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katherineoehring@capuk.org
07376932813



the link

The Parish Magazine of The United Benefice of St Peter & St Stephen, Burnley

St Stephen's Church,
Oxford Road, Burnley, BB11 3JA

Afternoon Tea with Contempo Choir

27th September at 2.30 pm

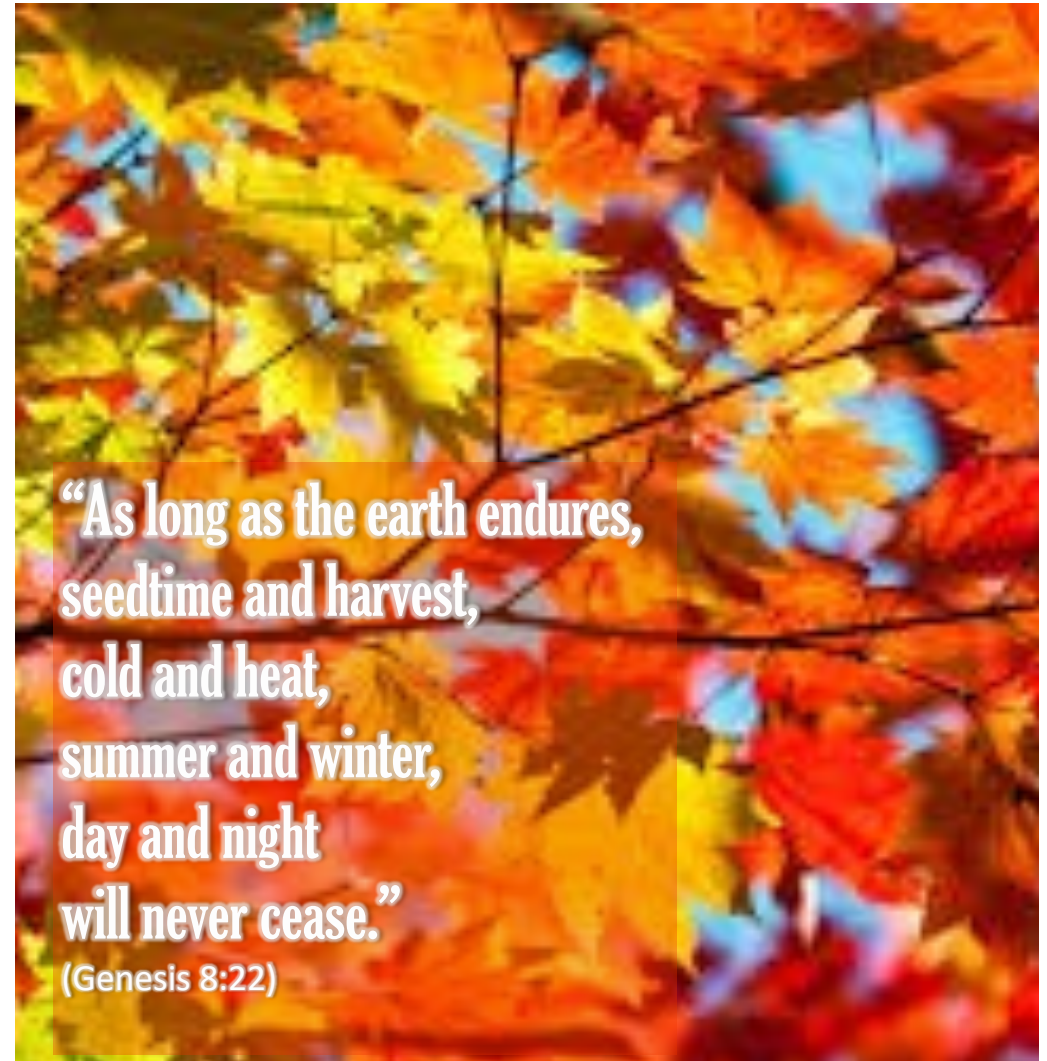
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seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night
will never cease."

(Genesis 8:22)



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St Peter's Church
Burnley

HERITAGE OPEN DAY

Saturday
20th September

10.00 am - 1.00 pm

REFRESHMENTS HERITAGE STALLS



10.15 am
Roger Frost will be leading a
TOUR OF THE CHURCH

11.15 am
ORGAN RECITAL
by David Thornton

There will be various
displays, including the
Book of St Peter,
plus activities for children.

Admission FREE
but donations welcome.



WHO'S WHO IN THE BENEFICE?			
Rector of the United Benefice & Area Dean of Burnley: Fr Andrew Holmes Tel: 07460 899451 Email: andrewinburnley@gmail.com			
ST PETER'S		ST STEPHEN'S	
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ASSISTANT WARDEN Mrs Meena Tomlinson	☎ 07806 623466	ASSISTANT WARDENS Mr Paul Hannah Mrs Edith Meek Mrs Anita Fossey	☎ 07967 644709 ☎ 456170 ☎ 07939 486712
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SUNDAY SCHOOL (DJs): Mrs Meena Tomlinson	☎ 777132	HEADTEACHER: Mrs Jo Roberts	☎ 427848
HEADTEACHER: Mrs Claire Law	☎ 426873	SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Mrs Barbara Hasty	☎ 07783006284
FLOWER GUILD: Mrs Alice Binns	☎ 789632	VERGER Mrs Edith Meek	☎ 456170
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Kitchen/Catering Manager Mrs Cynthia Bramley	☎ 07903 341700		
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In this issue

Page

- 2 Heritage Open Day at St Peter's
- 3 Who's Who
- 4 Fellowship in the Benefice
- 5 From The Rectory
- 7 St Peter's Churchwardens
- 8 St Stephen's Mothers' Union
- 10 Upcoming Events at St Stephen's
Heritage Open Day
- 11 Saturday Morning Concerts
- 13 Let's Do Lunch
Friends, Food & Fun
Welcome Wednesday
- 14 Caring For God's Acre
- 15 Community Football in Burnley
Wood
- 16 St Peter's Sunday School News
- 18 Canal Ministries
- 20 Light of the World Workshop
Light Party
Hymns & Pimms at St John's
Burnley Prayer Breakfast
- 22 From St Stephen's Wardens
- 23 From our Vision Champions
- 28 'No More Of Them And Us'
- 30 Children's Page
- 31 St Stephen's Sunday Club
- 32 CAP

The next Magazine will be joint
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER edition.
All items to be with the Editor by
15th October
pamelamcgrath1@hotmail.com

Fellowship in the Benefice

Every Monday at St Stephen's
KNIT & KNATTER
1.00 – 3.00 pm

Every Thursday at St Peter's
THURSDAY CHAT
10.00 am (coffee at 9.30)

1st Wednesday at St Peter's
WELCOME ON WEDNESDAY
1.30 – 3.00 pm

1st & 3rd Wednesday
at St Stephen's
FRIENDS, FOOD & FUN
2.00 – 4.00 pm

2nd & 4th Wednesday at
St Stephen's
LET'S DO LUNCH
12.30 – 2.00 pm

1st & 3rd Thursdays at
St Peter's
LUNCH CLUB - 11.30 am

Please check the Notices
for other events, or visit
the Websites



From the Rectory

A Season of Harvest and Hope

Dear friends,

As September arrives, the days subtly shorten, the air takes on a new, fresh edge, and our gardens, fields, and hedgerows offer up their fruits with quiet generosity. There is a gentleness to autumn's approach, yet beneath its golden surface lies an invitation: to reflect, to give thanks, and to prepare for all that is to come.

Harvest: Gathering Blessings

The month of September is, for many, associated with harvest. Perhaps you have noticed the combine harvesters in the fields. In the church calendar, we turn our thoughts and prayers towards Harvest Festival—a profound opportunity to express our gratitude for the earth's abundance and for those who labour to bring food to our tables.

But harvest is more than wheat and fruit. It is a reminder that, in every season of life, we are called to gather in the blessings that God has sown. Sometimes those blessings are obvious: a time of health, a new friendship, the birth of a child, or a grandchild. Sometimes, they are quieter or even bitter-sweet: finding courage in loss, resilience in hardship, or hope in a time of uncertainty.

Let us take a moment to recognise and name our blessings. Perhaps you might keep a small gratitude journal through the month, jotting down one thing each day for which you are thankful. Such a simple practice can transform the way we see our lives, opening our eyes to God's goodness even in the most ordinary moments.

Change and Continuity

September is often a time of transition. Young people return to school, some for the very first time or to new schools entirely; students prepare for university. For many families, the rhythm of life shifts again after the summer holidays. Even for those long out of the classroom, the change in season brings subtle shifts—a new term, fresh projects at work, or a return to routines set aside for summer's leisure. In these times of change, it is reassuring to remember that God is steadfast. The Psalmist writes, "Your faithfulness

it endures" (Psalm 119:90). While our lives may be full of movement and uncertainty, we are held by a love that is constant and sure.

New Beginnings

Perhaps September is a time to try something new—a fresh commitment to personal prayer, joining a church group, or volunteering in the community. Our Benefice offers numerous opportunities to serve and connect, including children's ministry, choir, food ministry, and home visits. If you are unsure where your gifts might be best used, please speak to me or a member of the ministry team. We would love to help you discern where God might be calling you next.

Looking Ahead: The Church's Autumn Journey

This autumn, our church calendar is full and rich. We look forward to our Harvest Festival service, scheduled for October. Please consider bringing gifts of tinned or dried foods, which will be donated to local families in need.

There will also be opportunities for study and reflection: our Bible Study groups resume, and we are launching the 'Moving On' course for new Christians to explore their faith—all are welcome. Please speak to Alan or Linda for more information. It is a joy to explore the questions of faith together, discovering how God's ancient wisdom speaks into our modern lives.

Remembering with Love

For some, September may mark anniversaries of loss. The return of routine can sharpen the ache of absence, as we remember loved ones who are no longer with us. If you are grieving, know that you are held in the prayers of our church family. Our pastoral team is here to support you in any way you need—please don't hesitate to reach out.

With Grateful Thanks

I would like to express my gratitude to all who continue to serve in visible and invisible ways: Your faithfulness is a blessing to us all. May September bring you moments of beauty and peace. May you find time for rest, joy, and reflection. And may you sense God's loving presence in every step you take.

With every blessing,

Fr Andrew



Churchwardens' News from St Peter's

Hello everyone,

We hope everyone had a good summer break and enjoyed the Holiday Club workshops at church throughout August. For our friends on the prayer list please remember we are thinking of you and praying for you.

The old light fittings in the nave and chancel were replaced and upgraded in August to new energy efficient LED technology. The decreased energy usage of the new lights will reduce our electricity bills and assist with achieving Net Zero targets. Thank you to John Sullivan for his hard work getting this project completed.

Following some careless damage caused to the new TV, we would like to remind church users to follow all instructions given by those leading an activity and to leave the operation and moving of expensive equipment only to those who are authorised to do so. This is important for health and safety reasons and also to avoid liability to individuals for damage caused.

Most activities in church start up again in September, with Lunch Club returning on Thursday 4th September and the Saturday Morning Concerts on 6th September with Ruth and James Sanderson playing the violin. Don't miss the Heritage Open Day coffee morning on Saturday 20th September when the church will be open to visitors, with stalls to look at and tours by renowned local historian Roger Frost. Our Harvest Festival takes place on Sunday 5th October at which we will be supporting the Bishop's Harvest Appeal and accepting donations for the food bank.

Thank you to those on our reading and intercessions rotas who have covered extra weeks during the summer for those who were away. All our readers and intercessors do a great job and their contribution to worship each week is an important element of our Sunday morning services.

Take care,

Sandra and Jason

I hope you all enjoyed our brief break. The weather has been so lovely at times I hope that when things heated up just that bit too much, you were able to find a cool place to sit and do nothing.

LOOKING BACK

The 9th of August marked Mary Sumner Day, a day in which we remembered our founder and her vision for our movement. The following prayer seems apt, not just for August just gone but for every month when we meet together.

Loving Lord, we give you thanks for the vision of our founder (as we celebrate her special day this month). As we support and love one another through another month, may we touch many lives for God through our prayers, our words and our actions. Amen.

LOOKING FORWARD

A new programme is available and will be given out during the first meeting in September. This takes us up to the end of the year. Briefly, the programme includes a welcome back meeting with scones and songs, a talk on Artificial Intelligence (AI), a quiz, a talk by Paul Hannah and a visit from Lynne Ward along with a chance to buy her Relax-U products in time for Christmas. We will end the year with a Christmas meal, venue to be arranged.

All meetings are held at St. Stephen's on a Tuesday, unless otherwise stated.

September Events

9th: 2 pm Welcome back with Songs, Sayings and Scones!
Also a chance to share ideas for next year's programme

23rd: 7 pm What do we know about AI? Presented by Rob Scott

Saturday

27th: 2 pm Worsthorne, St. John's—Songs of Praise.
(The date of this event is on at the same time as Contempo Afternoon Tea at our church).

/continued ...

October Events

14th: 2pm Quiz Time, our very own quiz, so brush up on your general knowledge. we'd love you to come along with a question or two of your own to test each other out. True or false? Multiple choice? It's up to you.

Saturday

18th: 12 noon Deanery Lunch at St. Stephen's

28th: 7 pm A Talk by Paul Hannah

LET'S CELEBRATE: September and October

Very best birthday wishes to Nancy Mitchell 8/9, Edith Meek, 23/9, Pam McGrath 7/10 and Christine Naughton 29/10.



Wishing Marilyn and Les a very happy wedding anniversary on 29/10.

Jackie

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UPCOMING EVENTS at St Stephen's

Saturday 20th September Burnley Prayer Breakfast in church
Breakfast served from 9:00 am with Reflection and Prayers from 9:30 am. All welcome!

Saturday 20th September - Heritage Open Day at St Peter's Church from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm. Annual event ~ Interesting displays ~ Refreshments will be available ~ All welcome.

Saturday 27th September - Afternoon Tea with Contempo in church at 2:30 pm. Enjoy a delicious afternoon tea and be entertained by Burnley's 'Contempo Choir'. Tickets are £10 available from Pam, Linda, Jackie or Jean.

Friday 31st October - Light Party - in church, 3:30 to 17:00 pm for our younger members! Further details in due course.

That's all for now everyone – keep an eye on our notice board at the back of church for further information about our future events and what's going on from week to week!

HERITAGE OPEN DAY

St Peter's will be open from 10.00am to 1.00pm on Saturday 20th September. Roger Frost will be leading a tour of the church at 10.15am followed by an organ recital by David Thornton at 11.15am.

There will be various displays, including the Book of St Peter, plus activities for children.

Heritage Open Days are free events, but donations will be welcome.

Refreshments will be available throughout the open period and we would like to serve home-baked cake and donations of both cakes and raffle prizes would be welcomed.

We will also appreciate help, both on the day and on the afternoon of Friday 19th September to prepare the church.

Carol

Saturday Morning Concerts at St Peter's



Our autumn series of concerts begins on 6th September when we welcome Ruth and James Sanderson (violin and piano). Ruth is a freelance violinist who frequently plays with the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, and Royal Liverpool orchestras. James is a recital accompanist and has been a répétiteur for York Opera since 2015. Their programme includes Dvorak's Sonatina in G major and Grieg's Sonata in G major.

The concert begins at 11 am with refreshments served from 10:30 am. Admission is £7 (free for those aged 18 and under). Car parking is available in the schoolyard with disabled parking in the church grounds.



As part of the Heritage Day on the 20th of September, David Thornton will give an organ recital at 11:15 am. Admission is free for this concert, which follows on from the talk by Roger Frost.

David began his organ playing career taking lessons at St Peter's, before heading off to Lincoln Cathedral, where he became the first organ scholar. After a career in teaching, David passed the diploma examinations of the Royal College of Organists and holds the prestigious FRCO diploma. We are fortunate to have David as accompanist to our Deanery Choir.

A trio of accomplished pianists complete the October and November concerts with Adam Davies from Chetham's School of Music on 4th October, Lewis Kingsley-Peart on 18th October and John Mark Rose on 1st November.

Philip.

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every
2nd & 4th WEDNESDAY
monthly
at 12.30 pm

'On the House' but donations appreciated



ALL WELCOME!

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AFTERNOON TEA
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All Welcome

St Peter's Church, Burnley

WELCOME on WEDNESDAY

Every **FIRST** Wednesday
1.30 - 3.00 pm

Refreshments - Time to chat
Toys & Activities for pre-school children.

Open to **EVERYONE**
but young families and parents of children in school
especially welcome.





Ladybirds: Tiny Heroes in Polka-Dot Armour

The ladybird, with its stylish and cheerful polka-dot outfit, holds a special place in our hearts. Few other insects, apart from perhaps the butterfly, evoke as many positive emotions and superstitions as the ladybird. Many cultures believe that ladybirds are a symbol of good luck and new beginnings. In fact, the belief that ladybirds are associated with positive qualities is nearly universal – from Slavic, European, and Asian cultures to Native Americans.

There are 46 different species of ladybirds in the UK and about 5,000 species worldwide. While some sport the classic red with black spots look, others come in shades of yellow, orange, or even black with red spots. All ladybirds are beetles and have a larval and adult form with the classic round and colourful ladybird being the adult whilst the larvae tend to be thin and black.

Many species of ladybird hatch from pupae in August or September so look out for a new generation of adults feeding up ready to overwinter. Ladybirds are voracious predators of aphids and other garden pests, serving as natural pest-control agents and helping to keep plants healthy. In fact, a single ladybird can devour up to 5,000 aphids and other plant-eating pests in its lifetime, making them invaluable allies to gardeners and farmers alike.

Despite their diminutive size, ladybirds are not without their challenges. Predators, parasites, and even rival ladybirds pose threats to their survival. Birds, spiders, and other insects prey on them. They do have defences against predators however, their bright red colour is a warning that they don't taste nice and when attacked they give off a yellow liquid which is rich in toxic alkaloids.

Churchyards and cemeteries can be great for ladybirds as they tend to be free of insecticides and full of food. There are lots of places where ladybirds can find a safe place to spend the winter, often in large clusters where they remain inactive until about March when they emerge to feed and breed. Monuments including chest tombs, gaps made by tree roots, wood piles, spaces beneath flaking bark, leaf litter, tussocky grass and drystone walls are full of potential places to overwinter.

With their rounded bodies and distinctive markings, ladybirds are easily recognisable. If you see a ladybird, take a photo or count its spots and make a note of both spot and background colours. The spot number indicates which species it is, not some people believe, how old it is.



Community Football in Burnley Wood

One hot and sunny Wednesday in August, Burnley & Padiham Police teamed up with Burnley FC in the Community and Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service, as well as representatives from Burnley Wood Community Centre and St Stephen's Church (who provided refreshments) for a fun filled evening!

Kids took on police and fire crews in football (and won!), explored emergency vehicles, cooled off with fire hoses, and enjoyed food, fun, and ice lollies





Sunday School News from St Peter's

'Let us run the race that is set before us , not giving up but looking to Jesus the starter and finisher of our faith.' (Hebrews 11).

This morning's Sunday School reminded me of the strength our amazing group gain from each other and their growing faith as we cheered each other on in a guard of honour encouraging those in their GCSE year , those beginning nursery , those starting their final year in primary school, those continuing at college and everyone as we all need each other for support in our life and our our developing faith. Their joy and non stop chatter was wonderful.

We welcomed a new young man to Sunday School who commented ' It's a long time since I have been in church - but this was so good ' .



Let us pray that young people will continue to find meaning and a welcome in our churches .

September brings a return to school and routine . We continue looking at the teachings in Paul's letters and how we can learn from this today . We celebrate harvest and give thanks for all that we have .

Many thanks to all who have supported our work and vision with children / young people and families over the summer.

Love from
Meena



Kingdom Builders Can we build it? - Yes we Can!

Summer Holiday Workshop . Building up God's Kingdom. Songs, prayers and lots of games to help us learn about building up a world God wants. We looked at how God built Creation, Solomon and his temple, the parable of the wise and foolish builders, and building a cornerstone. A really good mornings welcoming families from our Benefice and lots of new families.



Our amazing Young Singers were in concert with Opera Singer Sean Ruane and performed with Helen Parker's instrumentalists. Both concerts were really well received. We are grateful for continued financial support from Stocks Massey.

The Young Singers will next perform at Deanery Evensong at Higham on 6th October.



CANAL MINISTRY WEEK

Between the 3rd and 9th August, as part of the Churches Together In Burnley Community, we have had the pleasure of hosting the Canal Ministry Team for breakfast nearly every morning at St Stephen's before the wider work of the team began. A bit of chaos and a lot of laughter, the street cleaner even joined us one



morning as he was curious about what was going on!

The team spent their days visiting some of the churches in town and taking innumerable people on trips on their narrow boat, Ten Thousand Reasons, along the straight mile or through Weavers Triangle. This gave people an opportunity to relax and chat over a cuppa or have a go at steering. Some were better at steering than others!



A fantastic folk evening, with pie and peas supper was a great success with everyone singing along. The song about the number of different items that caught around a propellor had to be heard to be believed!

On Thursday, Bishop Phillip came along and had a ride on a bike that had been dredged out of the canal on one of the trips then preached from the roof of the boat ... At times looking alarmingly like he was getting a little too near to the edge.



Thursday evening saw a great turnout from lots of churches to join in a "short and gentle stroll" organised by Rev. Kat. I thought it was a pleasant stroll but have heard a few who considered it a long distance hike! Whichever camp you were in, however, the evening was glorious and it was great to see everyone mingling.

The final event was an open afternoon the Saturday, at Finsley Gate Wharf, with crafts and yet more boat trips! We believe the event has involved approximately 2000 people and everyone has thoroughly enjoyed themselves, so much so that we are going to repeat it next year!

Carol P



Ready for a trip down the Canal



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In The Loop

... With Jean, Paul, Edith & Anita



Hello everyone – we hope that you've all enjoyed a pleasant summer and are keeping well. Let's hope too that we can look forward to an 'Indian Summer' as Autumn is just around the corner!

AUGUST BREAK – The teams involved in providing 'Let's do Lunch' and 'Friends, Food & Fun' have enjoyed a well-earned rest during the month of August. 'Friends, Food & Fun' will resume on the first and third Wednesday, (3rd & 17th September) in the Community Room starting at 2:00 pm with a suggested donation of £5, and 'Let's do Lunch' on the second and fourth Wednesday (10th & 24th September) and again, donations are very much appreciated. For the uninitiated, 'Friends, Food & Fun' is a lovely Afternoon Tea, in the Community Room, with 'extras' - dominoes, bingo (with Keith), karaoke (with Fr Andrew) and, of course, jolly good company. 'Let's do Lunch' is a two-course meal with tea/coffee held in church starting at 12:30 pm prompt. This is followed by our Mid-week Eucharist at 2:00 pm, although you can attend the service whether or not you've been to the lunch. (NB When there are five Wednesdays, we have a rest!) We hope to see you there!

SPONSORED WALK

Well done to those who took part in the Sunday Club Ambassadors' Sponsored Walk on Sunday 13th July following the morning service. They were blessed with a lovely sunny day for their walk up to the playground on Towneley Holmes. A total of £294.00 was raised for the Ambassadors' funds which will in time be split between Pendleside Hospice and Christians Against Poverty. Another super effort - well done everyone and grateful thanks to the sponsors!

CANAL MINISTRIES TEAM WEEK

On Monday 3rd August through to Saturday the 9th, this nationwide-based team offered a splendid week of free activities in and around Finsley Wharf, including boat trips on the canal, a walk along the towpath and through the park, meeting Bishop Philip (who had a turn in steering the boat!), and culminated in an open afternoon at Finsley Wharf on the Saturday afternoon. Throughout the week, over 2,000 people from the many churches of Burnley thoroughly enjoyed taking part, and the weather was reasonably kind all week. We look forward to welcoming the team back next year!

continued/ ...

UPDATE ON THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH

Church clock: Following separate visits by two individual clock experts and having received their reports, a decision has been made as to how we raise the much needed funds to put a repair plan into action. Initially we shall be looking into obtaining a grant towards the costs, but should anyone feel they would like to donate monies, please see Keith or a warden.

QI Report: This is due to be received in early September when the church architect will meet with Fr Andrew and the wardens. The results of the report will in time be discussed with the PCC. Suffice to say we are led to believe that there are no major concerns requiring our immediate attention.

Gardens: Our grateful thanks are once again extended to Jim who each year provides a splendid floral display of flowers in our Memorial Garden (Smalley Street), and this year has been no exception. It certainly cheers the soul to see the lovely colours, and we do receive comments from passers by. Jim also keeps the Remembrance Garden in tip top shape. If anyone is able and happy to provide some help in any way, please do get in touch with one of the wardens – it will be greatly appreciated, thank you.


Love and best wishes to all.



Jean, Paul, Edith and Anita

"I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you hope and a future." *Jeremiah 29:11*

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... From our Vision Champions



PRAYER FOR
GROWTH AND RENEWAL

Hi everyone,

As mentioned in the last magazine over the next few months we will be looking at our vision for St Stephens. To ensure growth in our church and ensure we will be a presence within Burnley Wood for the future.

Early in July we held the first Vision Action Plan meeting. This was an invited group from across our congregation and purposefully it was a mix of established members of our congregation and relative newcomers. From all ages and involvement within the church.

The purpose of these meetings is to look at our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and prepare a working/revue-able plan for the ongoing ministry at St Stephen's

We split into 2 groups and carried out the swot analysis. We found that there were quite a few things that we do well and somethings where we fall short. We also discussed what Father Andrew described as "Blue Sky Thinking" if money, time, manpower etc were no object than what could we do.

The results from both groups will be collated by Pam McGrath and we will meet again in early September. From there our findings will be put to the PCC and then a date will be set for all the congregation to be involved. So perhaps before we bring it to you all, you may like to give some thought to what you think are the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats to the ministry at St Stephens, then you will be ready to input your thoughts and ideas to the process.

After a break in August "Let's do Lunch" and Friends, Food and Fun

restart in September and we are looking forward to welcoming you all back. Perhaps you know someone who may enjoy coming along but just need a little encouragement. Don't just tell them, offer to call for them or arrange to meet them at the door. Be that friendly face that we all need.

There is a change of date for this months Prayer Breakfast. It will be on Saturday 20th September. The theme for this month is "Stepping Up". Hope to see you there.

Linda. (St Stephen's Vision Champion)

***"In their hearts humans plan their course,
but the Lord establishes their steps."
(Proverbs 16-9)***



Adventures with Frank

I have had dogs most of my life, on the whole they have been well behaved and no trouble. After our last two dogs died I decided not to get another one. At the end of lockdown I made a passing comment to my youngest daughter - 'if I was going to get a dog now is a good time as it would be trained at the end of lockdown.' That was my first mistake. Charis rang me some days later to say that the barrier on the motorway into Wales had been removed. . She then said 'so come down on Saturday I think I've found you a dog.' I'm not often speechless after a few attempts I managed to stutter 'what makes you think I want a dog?' She answered 'you said so when we FaceTimed'. In vain I tried to say it was an observation not a desire. The conversation didn't go well ... and on the Saturday I drove to Wrexham wondering what I was doing and reiterating to myself 'I don't want a dog'

My grandson (6 at the time) told me he had seen the photos of the dog and thought he was really cute. As Charis and I were getting into the car Thomas shouted 'I can't wait to see him, you'll have to call him Cutie.' I waved an acknowledgment.

Then I made my second mistake. I said we need to get a name for this dog,

I'm not walking round a park in Burnley shouting 'Where are you Cutie'. We nearly hit the car in front. Then followed a strange conversation about names, with Charis telling me every name I suggested I couldn't have! I didn't like any name she suggested- there was a tense silence until we turned right instead of left (third mistake) and found ourselves in the middle of a static gypsy site.

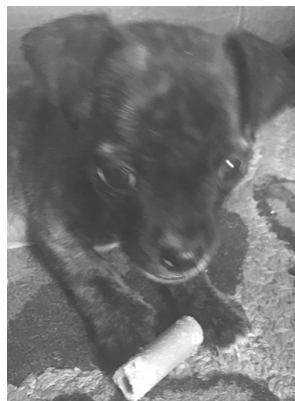
Suddenly we were surrounded by children, lots of children and lots of dogs and maybe a chicken or two. The car was stuck. Charis wound her window down and asked if we were in the right place to buy a dog. The biggest and most tattooed man I have ever seen strolled over and asked if the dog was for rabbiting or fighting. Charis squeaked 'I think we're in the wrong place and gave him the address. He did look slightly confused but moved the children and dogs and helped us off the site.

As we eventually arrived at the right place Charis said 'what about Frank?' I was feeling quite fraught and asked 'who the heck is Frank?' 'Your dog' she snapped. We were shown round and I was given a little bundle of striped fur - I reached out and said 'Come on Frank' he fitted into the palm of my hand. Somehow I had acquired a dog. We got back into the car and I put him on the floor to get settled as I went to pick him up I realised he had pooped. At this point I should have realised this was a bad idea, but no for better or for worse this little dog was mine.

When we got back to Charis's house we were greeted by Thomas shouting 'here's Cutie'. I took the bull by the horns and said 'I was going to call him Cutie, but his Mummy told us his name is Frank.' Thomas looked at the dog and said 'OK Mummy is always right'. A smug look from my daughter. And Frank, well he had done what dogs do and made a puddle on the rug.'

The end of my first adventure with Frank. What did I learn:

- ◆ Don't speak vaguely to daughter, be specific
- ◆ Don't argue about dog names in the car but do listen to the satnav
- ◆ Don't name a dog you didn't intend to get
- ◆ Don't lie to Grandchildren about a non-existent conversation with dog's mother.
- ◆ Don't forget to buy poop bags.



Joan

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We look forward to welcoming you, come and see us soon!

No More Of Them And Us! by Christine Harbour

I was listening to the podcast by Lectio 365 and I heard the words 'them and us'. It fits in so well with a little story which had really inspired me. In sociology classes one is taught how to distinguish different types of people by their upbringing, race, beliefs living standards etc. and of course, financial means! It's relevant to our world. We usually group ourselves and relate to people of our own social status and who behave in a similar way that we are familiar with. It's our comfortable space! Some of you know that I am struggling trying to manage rheumatoid arthritis. I have found that eating non processed food, coupled with vitamins and massage, is helping considerably. Walking any distance is not feasible, so I go to a swimming pool to gently float and exercise my limbs. It's usually quiet and gives me time to pray. Two great therapies in one!

After my 'hydro therapy' one day I waited anxiously for the usually crowded bus. The driver stopped and I was gob smacked. The bus was as packed as any Venetian bus! Every seat was occupied and the standing room was double the safety limit.! We were literally swaying until someone took pity on my white haired status, and gave up their seat. I soon realised that most of the passengers were a group of young people with learning difficulties on a day out to Burnley! They were aglow with excitement laughter and chatter, with the exception of one or two who looked a little apprehensive. It was a memorable experience as they told me where they were going, what they had eaten for lunch and what they did at their drop-in centre. I was quite sorry when we reached the bus station, although I did have a dent in my side where I had been squashed against a pole by a very large young man!



This journey set me thinking of how we as Christians perceive things differently to those who do not believe in a God at all. What do we really believe about the Everlasting? I base my ideas on the biblical version of the risen Jesus as he encounters his disciples on the road to Emmaus. It was a while before the disciples recognised him. This leads us to believe that maybe Jesus did not look exactly the same. .

Yet we are told that we are made in God's image. Jesus was therefore a man and not a ghostly apparition. That very same day the disciples (only one was named as Cleopas) were so drawn to this knowledgeable , charismatic man, Jesus, that they asked him to stay with them that evening. They shared supper together and when Jesus broke the bread they recognised their friend as Jesus, the Risen Lord.

This set my mind pondering. When Jesus comes again will we recognise Him? We are told in various parts of the bible that He will come without warning! This time on a cloud with angels and trumpets as a triumphant King! That's a far cry from that smelly stable. This sounds rather like something from a Superman movie doesn't it? So how will we know? In John's gospel 10.v 27/8 it says 'My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me'. So the Almighty God made incarnate once again, will recognise us and those who have followed him, will hear his voice again. Wow! It's actually true every shepherd has a special voice that is known only to his own flock of sheep!

We cannot really imagine how God's kingdom on Earth will be! One thing I believe with all my heart is that we will be transformed. Just as the bloodied broken body of Christ was changed, so will we be changed. I believe we will see others as Jesus sees them, so that everyone will be equal in our sight. No colour barriers, no categorisation of the lovely and the unlovely, no rich or poor and no 'inadequates'. For me, it was a reminder that there will be no-one classed as having 'learning difficulties' . No stigmas, I won't see them as different. Those excited faces on the mainliner bus were simply loved by God . His light shone brightly on them.

When Jesus returns with his choir of angels, We can join them in their song! All heaven declares the beauty of the Risen Lord! The Lamb that was slain sits on the throne, King and all Kings, forever and ever. AMEN.

With love.

Christine H xx

*"God made all equal.
Rich or poor,
we are all equal
in the eyes of the Creator."*

- SAINT RAINDER SINGH J. MAHARAJ





Children's Page

Hh is for Harvest



Colour in the Harvest Picture



Recently some of our older Sunday Club members asked if they could have more learning as part of their experience. Now they are growing up, they were finding that working on the same activity as the younger members was starting to feel a bit boring.

A few of us met together and decided it would be a good time to return to the use of Roots as a resource. As Roots gives access to ideas split into several different age groups, this would enable us to split into 2 groups and provide experiences more targeted to the age groups. We have now been using this for 3 weeks but already are seeing a real difference! From the leaders' perspective, there is less of a burden in trying to generate fresh ideas to tie in to the weekly reading as there is a good choice of activities that are ready to use; or can be used as an inspiration. From our younger members perspective, both age groups are telling us that they are finding it fun and our older age group certainly feel more challenged by the activities. There is still plenty of scope for spontaneous activity and joint working on some activities, when appropriate. It does mean, occasionally, that we will not be working on the New Testament/Gospel readings but will looking at something from the Old Testament but we hope that the congregation have noticed a new energy when the children return to share what they have been doing.

Carol, Emma and Carrie.



It's been a few weeks now, but this is when we #enjoyed making bracelets and learning all about The Trinity on Trinity Sunday