

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



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

THE LINK



2025

"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,

‘What’s in a name?’ the great Shakespeare once asked. The Bible would probably answer, ‘quite a lot!’ Again and again, we see that names in Scripture carry real meaning. Abram becomes Abraham, Sarai becomes Sarah, Jacob is renamed Israel and Simon is called Peter. A name marks identity, calling and relationship. It shows who we are, and often, who we are becoming.

For the past eight years or so, our Missional Partnership has gone by the name East Cheshire and Derbyshire Borders. It has served its purpose, but I wonder if you’ll agree, it doesn’t really fit. The ‘Derbyshire Borders’ part is true enough with three of our churches located just over the border into Derbyshire; but most of our congregations are within Stockport Borough, which hasn’t been part of Cheshire for more than 50 years. To complicate things further, ‘East Cheshire’ is also the name of a local council area to the south of us. No wonder people can get confused.

Perhaps this is a good moment to pause and ask: what name might better reflect who we are, and what we are called to do? Just as names in the Bible often point to new beginnings, maybe this is a chance for us to listen for the Spirit’s prompting about our shared identity.

So, we are inviting everyone to take part in a fun competition to rename the Missional Partnership. We’d love to hear your ideas. Think of names that tell our story, that capture both our place in the world and our calling as a Christian community. You might be inspired by local history or geography, or by an image from Scripture. Or perhaps something completely fresh will come to mind.

Please send me your suggestions via email to jonnie.hill@nwsynod.org.uk by 31 October. Our November steering group will consider all submissions and choose a winner which we'll publish in the December/January Link. A name matters. It doesn't just label us – it helps us live more fully into the future God is setting before us. So, get your thinking caps on and send me your ideas!

With love in Christ, Jonnie

Finding God in Scripture

UNSELFISH AMBITION



Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.
Philippians 2 v3 NIV

Nadav was just 300 metres away from becoming the youngest Israeli to reach the summit of Mount Everest. Four climbers had died that weekend, and conditions were treacherous. It was all he could do just to keep breathing and walking, breathing and walking, focusing on survival and reaching the top.

Suddenly he halted. Irmak, his new friend, lay unconscious in the ice - without oxygen or gloves. Should Nadav ensure his own survival and record-breaking or attempt to rescue him? While others walked on by, he didn't hesitate. For eight hours he carried him down. Nadav saved a life that day.

What struck me is how hard it must have been for him to give up that long-held dream, risking his own life to save another. Though this example is extreme, I'm thinking about the micro-decisions we face each day between *selfish ambition* (Philippians 2 v3) and looking to the interests of others (v4). By asking God to give us *the same mindset as Christ Jesus* (v5) who *humbled himself even to death on a cross* (v8), we can become more loving in our everyday living.

Nadav acted like Jesus, who made himself nothing in order to save others (v7). Yet however remarkable Nadav's sacrifice was, it was nothing compared to Jesus' sacrifice in becoming human, taking the nature of a servant (v7) and dying for us. How costly Jesus' love is.

Tanya Marlow

What do you think is the difference between selfish ambition and healthy ambition? What micro-decisions do you face in your everyday life between your ambition and valuing others?

Dear Jesus, You washed feet, served others and gave up Your life sacrificially. Please help me to have Your mindset of love for others.

Taken from Our Daily Bread publication. odb.org / 0153 956 41 49



Coffee and Cake, Conversation, Games and Jigsaws - every Wednesday during school term time, 10am-12noon at St. Martin's Church Hall, Brabyns Brow, Marple Bridge.

Saturday 11th October

Annual Sponsored Walk for the Wellspring. Meet at 9.45am at the Holy Spirit Church, Leigh Ave., Marple. Leave at 10am. The walk will be about 8 miles, after visiting all the Churches in Churches Together. If you want to come for part of the walk you will be very welcome. Sponsor forms and more

details are available from: Marian Thompson (phone 0161 427 7254 or email: marian37et@gmail.com).

Heritage afternoon at St. Martin's Church - talk about John Rylands Library

A date for your diary

'SING OUT' at the Ridge Methodist Church on Thursday November 6th 7:00-8:00 pm - Everyone welcome.

Articles from Members of the Missional Partnership.....

NB: last date for November articles is Sunday October 19th

GREAT CELEBRATIONS!!



Margaret Dexter-Brown will celebrate her ordination and induction on Sunday 5th October at 2:30pm at Hatherlow and George Lane. All welcome!

(Could churches let Linda Davidson have numbers attending, please, to help with catering).

***From Liz Delafield* (Mission and Discipleship Mentor
East Cheshire and Derbyshire Borders Steering group
convenor, liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk
tel. **07740 112 628**)**

About the Church Life Review

Some of you may have heard about the Church Life Review. The Missional Partnership steering group heard a report about this from Tim Hopley, the Synod Clerk and Elizabeth Hall, Chair of the Ministries.

There is lots of information about this on the URC website.
<https://urc.org.uk/church-life-review-group/> including a short film.

The vision of the Church Life review is, “A flourishing church, less burdened and better enabled.”

The review group have been exploring ways that churches can be relieved of administrative and other burdens, to enable us to focus more on our mission as disciples of Jesus. This includes plans for a resource hub with all the admin requirements that churches may need in one place.



They have also been exploring ways to support churches and partnerships with employment. There will be a special General Assembly in November to take forward some proposals.



There is also a strand looking at how new communities of worship, mission and discipleship could be nurtured

If you want to know, more check out the website, or speak to your steering group rep, minister or Mission Mentor.

Worship Leaders Gathering: Worshipping through Winter.

Saturday 1st November 2025 10am-1:30pm Hazel Grove URC Short Street SK7 4AD (TBC)

- For all who lead worship in URC churches or ecumenical partnerships.
- We will finish with lunch together. Please bring your own lunch. Coffee/tea and Christmas themed treats provided.
- A chance to connect and share ideas and resources for Advent, Christmas and January. Please bring any resources that you find helpful.

Contact Liz Delafield liz.delafield@nwsynod.org.uk or Alicia Jones southlpadvocate@nwsynod.org.uk to let us know you are coming.

From Ian Kenna (M)

A prayer of joy

What a wonder you are working, God of all the glorious things!
You give the delightful possibilities of time, when time is spent well
In the ways that bring me joy: the hot drink and a good
book, favourite music, fresh air and a gentle breeze beneath the
sun, a conversation, friendship, love.

You give the gifts each day can carry, when I let myself slow down
enough to notice them with joy: the formation of clouds and the
sunlight's shine, the petals on the stem and the leaf's lustre, the
water from the tap and the street's surprise.

With you, joy is lurking, lingering, longing to be found.
What a wonder you are working.

Neil Thorogood, URC Prayer Handbook

From Margaret M. Jones (Short Street)

Many years ago, when I was teaching a reception class in
Brinnington, I taught a lively little boy, called Richard, who, around
20 years later contacted me on-line on 'Friends Reunited'. He told
me that he had seen my name and remembered me conducting the
choir and also his being chosen, whilst in reception class, to be an
elf in the Harvest play. He even remembered the name of the
poem which he had learnt and recited whilst sitting on a bright red
cardboard mushroom! I found the poem in one of my poetry books
and here it is.

It is called 'Red in Autumn' by Elizabeth Gould.

Tipperty-Toes, the smallest elf, sat on a mushroom by himself,
playing a little tinkling tune, under the big round Harvest moon.
And this is the song that Tipperty made, to sing to the little
tune he played.

"Red are the hips, red are the haws, red and gold are the
leaves that fall.

Red are the poppies in the corn, red berries on the rowan tall.
Red is the big, round Harvest moon, and red are my new little
dancing shoon"

From Keith Whiting (T&G)

BITS AND PIECES

It is still harvest time, so not out of place to think about the glorious sights that are in our gardens and the views across the hills and valleys and be thankful for the privilege we have living in this part of the country. In the last edition of the Link I commented on the popular painting by John Constable the "Hay Wain", John's masterpiece depicted the idealistic rural scene of the English countryside; it was a picture that was already changing. He painted what was true twenty years ago and John painted it from his comfortable home in London.

I am reminded of another artist who came from a different way of life - Vincent van Gogh - who spent much of his adult life moving from place to place, never finding peace or contentment with either friends, family or the environment. In 1873 he was in London doing jobs of a various nature. Vincent's father was a Pastor in the Dutch Church and Vincent was well versed in the Christian Faith. He was a Lay Preacher, worked and saw the poverty of 19th century London. He left, went to Paris, then on to

Arles in the South of France in 1888 to a house that was painted yellow (it still is) where he found some peace with his friend Paul Gauguin but it didn't last. It was at this time that he painted the now famous series of pictures of Sunflowers. For Vincent sunflowers represented happiness. Remembering his early years in Holland and Dutch literature, the sunflower was the symbol of devotion and loyalty. In 1890 he suffered from a new bout of depression and he checked into a sanatorium. He continued to paint; maybe some of his best work being landscapes at various times of the day.



Vincent ended his life on 27th July 1890. He was only 37 years old. Throughout his troubled life, Vincent received support from his devoted younger brother Theo van Gogh, who sadly died of a stroke six months after Vincent. I think there are eight of van Gogh's paintings in the National Gallery, London.

Our thanks for all that nature provides and our thanks to those who record it, Keith

From Revd. Elizabeth Sheppard (Short Street)

Growing atheism or growing humanity?

Footsore, lost and anxious that I would miss the coach home, I was very happy when a voice from a passing car said, "Need any help?" The young man and his girlfriend couldn't have been nicer, helping me in, then driving round all the blocked off roads at breakneck speed seeking the coach. Every time we met a road block he said, "O sh*t sh*t, sh*t, or "O b*gg*r, b*gg*r, b*gg*r." It was so naturally and unconsciously said and I thanked him for his kindness and



asked him if he had once been a Christian. He replied "Oh no, I haven't the time for that lot - The Mormons!"

Conversation was out, driving at that speed! Finally he stopped, helped me down and on foot in the wrong way of the traffic, I got back to my coach! I asked him for his address so that I could thank him, but he just settled for a hug. I told him he was my Good Samaritan and asked him to look it up sometime! I might have added, "Whoever does the will of my Father in Heaven is my brother, sister and mother."

From Ian Kenna (M)

GOOD NEWS

The number of people who die from breast cancer within a few years of diagnosis has fallen by two thirds since the 1990s. More than 90% of women in England who are diagnosed with early stage breast cancer now survive for five years or more, thanks to more targeted anti-cancer drugs and radiotherapy and a new hormonal therapies.

Sunday Times Magazine

From Ruth Miller (Hatherlow and George Lane)

CRAFT-A-NOON 1.30 - 4 p.m. and then each first and third Tuesday in the month. All welcome.

TUESDAY CLUB each fourth Tuesday in the month. Everyone welcome.

COFFEE MORNING is ongoing from 10 - 12 each Wednesday. Tea. Coffee, Toast and Toasted Tea Cakes (at very reasonable prices!) and a smile and a chat!

MARPLE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

wishes in October go to:

Jamie McLean (9th)

Services in October

Please note Services start at 10:30am

- 5th Joint with Marple URC – (Communion)**
- 12th Joint with Marple Methodist Church –**
- 19th Joint with Marple Bridge URC –**
Raymond Cochrane
- 26th Worship Group**



MARPLE

Our total collection for July, August and September was the fantastic amount of £287.40, and the Wellspring staff were thrilled to receive this, along with two bags of warm clothing and a bag of toiletries. *Ian Kenna (M)*

From Sue Ardern

Marple URC Handbells team are seeking NEW members to join the group. Practise evenings are: Tuesdays from 7pm-9p.m at Marple URC in Hibbert Lane.

We are a friendly HRGB-affiliated (Handbells of Great Britain) team, doing some mini-concerts and joining up with other teams, occasionally. No previous hand-bell ringing experience needed



Please support our **Coffee Morning & Handbells informal Concert, at Marple URC on Saturday, 4th October at 10.30am-12.00.** Donations requested for Francis House Hospice, Didsbury. The Hospice needs £5 million pounds in charitable donations each

year to continue to provide specialist palliative care provision, caring for children with a wide variety of life-limiting and life-threatening conditions.

STRICTLY COME TOGETHER

Wednesday Mornings at Marple URC 10.30am-12.00

OCTOBER - All are welcome

- 1st Helping with Shoe boxes/Chatting
- 8th Your choice of Music
- 15th 'Close Encounters of the Animal Kind'
(David Gordon)
- 22nd Game of Beatle
- 29th 'Chair Exercises' (Jill Kenna)



STRICTLY COME CRAFT

Saturday 25th October 4pm-6pm

For children and their families

At Marple United Reformed Church

MARPLE BRIDGE NEWS & NOTICES



wishes in October go to –

Tim Brown (10th), Paul Frampton (10th)
Phil Bellamy (19th), Penny Abraham (22nd)
Martin Cruickshank (29th)

CONGRATULATIONS to Helen and Joe Dodgson on the birth of a beautiful daughter, Emmeline 'Emmy' Jean, on Friday 12th September. Also congratulations to grandparents Tim and Cath Brown, and great-grandmother Jean Filkins.



Services in October

Please note Services start at 10:30am

- 5th Joint with Marple URC – (Communion)**
- 12th Joint with Marple Methodist Church –**
- 19th Joint with Marple Bridge URC –**
Raymond Cochrane
- 26th Frank Dean**

The next Working Party at MB will be on

Saturday 11th October

All Welcome



As we have seen some beautiful rainbows recently, I thought I would put Trevor Jones' poem in about our Rainbow Window:

THE RAINBOW WINDOW

Trevor Jones

Our church has a rainbow, made of stained glass it's true,
And the walls seem to sparkle with colour, when the bright
morning sunshine pours through.

But when there's no sunshine beyond it, it's quite dull, and is
hardly seen, and the wall is a pale shade of beige - no dancing
colours between.

Perhaps we are all stained glass windows -
well stained without any doubt - and
pretty dull and lifeless when our God's
light is shut out. But if we let His love
pass through us, what glory there is to
behold, and the world becomes a more
wonderful place, more colour, more joy
and less cold!



And when the skies outside are dark, comes the glory that
blazes from Him, and the world is far more beautiful as His
love shines out from within.

MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

Services in October

Please note Services start at 10:30am

- 5th Joint with Marple URC**
- 12th Joint with Marple Methodist Church –
Revd. Jonnie Hill (Communion)**
- 19th Joint with Marple Bridge URC –
Raymond Cochrane**
- 26th Ian Coverdale/Sue Wheeldon**

PROVIDENCE NEWS & NOTICES

Services in October

- 5th tbc**
- 12th Alison Pope,**
- 19th Revd Jonnie Hill**
- 26th Michael Brueck.**

SHORT STREET NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

wishes in October go to:

Andrew Tymn celebrates his 70th birthday on the 5th and Maureen Pownall celebrates her 90th birthday on the 20th October. Congratulations to you both. 13th Joyce Embrey, 27th Isla Ijima

Services in October

- 5th Rev. Jonnie Hill (Harvest) - Communion**
- 12th Service at Hazel Grove Methodist Church**
- 19th Choir Sunday**
- 26th Worship Group**

Chatty Cafe....

We are restarting Chatty Cafe. Every Wednesday from 15th October: 10am until 12 noon.

EVERYONE welcome.

Pastimes

Unfortunately due to circumstances we will no longer be having Pastimes each month. We will get together in November to start preparations for our Christmas fair and meet up at times for a meal. Thanks to all who have attended and helped during our 12 years.

TINTWISTLE & GLOSSOP NEWS

Services in October

- 5th Keith Whiting (Harvest)**
- 12th Lee Fawcett**
- 19th Henry Drabble**
- 26th Rev Mike Aspinall**

HATHERLOW & GEORGE LANE NEWS

Services in October

- 5th Revd Mike Aspinall**
- 12th Margaret Dexter-Brown**
- 19th Margaret Dexter-Brown**
- 26th Rod Wallace**

**CLOCKS GO BACK ON
SUNDAY OCTOBER 26th**



**Please could you send all items for the November 2025
edition of the Link to Barbara Northover –**

(email: northoverfamily@gmail.com)

NO LATER THAN SUNDAY 19th OCTOBER



**Please check the Pastorate website for any events, which
are happening in all churches:**

**www.ecdbmp.wordpress.com and scroll down the
page. The website is frequently updated!**

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

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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).