicken and guinea pigs to generate additional income to his work as a construction labourer. With dedication and constant work, he has gradually expanded his production and built a stable source of income for his family. However, the main challenge he faces is the lack of capital, as his savings were used to cover medical expenses for his daughter. Jonathan has applied for a loan to purchase 400 chickens, 20 sacks of ground feed, 20 sacks of balanced feed and to repair the animal coop, allowing him to maintain and expand his poultry production.

We hope you agree that both loans are very worthwhile and we hope they achieve their totals soon. Thank you to all who continue to support Lend with Care with giving their change each week. It is amazing how it mounts up.



## **MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH**

*Services in May- Please note Services start at 10:30am*

- 3<sup>rd</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MURC – Rev Jenny Austen**
- 10<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE METHODIST – Local Arrangement**
- 17<sup>th</sup> JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE BRIDGE – Rev Jonnie Hill**
- JOINT SERVICE AT MARPLE URC at 2:30pm – Final Service for Rev Jonnie Hill**
- 24<sup>th</sup> Judith Laycock**
- 31<sup>st</sup> Keith Tonge**

# PROVIDENCE NEWS & NOTICES

## *Services in May*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Richard Britton**

**10<sup>th</sup> Revd David Jenkins**

**17<sup>th</sup> 10.30am - shared contributions from congregation, and 2.30pm at Marple URC,**

**24<sup>th</sup> Michael Brueck,**

**31<sup>st</sup> Gordon Stewart.**

## **Chatty Cafe at Providence**

All are welcome to drop in to our weekly chatty cafe on Wednesdays from 2pm-4pm. Good company, and home-made cakes on offer!

## **Providence Talk**

Jane Forshaw will be doing at Talk at Providence (for more details please contact Gill Collins\_

**Karen Moore (Rev David Jenkins' daughter) will be joining Gordon Stewart for a Musical Spring Afternoon. All welcome**

**Providence Church**  
*Mellor Road, New Mills, SK22 4DP*

*Music for a  
Spring Afternoon*  
**with**  
**Karen Moore (flute)**  
**and**  
**Gordon Stewart (organ)**  
**Sunday May 3rd**  
**at 3pm**  
**Music by Handel, Bach, Carter,  
Callahan and Johnson**

**a date  
for your  
diary**

*Free admission with retiring collection*

[www.providencechurch.co.uk](http://www.providencechurch.co.uk)

# SHORT STREET NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*wishes in May go to:*

On the 31<sup>st</sup> Zoe Bradshaw will be 30

## *Services in May*

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Rev Mike Aspinall**
- 10<sup>th</sup> At Hazel Grove Methodist Church**
- 17<sup>th</sup> Worship Group**
- 24<sup>th</sup> Barbara Aspinall**
- 31<sup>st</sup> Mrs. B. Cowan**

*Egg Breakfast before Easter Sunday Service*



# TINTWISTLE & GLOSSOP NEWS

## *Services in May*

- 3<sup>rd</sup> John Watkins**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Vince Ryder**  
**17<sup>th</sup> Outdoor Service down Chapel Brow-  
Alan Kendrick**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Lee Fawcett**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Tim Ashworth**

# HATHERLOW & GEORGE LANE NEWS

## *Services in May- 10.45a.m. start*

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Rev Jonnie Hill**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Rev Jonnie Hill**  
**17<sup>th</sup> Elders**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Chris Gordon**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Rev Margaret Dexter-Brown**

Please could you send all items for the JUNE 2026  
edition of the Link to Barbara Northover -  
(email:northoverfamily@gmail.com) .. Thank you .  
**NO LATER THAN SUNDAY MAY 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**(earlier if possible, thank you)**

Please check the Pastorate website for any events, which  
are happening in all churches:  
**[www.ecdbmp.wordpress.com](http://www.ecdbmp.wordpress.com)** and scroll down the  
page. The website is frequently updated

**Part of East Cheshire and Derbyshire  
Borders Missional Partnership  
Web: [www.ecdbmp.wordpress.com](http://www.ecdbmp.wordpress.com)**

**Minister: Rev'd Jonnie Hill 07862 220997  
Email [jonnie.hill@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:jonnie.hill@nwsynod.org.uk)**

**NSM Minister. Rev'd Mike Aspinall 07929 525909  
Email [mike54.ma@gmail.com](mailto:mike54.ma@gmail.com)**

**NSM Minister: Rev'd Margaret Dexter-Brown  
07974 651754  
Email: [margaretdexterbrown@icloud.com](mailto:margaretdexterbrown@icloud.com)**

**Mission Mentor: Liz Delafield 07740 112628  
Email [liz.Delafield@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:liz.Delafield@nwsynod.org.uk)**

**Moderator: Rev'd Clare Downing  
Email [moderator@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:moderator@nwsynod.org.uk)  
Phone: 08000 903 903**

**Part of East Cheshire and Derbyshire Borders  
Missional Partnership -**

**Hatherlow and George Lane**

Otterspool Road, Romiley, Stockport. SK6 3DR

Secretary: Christine Corris:

07929628723.

**Marple**

Hibbert Lane, Marple, Stockport. SK6 7NN

Secretary: Mrs Jill Kenna

01663 810088

**Marple Bridge**

Hollins Lane, Marple Bridge, Stockport. SK6 5BB

Secretary: Mrs Alison Hunter

0161 427 7462

**Providence, New Mills**

Mellor Road, New Mills, High Peak. SK22 4DP

Secretary: Penny Noon

Email: [providenceurc@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:providenceurc@nwsynod.org.uk)

**Tintwistle and Glossop**

Old Road, Tintwistle, Glossop. SK13 1JY

Secretary: Mr Keith Brierley

01457 862032

**Short Street**

Short Street, Hazel Grove SK7 4AD

Secretary. Jo Moores

0161 285 5229

**Heaton Moor United Church**

Stanley Road, Stockport, SK4 4HL

Admin: Sharon Heginbotham, Office Open: Mon, Wed, Fri.

**Edgeley Community Church,**

Edgeley Rd, Edgeley **SK3 9NB**

Contact: [barbara.aspinall@hotmail.com](mailto:barbara.aspinall@hotmail.com)

**The Missional Partnership** also includes **Whaley Bridge (Uniting Church)**. To find out more about each church and its activities, please see the new website (address inside back cover)

.