

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



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

THE LINK



**SEPTEMBER
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,

As I write this we are still enjoying a hot sunny time, but I realise lots of folk work, but at least for children and young people (and teachers!) a break from school work or education – and it's not raining! (yet!)

When you read this it will be starting September. A time of year when things start afresh, new schools, new classrooms, possibly starting college or university, even starting a new job. We often think of the new year as a time of fresh starts but for so many so is September. Because we think of a specific time of year as offering us a “fresh start” we forget that God offers us a fresh start every day of our lives.

Life throws at us all sorts of changes, some with complications, some can be smooth transits. We might be thinking about what we can do in church to break the old habits and ways of doing things, how can re-invigorate ourselves and our communities. In the Bible we can see various stories of folk who faced difficulties but made fresh starts – Noah after the flood, Jacob fleeing Esau's wrath, Moses in Egypt, Job arguing with God, Ruth meeting Boaz, Saul on the road to Damascus, Samaritan woman at the well – and I'm sure you can think of others.

All these stories have one common factor and that is God giving all a way through to a new life, a fresh start, regardless of their difficulties and in some instances their loss of faith in God. God never turns away, God is always present. Whatever you find yourself doing this September, whether you are looking at a fresh start or not, allow God to share with you in all you do.

May God bless your days wherever you find yourselves.

Mike Aspinall

Finding God in Scripture



ACT AND REACT LIKE A CHRISTIAN

*You have heard that it was said...But I say to you... Matthew 5 v21-22
NKJV*

Around the turn of the 19th century, a Russian physician named Ivan Pavlov won a Nobel Prize for his experiments with dogs. All of them had one thing in common - they salivated around food. But Pavlov wanted to find out if salivation could be caused by another stimulus, so he conditioned the dogs by ringing a bell before feeding them. Eventually the dinner bell caused salivation, even if the food wasn't served. Pavlov referred to this learned relationship as a conditioned reflex. We all have been consciously or subconsciously conditioned our entire lives. Much of our behaviour was dictated by those conditioned reflexes. Some conditioned reflexes are as normal and natural as a blush. Others are as destructive as drinking to drown your sorrows. But conscious or subconscious, harmless or harmful, one thing is certain: we are far more conditioned than we realise. And one dimension of our spiritual growth is being reconditioned by the grace of God. Jesus said, *You have heard that it was said... But I say to you.* Jesus uses this couplet repeatedly. What was he doing? He was uninstalling Old Testament applications and reinstalling New Testament truths. It was no longer an eye for an eye. Jesus upgraded it to 'turn to them the other cheek' which required reconditioned reflexes (see Matthew 5 v 38-39 NIV). Sometimes it's much easier to act like a Christian than to react like one. How does this change in our reactions take place? By the Holy Spirit. We are being changed to be like Him. [Jesus]. This change... comes from the Lord, who is the spirit. (2 Corinthians 3 v18 NCV).

*Taken from the UCB Word For Today, written by Bob and Debby Gass.
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Broadcasters, UCB Operations Centre, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent,
ST6 4JF or at ucb.co.uk. Used with permission.*



Message from the Ridge Methodist Church

The next **Movement and Mindfulness** at The Ridge Methodist will be on Tuesday 8th September at 11 am.

Afternoon Tea in aid of Action for Children on 19th September - 1-3pm. All welcome

From Sharon Heginbotham (Church administrator at Heaton Moor United Church – phone 0161 431 0262)

A CHOIR WITH A DIFFERENCE

**THE MONDAY
MONDAYS**

Brilliant and Bonkers! Musical Fun

Contemporary 5 part a cappella - Swing and Pop Choir

ON SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER AT 7:30pm

£8 (including refreshments)

**In aid of church charities: Action for Children,
Eve Project, Leprosy Mission, Lebone Village
(South Africa) and Christian Aid.**

All welcome



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

NB: last date for October is Saturday September 19th

From Jon Kear (Providence)

Sponsored 10km run for Tearfund
in Manchester on 31st May.

A big "Thank You" to everyone who sponsored me for the 10km run. The weather was good for running mainly cool and a slight breeze. I wasn't able to visit all the churches for sponsors this time but the run raised £500 in total for Tearfund.

From Margaret Bailey (MB)

The recorder group

**The next meetings will be on Thursday 3rd
September at 2p.m. at my house.**



From Ian Kenna (M)

GOOD NEWS

A paralysed man has been able to walk simply by thinking about it thanks to electronic brain implants, a medical first that he says has changed his life. Gert-Jan Oskam, a 42-year-old Dutch man, was paralysed in a cycling accident 14 years ago. The electronic implants wirelessly transmit messages from his brain to his legs and feet via a second implant on his spine.

Sunday Times Magazine

**B I G' COFFEE MORNING IN AID OF MACMILLAN
NURSES ON FRIDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER
AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH
FROM 10am-12noon**

**Donations of cakes and any help would be
gratefully appreciated. ALL WELCOME**



From Keith Whiting (T&L)

Bits and Pieces

In St John's gospel Jesus replies to Pilate "I came into the world to testify to the truth, everyone on the side of truth listens to me" and Pilate asks "what is truth?" The bad, the sad and everything in between and I often think what is the real truth behind a particular event! Something less worrying to consider whilst the television is off!!

In 1848 three students at the Royal Academy - William Holman Hunt aged 21, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 20, and John Everett Millais 19 - became the founder members of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood. In total the membership increased to seven. These artists shocked the Victorian critics by rejecting traditional rules of idealised beauty and composition, they rejected "idealization" that they believed was being taught in the Art schools. Paint what is real even if its unglamorous. The Brotherhood did not last very long as Millais was to become the President of the Royal Academy, but those young students had opened the door to what later would be called "Modern Art".

In 1851 Millais began painting the tragic story of Ophelia in Shakespeare's Hamlet. Millais found a river in Ewell in Surrey and at that spot he painted what he saw from June until October. Painting every piece of leaf and stalk with meticulous accuracy, he also paid close attention to the play of sunlight and shadow on the water.

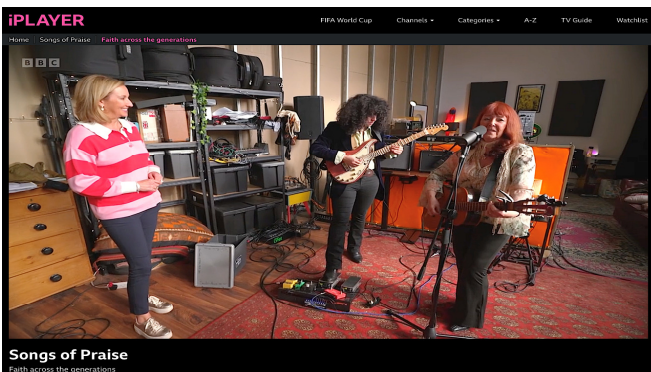
Millais' model for the figure of Ophelia was Elizabeth Siddal, who later married Rossetti. She was painted at his London home in a bath full of water which was heated by oil lamps underneath. At one point the lamps went out and Elizabeth contracted a severe cold. Her father was enraged and threatened legal action and Millais paid the doctor' bill. The painting hangs in the Tate Gallery London. There are I think 23 different plants, budding flowers and seedlings can clearly be identified. So, Leonardo's Mary v Mallais' Ophelia is something to think about!



From Linda Lamon Conneely ... From Songs of Praise

...Linda Lamon-Conneely and her musician friend Niall Brett will be featured on the Songs of Praise 'Faith Across The Generations' episode for another eleven months on BBC iPlayer:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m002yfbz/songs-of-praise-faith-across-the-generations?seriesId=unsliced>



They talk about their shared faith and how their 50-year age gap doesn't really matter when making music. The duo originally appeared on the

show on June 28th and after the producer asked Linda to write a new faith song, they performed Jesus Shine On, before being interviewed and ending with a prayer._

From Ian Kenna (Marple)



LOVE ONE ANOTHER

You said we are to love one another.
A simple enough idea,
Yet not always simple to do.
Sometimes I run out of love.
Sometimes I just run out,
Of everything.
Sometimes I want to shut the world away,
Hide under my blanket,
And sip hot, sweet coffee.
Rest, you say, is also a commandment.
So come sit beside me,
Take a deep breath or two, or three.
Share my blanket, Jesus,
Until I am ready to take up burdens again.
You share my blanket,
And I will hold the tassels of your scarf.

Nicky Gilbert, URC Prayer Handbook

From Chris Kynaston (Marple)

Calling all Knitters

Over the last few years, we have distributed knitted angels to different areas in Marple giving Christmas wishes to the community.



We are hoping to do this again this year and would welcome any help you can give to knit these. In previous years our joint venture with the Methodists have seen over 500 homes receive these each year. It remains to be seen how well we do this year. If you would like a pattern, please ask, and if you only want to knit the body and/or wings we are happy to stitch up.

Thanks, Chris

WORD OF THE MONTH

Originating from Swedish, a TIDSOPTIMIST is someone who is always late.

From Margaret Jones (Short St)

‘One of my favourite poems’

I am the fortunate owner of dozens of poetry books and enjoy occasionally browsing through them. The following poem has been one of my favourites for many years.

‘ABOU BEN ADHEM’

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)

Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace, and saw,
within the moonlight in his room, making it rich, and like a
lily bloom, An angel, writing in a book of gold; Exceeding
peace had made Ben Adhem bold, and to the presence in
the room he said “What writest thou?” The vision raised its
head, and with a look made of all sweet accord, answered
“the names of those who love the Lord”, and is mine one?
said Abou, “Nay, not so” replied the angel

Abou spoke more low, but cheerily still and said “I pray
thee then, write me as one who loves his fellow men” The
angel wrote and vanished. The next night it came again
with a great wakening light and showed the names who
love of God had blest, and lo! Ben Adhem’s name led all the
rest,

By Leigh Hunt 1784-1859

MARPLE NEWS & NOTICES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

wishes in September go to:

Caroline Calverley (6th) Joan Armitt (12th),

Services in September- Please note Services start at 10.30am

6th JOINT AT MARPLE URC

Rev. Mike Aspinnall – Communion Service

13th JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH –

Local arrangement

20th JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC –

Rev Margaret Dexter-Brown

27th JOINT AT MARPLE URC – Rae Cochrane

STRICTLY COME TOGETHER

Wednesday Mornings at Marple URC 10.30am-12.00

SEPTEMBER - All are welcome

2nd Opportunity for a Chat

9th Poems/Monologue/Prose

15th 'Memories' (Jenny Austen)

23rd Quiz

30th Your choice of Music

STRICTLY COME CRAFT



For children and their families on
Saturday 19th September from 4-6pm
at Marple URC

I took £172.55 to The Wellspring, along with 6 carrier bags of clothes recently. The room was a hive of activity: a kitchen full of volunteer workers, several men waiting for dinner, one person receiving 1:1 counselling & liaison help, and people using the private showers. What a marvellous organisation!

Ian Kenna (M)

MARPLE BRIDGE NEWS & NOTICES



Wishes in September to

Mike Bolderson (7th), Colin Fox (9th)

Terry Lomax will be 80 on the 11th **

Em Dodgson will be 1 on the 12th

Zara Pass (20th), John Reynolds (30th)



Services in September

Please note Services start at 10.30am

6th JOINT AT MARPLE URC –

Rev. Mike Aspinall – Communion Service

13th JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH –

local arrangement

20th JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC –

Rev. Margaret Dexter-Brown

27th JOINT AT MARPLE URC - Rae Cochrane

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

From Lynne Cruickshank

Marple Bridge URC - Commitment For Life – Bangladesh

Update

For generations the Manta Community in Barisal, Bangladesh, have lived on water – floating from place to place, unseen and often forgotten. This life has meant exclusion from education and even the most basic public services.

But.... change is happening with support from Commitment For Life, working alongside the local partner AVAS, Manta communities are journeying towards inclusion. Families are gaining official recognition and training in net weaving, and small trade activities to reduce their total reliance on fishing. Official recognition also opens the door to healthcare. Safe spaces have been created for children to play, along with learning to read and write. Families are also safer near the river with solar lights, life jackets and training in disaster preparedness in case of flooding.

At Harvest time we can once again continue to support Commitment For Life along with our support for Oasis and The Wellspring.



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

News from Lend with Care

Two loans have been made recently from repayments of previous loans and money collected.

In July, £100 was loaned to the Aisaar Solar Group who have applied for financing to install a 7.5 kilowatt solar-powered tube well equipped with 14 solar panels. The new system will enable them to use solar energy for irrigation, reducing fuel costs and providing a more sustainable solution to their farming activities.

The group is made up of five small holder farmers aged between 18 and 35 from Kasur district, Pakistan and support 23 dependents including 18 children. Currently, the group relies on a tube well powered by diesel and electricity to irrigate their crops. With increase of fuel costs this has made irrigation increasingly expensive and creates noise and environmental concerns.

In August a loan of £75 was sent to Asif Arif living in Lahore, Pakistan with his wife and four children. Asif has run a vital recycling business for more than 10 years, collecting scrap iron from the local community and delivering it to factories for reprocessing, earning him about £64 per month. His work reduces landfill waste and supports sustainable practices.

Asif applied for a loan to purchase a scrap allotment and expand his business. This will help him further support local construction projects and solidify his position as a reliable supplier of scrap iron.

A big thank you to all who contribute to the Lend with Care collection.

MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH

Services in September- Please note Services start at 10:30am

- 6th JOINT AT MARPLE URC –
Rev. Mike Aspinall – Communion Service**
- 13th JOINT AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH -
Local arrangement**
- 20th JOINT AT MARPLE BRIDGE URC –
Rev. Margaret Dexter-Brown**
- 27th JOINT AT MARPLE URC – Rae Cochrane**

PROVIDENCE NEWS & NOTICES

Services in September....

- 6th Quiet Service**
- 13th Revd David Jenkins**
- 20th Revd Peter Sharp**
- 800th Anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi**
- 27th Revd Mike Aspinall**

Evening Talks at Providence

Wednesday September 9th at 7.30pm,
Evening Talk by Dr Richard Britton.

Life after Life after Death -

The Myth of Heaven and the Truth of Creation.

Whatever you think you know about what happens after you die, you could be wrong, according to the Scriptures of the major religions. In this talk, Richard Britton shows how Greek Platonism has skewed our understanding of life after death, and that we must go back to scripture, particularly the Bible, to understand the truth about what happens after we shuffle off this mortal coil.

Date in October:

Wednesday 14th October 7.30pm,
Evening Talk by Joan Potts -

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

'Made in New Mills'

Sheena has been busy rallying her 'knitters' to make toys for a tombola to raise money for church funds. This will be part of 'Made in New Mills', a group of local artists who will be displaying a vast amount of their crafts, including pictures, jewellery, woodwork and many more. This will be held at Providence on Saturday 10th September, 10.00am - 4.00pm.

Pet Blessing Service

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

On Saturday 19th September 10.30 – 11 am

Bring your pets or light a candle in memory of your pet.

Tea, biscuits and bonios provided!

Dogs on leads please

Sunday 20th September at 10.30am

Providence New Mills is celebrating the 800th Anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi.

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



wishes in September go to:

Kath Booth (12th)

Betty Newman (15th)

Services at Short St in September at 10.30am

- 6th Mr. E. Allman**
- 13th Service at Hazel Grove Methodist Church**
- 20th Worship Group (C)**
- 27th Mr. K. Tonge**

TINTWISTLE & GLOSSOP NEWS

Services in September

- 6th Barbara Aspinall (Communion – Keith Brierley)**
- 13th Vince Ryder**
- 20th John McNeil**
- 27th Martyn Cooling**

HATHERLOW & GEORGE LANE NEWS

Services in September 10.45a.m. start

- 6th Rev Margaret Dexter-Brown**
- 13th Chris Gordon**
- 20th Elders**
- 27th Rev Margaret Dexter-Brown**

CRAFT-A-NOON starts again after the Summer break on Tuesday 1st September 1.30 - 4 p.m. and the following third and first Tuesday each month. All welcome.

Unfortunately, due to lack of number, Tuesday Club will not be meeting.

And finally

Remember ... Amateurs built the Ark,
professionals built the Titanic!!



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

NO LATER THAN SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 19th
(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**

Stockport and High Peak Missional Partnership:
Web: www.shpurc.wordpress.com

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Secretary. Jo Moores 0161 285 5229

Heaton Moor United Church

0161 431 0262

Stanley Road, Stockport, SK4 4HL

Admin: Sharon Heginbotham, 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.