

**Stockport and High Peak Missional Partnership
(United Reformed Church)**



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

THE LINK



OCTOBER 2026

"The Stockport and High Peak Missional Partnership 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,

Welcome to October: A season of gathering and giving.

It's that time of year when the light turns golden, the air turns crisp, and we finally remember where we put our jumpers and heavier coats.

It's also a month that invites us to pause and think about what it really means to be a community.

In our part of the world, community doesn't look like a perfect, uniform block. It looks more like a jigsaw puzzle where we are still trying to find the pieces that belong to the border. And most of our churches are in the thick of one of our favourite ways to put those pieces together: our Harvest Festivals.

For us, Harvest is about more than just the display of vegetables and the collection for food banks. It is a celebration of our shared life. It is a chance to step outside of our daily routines and say 'I am part of this community, and I care about its wellbeing.

Being a community is about the "little" things that hold us together, and Harvest brings them all to the surface:

The Welcome: The genuine smile that says, "I'm glad you're here," whether you've been coming for fifty years or five minutes.

The Shared Load: The way we rally around families when things are tough, whether that's with a meal, a cup of tea, or just a quiet presence.

The Joy: The laughter that fills the hall after a service, the shared excitement of a new project, and the music that lifts us up.

We are a community of diverse voices and backgrounds. We have the young families bringing new energy, the retirees who hold the memory of our history, and everyone in between. And that diversity makes us resilient. It means that when one of us is struggling, there is likely to be someone else who can offer a different kind of support, a different perspective, or a different kind of prayer.

In a world that feels fragmented our local community is a place of connection. It is a place where we can practice radical 'love in action' - not just the ones who are easy to love, but the ones who are different, possibly difficult, or new.

As we walk together into October, let us make a commitment to be communities that are known for their kindness.

May your October be filled with warmth, conversations, connection and the absolute joy of belonging.

Blessings.

Margaret



Finding God in Scripture



HOW TO KNOW YOU'RE BLESSED

*May I never forget the good things he does for me.
Psalm 103 v2 NLT*

It's the bad days that help us to appreciate the good days. Without them, we'd have no comparison point. David was talking to himself one day, and he recorded his thoughts for us: *May I never forget the good things he does for me.* Here are 6 good things worth thinking about:

1. If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million people who will not survive this week.
2. If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are better off than 500 million people in the world.
3. If you can attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than 3 billion people in the world.
4. If you have food in the fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the world.
5. If you have money in the bank or in your wallet, or spare change in a dish somewhere, you rank among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.
6. If you can read this devotion, you are more blessed than over 2 billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

There is always someone who is worse off. That doesn't mean you revel in other people's misery. But it ought to heighten your Christ-like compassion and give you a sense of gratitude that spills over into thanksgiving each day.

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. Used with permission.



The afternoon tea on Saturday 19th September at the Ridge Methodist Church raised the magnificent sum of £305 for Action for Children. Thanks to everyone who supported this.

The Wellspring Walk this year will be on Saturday 10th October, starting at 10am at Holy Spirit Church, Marple.

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

NB: last date for the November Link is Saturday 24th October

From Margaret Bailey (MB)

The recorder group

The next meetings will be on Thursday 15th October at 2p.m. at my house.



From Alan Davidson (Hatherlow & George Lane URC)

PAM WARD

We were all so saddened to hear of the death of Pam Ward who passed away after a short period of illness, on 25th July, aged 88. Pam had preached at our church over many years. Her warm and friendly personality shone through her services which usually included personal stories, plenty of activities for all ages to perform throughout the service, home-made cakes which she would bring and always concluding with a poignant biblical message. Some of our members attended her memorial service on 24th August, which was a fitting tribute to this lovely lady who had lived all of her adult life serving God and bringing happiness to those she encountered. She will be sadly missed and our thoughts and prayers are with her family, many of which paid tributes through music at the service.

From Ian Kenna (M)

GOOD NEWS

Globally there are 50 million more girls in school today than there were in 2015. Completion rates for females have increased from 86% to 89% in primary school and from 54% to 61% in high school, according to UNESCO.

Almost all children in Western and Central Africa attend primary school, with enrolment rising from 50% in the 1990s to nearly 90% today, the World Bank reports.

Enrolment in high school is increasing too, more than doubling in the past decade to 55%. In the Punjab, home to over half of Pakistan's population, school enrolments have doubled from 13 million to 26 million since 1998.

Sunday Times Magazine

From Ian Kenna (Marple)

TOUCHING GOD

Out of reach.

God, that's how you feel
when I've wronged someone I love
and they are angry,
or when someone wrongs me
and I am angry.

Move me closer.
turn my feet away
from the self-righteous path.
Point them toward you.
Clear my head of fears
and unreasonable repetitive
reflections.

Make room for your spirit
to invade my thoughts,
To alight on my heart.
God, I'm facing you,
approaching you,
reaching out to touch you.
Thank you for holding me tight
even when I don't feel you.
Thank you for filling me
with the peace of your touch.



Anna Gobledale, URC Prayer Handbook

From Sue Ardern (Marple)

Have you heard about Marple URC Handbells lately?

The team have been practising keenly through the summer heat on Tuesday evenings, (with a drink break - because it was hot work!) and recently played a varied set of tunes at the local Stroke Association meeting at the Torkington Centre (see photo). The audience had a bit of fun joining in too! Kinder Ringers members kindly filled our ringer gaps on that occasion, which is possible through the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain network.



Our next HRGB event will be the 60th Anniversary Rally hosted by Norbury Handbell Ringers, in October. **Then on Saturday 14th November, 10am - 12 we're hoping to have a fundraising 'Coffee & Concert', for Wellspring. Do join us if you can.**

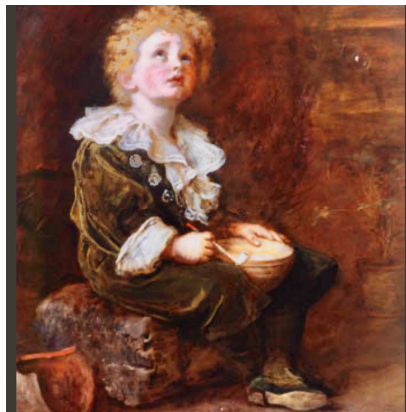
On Wednesday December 2nd Festive tunes will likely be included at Strictly Come Together at Marple URC, 11a.m. – another occasion for audience participation!

New ringers are welcome to come to our practices on Tuesday evenings, 7–9 pm. at Marple URC. The first evening will be free! **Please contact Sue Ardern, or any member of the team, if you'd like to join us.**

Bits and Pieces

Another thought on last month

Millais painted his 5-year old grandson, a young golden-haired boy, looking up at a bubble symbolising the beauty and fragility of life. On one side of him is a young plant growing in a pot, emblematic of life, and on the other side is a fallen broken pot, emblematic of death. The boy is spot-lit against a gloomy background. A & F Pears purchased the painting and Millais' permission was sought in order to alter the picture by the addition of a bar of Pears Soap so it could be used for the purposes of advertising. At the time Millais was one of the most popular artists in Britain and he was initially concerned that his work and his grandson would be subject to commercial exploitation. However, he grew to appreciate the idea which portrayed the soap as if the child had used it to make the bubbles.



The painting is a long way from Ophelia (35 years). So, is the Victorian understanding of the Masterpiece what we want to accept or is it just an advert of how good Pears soap is to make bubbles? The painting is at the Lady Lever Art Gallery Port Sunlight. The artists are still debating the rights and wrongs of using art in this way,

FAIR TRADE COFFEE MORNING
SATURDAY 17th OCTOBER 2026 10am-12 noon
at MARPLE URC



Please come and support Fair Trade whilst drinking coffee and tea and eating cake! Treat yourself to some fairly-traded goods from our stall and relax and chat.
ALL ARE WELCOME, BRING YOUR FRIENDS.

From Phil Taylor (Hatherlow & George Lane)

The Vernon Building Society (Poynton)
Band are putting on a Christmas Concert
at Hatherlow & George Lane United
Reformed Church Otterspool Road
Romiley (next to the Spread Eagle Pub)
on **Saturday 5th December at 2pm**



Tickets are £10 each and include refreshments. There will also be a raffle and all proceeds are for Church Funds Tickets can be purchased from Phil on 0161 989 9993 or Linda Davidson at Hatherlow Church.

From Margaret M Jones (Short St)

‘HELPING OTHERS’

When I was 24 years old, in 1963, my friend and I decided that we would like to become blood donors. So, one evening we found the necessary venue, which in those days was in the old Stockport Infirmary, and signed up as blood donors. My friend, Kate, had no trouble in giving her donation but it took me much longer and I had to spend an extra 10 minutes lying on the bed and opening and closing my hand to help the blood to flow. Eventually I was allowed to sit up slowly and have my cup of tea. However, I persisted and was able to donate 15 pints over the years before high blood pressure put an end to my efforts.

However, my husband, who was already a donor when I met him, in 1967, persisted with great determination and was able to donate more than 50 pints before he died in 2005. We used to go to give our blood donations together, and on one of our visits we were given information about Dr. Charles Drew, who was an African-American physician and surgeon, born in 1904. He was a clever medical researcher and made the important discovery of how to efficiently store large quantities of blood plasma in blood banks for future use. Sadly he was only 46 when he died, but in his short life he had achieved so much for the benefit of mankind. Every day throughout the year, many lives are saved due to the direct result of his pioneering research.

I sometimes think of *my* first trip to Stockport Infirmary in 1963 and would like to believe that the efforts of my friend, my husband and myself have contributed in a very small way to benefit mankind.

*From Barbara Northover
(MB)*

A friend of mine went to see the Well Dressings in Eyam recently and sent me this lovely picture -



Marple Churches Timetable October-December 2026

October	4th	11th	18th	25th	
	Marple Methodist	Marple Bridge URC	Marple URC	Marple Methodist	

November	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	
	Marple Bridge URC	Marple URC	Marple Methodist	Marple Bridge URC	Marple URC	

December	6th	13th	20th	27th			
	Marple Methodist	Marple Bridge URC	Marple URC	Marple Methodist			

MARPLE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

wishes in October go to:

Jamie McLean (9th)

Services in October- Please note Services start at 10.30am

4th Rev Jane Tate (Communion)

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

11th Rev Jude Laycock

JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC

18th Rev David Jenkins

JOINT AT MARPLE URC

25th Frank Dean

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

STRICTLY COME TOGETHER

Wednesday Mornings at Marple URC 10.30am-12.00

- All are welcome

OCTOBER

7th 'Chair Exercises' (Jill Kenna)

14th 'Memories' (Jenny Austen)

21st 'Travels' (David Gordon)

28th 'Call My Bluff'

STRICTLY COME CRAFT



For children and their families on
Saturday 24th October from 4-6pm at
Marple URC

MARPLE BRIDGE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Wishes in October to

Tim Brown (10th), Paul Frampton (10th)

Phil Bellamy (19th), Martin Cruickshank (29th)

Services in October- Please note Services start at 10.30am

4th Rev Jane Tate (Communion)

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

11th Rev Jude Laycock

JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC

18th Rev David Jenkins

JOINT AT MARPLE URC

25th Frank Dean

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

BOOK SWAP ...

There is a box at the back of Marple Bridge Church containing people's favourite books. Please help yourselves - donations please to Lend with Care. When you have finished reading the book please return it to the box. Thank you

Saturday October 10th... 10-12 noon All Welcome



MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

Services in October- Please note Services start at 10.30am

4th Rev Jane Tate (Communion)

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

11th Rev Jude Laycock

JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC

18th Rev David Jenkins

JOINT AT MARPLE URC

25th Frank Dean

JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

PROVIDENCE NEWS & NOTICES

Services in October....

4th Harvest Festival with shared contributions,

11th Revd Peter Sharp

18th Dr Richard Britton

25th Quiet Service.

From Gill Collins

Tombola

We had an amazing display of tombola prizes on our stall at 'Made in New Mills' at Providence during Festival fortnight.

Everyone had been so busy knitting etc to fill the stall.

The event was very well supported and £270 was raised for church funds. Even if you didn't pull out a winning ticket, you went home with a free mouse! Not all the prizes were won, so the remaining gloves and hats have gone to Wellspring and the toys were given to Sheila who makes up gift boxes for children in Ukraine.

Thank you Sheena and to all the knitters for making this a special event.

Evening Talks at Providence

Wednesday 14th October 7.30pm,

Evening Talk by Joan Potts -

The Wild Life of the Sett Valley and the Watford Lodges.

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!

SHORT STREET NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

wishes in October go to:

Andrew Tymn (5th), Joyce Embrey (13th)

Maureen Pownall (20th), Isla Ijema (27th)

Services at Short St in October at 10.30am

4th Mr Frank Dean. - Harvest

11th Service at Hazel Grove Methodist Church

18th Choir Sunday

25th Rev Mike Aspinall (Communion)

TINTWISTLE & GLOSSOP NEWS

Services in October

4th Harvest – Stephen Howcroft (Communion – Allan Lochhead)

11th Kevin McCann

18th Joyce Blundell

25th Keith Whiting

HATHERLOW & GEORGE LANE NEWS

Services in October 10.45a.m. start

4th Revd Margaret Dexter-Brown

11th Revd Margaret Dexter-Brown (Communion)

18th Rod Wallace

25th Revd Margaret Dexter-Brown

*And finally Remember
clocks go back an hour on
October 25th at 2am*

I got fired from the clock
factory - I thought putting in
extra hours was a good thing!



Please could you send all items for the NOVEMBER 2026 edition of the Link to Barbara Northover - (email:northoverfamily@gmail.com) .. Thank you .

**NO LATER THAN SATURDAY 24th OCTOBER
(earlier if possible, thank you)**



**Please check the Pastorate website for any events, which are happening in all churches:
www.shpurc.wordpress.com and scroll down the page. The website is frequently updated**

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Secretary. Jo Moores 0161 285 5229

Heaton Moor United Church

Stanley Road, Stockport, SK4 4HL

Admin: Sharon Heginbotham, 0161 431 0262

Office Open: Mon, Wed, Fri.

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