

SPHERE

Flourishing, Living, Learning



**2025 - Preston Ribble Circuit
Year of Faith Development**

BAMBER BRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

Please complete this form if:

- You will be worshipping with us regularly; we would like to stay in contact.

OR

- There have been any changes to the information we already hold for you.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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We can send you our publications electronically - please indicate those you wish to receive:

Weekly Notices

☐

Monthly Prayer Diary

☐

Sphere (Church Magazine)

☐

Printed copies of these publications are usually available for collection from Church.

By signing this form you agree to us storing your details in a secure electronic file.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please hand this form to a Steward or direct to Tony Andrews (Church Council Secretary).

C O N T E N T S

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Pastoral Message from Rev Sharon

Lent – a season of new life?

Lent, a word that can refer either to springtime and the lengthening of days after a winter, or to the season in the Christian year leading up to Holy Week and Easter.

In the first sense, we are reminded of the new shoots popping up out of the ground or budding on trees and shrubs, and the feathering of nests in preparation for new life. As a season within the Christian calendar however, it can often feel like a time that focuses on death, sorrow and sin.

I wondered why this might be so. In truth, Lent does begin on Ash Wednesday, a time when we remember our mortality and our need for a Saviour and many of the Bible stories we will hear will speak of Jesus turning his attention to the journey towards Jerusalem and the cross that awaits him.

Are the two meanings of this word in our language therefore incompatible?

Perhaps not... if we take a step back and look at the Gospel story in full, we are reminded of why Jesus came – not simply to die for us, but through death, to transcend into new life, taking us with him.

It is true that any seed has to struggle through the darkness to reach the light and flourish and that every new chick has to draw upon all its strength to break out of its shell. Were the seed or the chick to forget the goal, they may become despondent and give up. Then the dirt would become a grave and the shell a tomb. By the grace of God, most persevere.

This season of Lent, let us not lose sight of the goal that drove Jesus on to face the cross for us. Then we will find that the Christian season of Lent is not so different from that describing the sequential changes of the earth.

This Lent, may you reach through the darkness into the light and break out of your shell, through Christ who strengthens you so that, on Resurrection Day, you are ready to bloom and sing!

Love, Sharon



Each year, the Methodist Church sets a theme for its services during Lent. This year's theme is "Soul Food" when we are reminded of Jesus's time in the wilderness and how Jesus reminded us that people don't live by bread alone. Each week we'll explore together what sustains and nourishes us – both food and beyond based on the lectionary Gospel passage for each Sunday. There will also be some "Good news to get across" which is a central message for newcomers, and those with a connected Methodist Way of Life commitment. Below is the "Good News to get across" for each Sunday in Lent. Please read them and take time to reflect on them.

1st Sunday in Lent - Soul Food: All the things that nourish us

We all need many kinds of nourishment beyond just food – things that sustain our hearts, minds and spirits. Lent offers an invitation to explore these deeper sources of nourishment and reflect on what truly feeds us

2nd Sunday in Lent - Soul Shelter: Nourished by a safe home (for all)

God desires a safe home for everyone and we are called to advocate for justice and peace for all. Through our actions and commitment, we can contribute to creating a world where everyone is secure

3rd Sunday in Lent - Soul Rest: Nourished by patience and slowness

Rest and reflection are essential, not only for the sake of productivity but because they hold intrinsic value. Taking time to pause allows us to reconnect with ourselves and our purpose, nurturing our wellbeing and deepening our understanding of life

4th Sunday in Lent - Soul Repair: Nourished by unconditional love and forgiveness

Despite all the ways we may try to distance ourselves from God, God continually seeks us out. God's love, compassion and presence can heal our shame, failure and isolation. What aspects of that message have stayed with you over the past year. What insights or experiences have resonated deeply, reminding you of God's unwavering presence and affection?

5th Sunday in Lent - Soul Mates: Nourished by companionship

We all need companionship, which requires a generous investment of our time and resources. The rewards of building meaningful relationships, however, are priceless, enriching our lives and fostering a sense of belonging and connection that enhances our wellbeing. >>>>> More on next page



Palm Sunday - Soul Songs:
Nourished by music from the heart

The death and Resurrection of Jesus brought transformation to the entire universe. Both sentient beings and inanimate creation are drawn into this renewal, as all things are encompassed in the restoration God brings.

Good Friday - Soul Support:
Nourished by each other when times are tough

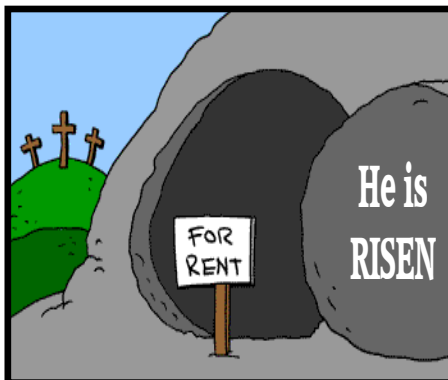
Even in the most challenging times, we can draw strength and resilience from both those close to us and from strangers. Their support and kindness can provide encouragement and hope, reminding us that we are never truly alone in our struggles.

Easter Sunday - Soul Stories: So well nourished that we have to share it

Jesus is alive and death has been defeated! Let us follow the example of the women who first proclaimed this good news, sharing the message with those who need to hear it. Together, we can spread hope and joy, transforming lives through the power of the Resurrection



♫@hillsong_lyrics





PALM SUNDAY - Sunday 13th April 2025

10-30am : Morning All Together Worship at Bamber Bridge
10-30am Morning Worship at Trinity, Gregson Lane

MAUNDY THURSDAY - Thursday 17th April 2025

6-30pm Maundy service at Trinity, Gregson Lane
[United communion service with Bamber Bridge & Christchurch]

GOOD FRIDAY - Friday 18th April 2025

10-00am at Bamber Bridge
[United service with Trinity, Gregson Lane]
11-00am Short Ecumenical service outside Morrisons store

EASTER SUNDAY - Sunday 20th April 2025

8-30am Easter Sunday Communion at Bamber Bridge



10-30am Easter Sunday service at Bamber Bridge

10-30am : Easter Sunday Communion service
at Trinity, Gregson Lane



EASTER SUNDAY
April 20th 2025
Circuit Service at 6am
at Beacon Fell
(time to be confirmed)

2025 ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING 2025

The General Annual Church Meeting is open to all those associated with the Church. The agenda can be quite varied, but the most significant item is that there is a “conversation about the work of God within the local church and community”

This is your chance to have your say about what has happened, what is happening and what you would like to see happening within the local church.

The General Church Meeting also provides the means and opportunity for new Church Stewards and Representatives from the meeting to the Church Council to be appointed.

If you are interested in either of the appointments, please have a chat to our Minister about what is involved. More information about how the meeting will be conducted will be available over the coming weeks.

Below are the dates for this year's General Church Meetings. Note the dates, try to be a part of the Meeting, make your voice heard and help seek the Will of God for this part of the Circuit.

**Bamber Bridge ACM will be held in conjunction with
Morning Service at 10-30am on Sunday 11th May.**

**Trinity, Gregson Lane ACM will be on Sunday 4th May
during Morning service at 10-30am**





CAR PARKING WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The capacity of the front car park is clearly indicated by the number of identified parking spaces (14 - including one for a Blue Badge holder).

To some of us, there is an obvious reason why this number of cars should not be exceeded: to permit access for the Emergency Services (be that a fire engine or an ambulance). We must always consider the worst-case scenario and alleviate the possible delays (or further injuries) if the attendance of the Emergency Services has to be requested.

This request to park only in a designated car park space applies not only for Sunday Services but also throughout the week. The latter is also a request from the Head of Cuerden Church School - bearing in mind the need to call an ambulance for a pupil with complex medical needs (or perhaps someone with a serious, accidental injury).

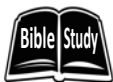
If you have a disabled passenger and the designated parking space is already occupied, please drop-off your passenger and then park in a identified parking space.

There are spaces in the rear car park on a Sunday morning (or when we expect many visitors on a week-night evening). There is also Wesley Street - I regularly have had to park closer to Stockdale Crescent than the Church! There have recently been some changes to the parking restrictions on Wesley Street.

Any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tony Andrews, Church Council Secretary





WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

AN UPDATE ON THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP BY Kevin Savage



We're still meeting on a monthly basis, and that's usually on the second Monday of the month at 2pm. You'll find us in the coffee area, at the back of church. Our simple format is unchanged: We have a cup of tea/coffee (and a biscuit!) when we arrive, have a chat and a catch-up for a half-hour, and then, after an opening prayer and a read through the relevant Scripture passage, we look at the questions for the current topic. Having had the question sheets in advance, we've had opportunity to think and pray about them, and we simply share our thoughts and learn from each other as we go along.

For some time now we've been working through *Jesus' Final Week* (a series of eight studies, written by Cindy Bunch). There have been so many supplementary questions, and we've found the topics so challenging and stimulating, that we're only now about to begin the penultimate section! "Friday: Crucifixion" is based on the account in Matthew 27, and asks questions ranging from our personal responses around the story to where and how God can give us hope in our lives. As we draw towards the conclusion of our exploration of the familiar events of Holy Week, we've learned and grown spiritually, and we continue to pray that God will deepen our faith in Jesus our Saviour.

There are various thoughts about what we might tackle next, but a look at some biblical prophecy seems high on the list, and one suggestion is the Book of Daniel. If you want to know more about the Bible and would like to share in our fellowship, then you're welcome to join us at any of our meetings.

St Paul writes, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3: 16-17, *NIV*). With that in mind, you may occasionally like to use a prayer about the Bible, so I'm including the Collect for Bible Sunday.

Eternal God, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Help us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that through patience and the comfort of your Holy Word we may embrace and for ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.




Canalside Parables ...

(Some names have been changed to protect identities)

John 1 v 12-13 : What's in a name?

¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed **in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God – ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Narrowboat Aspen has had a full repaint! It had been a 2 year wait as Paint-gun Polly, at the marina, is in great demand. The rust spots where ever multiplying and the time had come for her to work her magic. She sprayed away the past, and Arty Marty applied the new name, **Two Hoots!** 

Kosy and Dim needed to get back to Johnson's Hillock for Christmas. No one knows who **Johnson** was (answers to the editor please), but his Hillock gave rise to 7 locks on the Leeds and Liverpool canal, leading to Top Lock at Wheelton. Kosy and Dim set course in November, taking great care not to scratch their shiny newly-painted boat. That lasted an hour until the first set of unforgiving locks - oh well!

It hadn't been easy settling on a new name for the boat. A strong contender had been, ' **It'll Fit** ', referring to the frequent jeopardy when navigating between boats, or through narrow channels and bridges. Several other names came and went, each with their own particular pun, or meaning.

Back for Christmas, and the festivities over, it was soon New Year. Kosy and Dim joined a local congregation at the Covenant Service, to renew their promises to God. Just like the shortlist for the boat, the reading that day from John 1 v1-18, had various names, with meanings The **Word** was **God** - The One and only **Son** - The **Father** - Grace and Truth came through **Jesus Christ**. Names for God in the Bible are important all adding to our understanding of his character, purpose, and eternal presence. *Most of all, for those who believed in **his name**, he gave the right to become children of God'*

www.biblegateway.com is a quick easy search for any Bible readings in different translations to suit you.

www.content.scriptureunion.org.uk/resource/word-live is a good way to study the Bible each day, and don't forget our own Church Bible Studies!

Don and Kath, now on land while their boat receives some TLC



Wesley comes to Preston



Outside the Market Tavern pub in Preston there is a sign outlining the history of Preston Market. On the sign there is a reference to a visit by John Wesley in 1790 and nearby there is a blue plaque marking that visit.



During his lifetime John Wesley made four visits to Preston as part of his annual trips to the North of England. His first visit was on Friday, April 28th, 1780. On Thursday 24th May 1781, the small band of noble workers in Preston was delighted with a second visit. Wesley's third visit was on Saturday 17th April 1784. He had planned to go from Wigan to Blackburn, but stopped off in Walton-le-Dale to visit a Mrs Nuttall who was on the point death.



Wesley's last visit was in 1790. In his book "The Makers of Wesleyan Methodists in Preston" published in 1890, Mr William Pilkington, a local preacher in Preston wrote this account of that visit. ***"It was in the Back-lane Chapel that the Rev. John Wesley preached on the occasion of his last visit to Lancashire. He was fast approaching his eighty-eighth year, and yet pursuing a course of labour which, involved preaching every day, and sometimes twice a day, as well as travelling over terrible roads. What an impressive sight the Preston Methodist would behold on Thursday, the 15th April, 1790, as he ascended the pulpit steps. After announcing his text, "The Spirit and the Bride say come," he lifted his hand to his forehead, and paused for some time before he could proceed. His memory had failed him. Tradition tells how the whole town used to be moved at his visits to Preston, and how the people lined Fishergate to see him pass, leaning on the arm of Roger Crane and one of his preachers ; and how, from the steps of the obelisk in the Market-place, he more than once addressed multitudes of people.***



Editor's note : Many thanks to Andrew Paver for sending in these photos which he took on a visit to Preston in March.



Puzzle Time



Here's a puzzle to test the little grey cells. Just find the words below and mark them off in this puzzle. If you get stuck...the solution is on page 27



BASKET

BIBLE

CHICK

CHOCOLATE

CHRIST

FASTING

FLOWERS

HOT-CROSS BUN

HUNT

LAMB

LENT

PARADE

REBORN

SACRIFICE

SPRING

Psalm 91 - A Psalm For Lent by the Rev. Dr. Kevin Savage

Something that I haven't done much in recent years is to preach on or even lead studies on the Psalms, and when thinking about what I might write for the *Sphere*, I felt led to the appointed Psalm for the first Sunday in Lent. The Lectionary suggests selected verses, rather than the whole Psalm, and that's the basis of this short article: verses 1-2 and 9-16. Here, then, are a few thoughts which I hope you'll find helpful. You might find it useful to think of the overall theme of this Psalm as "The Hiding Place", and within the verses we're directed to, there are two sub-themes that will give us both reassurance and confidence in our Christian lives. So, what is God saying to us about Times of Trial and about Times of Temptation?

Let's begin by considering Times of Trial (actually verses 1-4, but we're staying with 1-2). The Psalmist uses four of the names of God in the first two verses, and they're used in light of God being the One Who gives us shelter. As the *English Standard Version* says, several terms for security appear: a "shelter" that hides one from danger; a "refuge" that provides a place of security; and a "fortress" that protects us from attack. A question, then: how do these four names help us to better understand the God under the shadow of Whose wings we may safely dwell? The names used here are: *Elyon*, *Shaddai*, *Yahweh* (which used to be transliterated as *Jehovah*), and *Elohim*.

Elyon, which is usually translated as the "Most High", reminds believers that God is far above all other power and authority, whether worldly or spiritual. Derek Kidner calls it "a title which cuts every threat down to size"!

Shaddai, rendered into English as "The Almighty", is often found in the two-part name "*El Shaddai*", as in Genesis 17:1-2. Like many other divine names in the Book of Genesis, the common Semitic word for God, "*El*", is followed by a term that highlights a particular attribute of God. *Shaddai* / *El Shaddai* emphasizes God's power to overcome in seemingly hopeless situations. In Genesis 17, the seemingly impossible promise of God Almighty that Sarai, at 90 years old, and Abram, aged 100, will have a son is what will be brought to pass.

Yahweh, "I AM", which is mostly rendered "The LORD" - the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses (Exodus 3:14), the name most revered in the Jewish faith - denotes His eternal self-existence. *Elohim* is the first name we encounter in the Old Testament; He is "God the Creator" (Genesis 1:1), Who brought the whole Universe into being, and the simple fact is that we only exist through Him.

In the context of Psalm 91, John Phillips likes to think of these names of God as representing four practical applications within our lives - Possession, Provision, Promise, and Power.

>>>>> More on the next page

>>>>> *Psalm 91 continued from previous page*

Later in the Psalm, in the section that the Lectionary skips over, we see why these names and their inherent promises should be so important and reassuring for us. When any of the many difficulties of life threaten to overwhelm us and destroy our spiritual peace, the Psalmist points us to God. Whether we face difficult or tricky situations, health issues, fear or anxiety, natural disasters, even war, still the Psalmist points us to God. He's not saying that life will always be perfectly smooth sailing for Christians, but that we have Someone to turn to, to lean upon, and be saved by. The God Who made the Universe, and created human beings to have fellowship with Him, is bigger and more powerful than anything we ever have to face. The eternal God, for Whom nothing is impossible, is ultimately in charge, and though we may not understand now why certain things happen to us, He asks us to trust Him. Because He loves us, He won't let us be overwhelmed. He is "shelter" and "refuge" and "fortress" to us.

So we see that although verses 3-8 are omitted from the Lectionary reading, it's useful to acknowledge that the times of fear and testing described there are all known to and covered by God (vv. 5-10). All this *in spite* of the Psalmist's foes (vs. 3) and *because of* his faith (vs. 4)!

In Times of Temptation and Testing, then (vv 11-16), we can be confident. Why is that? It's because "you have made the LORD your dwelling place" (vs. 9), i.e. we have responded to God's gracious invitation and chosen to follow Him. What lies before us now is, first, "A Triumphant Path" (vv 11-13), and, second, "A Tremendous Promise" (vv 14-16).

In Matthew 4:6, the Devil quotes verses 11-12 in an attempt to get Jesus to win a great following among the people by invoking angelic support. However, as we know, Jesus denounces the idea as testing God; the Devil wilfully misuses the passage, which doesn't encourage us put ourselves in unnecessary danger, but rather to trust God. Dangers that we may indeed face are represented by the image of "the lion and the adder" in verse 13. Think of them as images of people determined to harm the faithful.

Psalm 91 definitely closes on a high note: "Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him" (vs. 14). It lays out what the ideal of trust looks like ("holds fast to me in love", "knows my name", "calls to Me" in times of trouble), and repeats God's pledge to care for His faithful children ("deliver... protect... answer... be with him in trouble... rescue... honour..."). Such persons will have "long life" - the promise of eternal life - and will enjoy God's "salvation".

Would you be surprised ?

I cannot profess to have read the Bible from cover to cover or to have studied it's writings in any great depth. I do believe that every word in the Bible is there for a purpose, and especially those accounts of events that only appear once. One such account relates to the death of Jesus, which is quite relevant as we shall be entering Lent very soon. All four Gospels tell the story of the Crucifixion of Jesus, but only Luke's gospel recounts the conversation that Jesus had with the two men that were crucified with him.

In Luke 23 [verses 32-43] we read: *Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

I believe that these words of Jesus shows His love and care for all mankind. Even at the time of His death He was prepared to give someone a second chance for acknowledging their sins and was prepared to say sorry for them and seek God's forgiveness. God's Love and Forgiveness is a theme that has cropped up many times over the last few months in the message that our preachers have to our pulpit.

We even sing about it with these words from Wesley's hymn "To God be the Glory" : ***Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, to every believer the promise of God; the vilest offender who truly believes, that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.***

So, who would you be most surprised to see when you enter Heaven? There are plenty of the "vilest offenders" in history [ancient and modern]. Pause and think about it for a moment.

Eric Chatburn





Welcome to Crafty Times

A few years ago the Craft Club was formed and today is doing well with around a dozen regular members. We meet once a fortnight (after the Thursday Cafe Lunches) from 1pm to 3pm with a small charge of £2.00 which covers the costs of refreshments; we do have very nice biscuits.

We all bring our own crafts, so the group covers all aspects from Cardmaking to Embroidery; Crochet to Diamond Art; Tapestry to Knitting; Rug making or just enjoying the company and chat with like minded people.

In its own quiet way the Craft Group supports the Church where it can. The T.V. Upstairs which has proven so useful to many of the groups held there. New tall fans for the summer, should we be fortunate enough to have one this year, we can all enjoy their cooling breeze; and look out for the new Christmas tree in 2025.

So come along, get that project of yours out of mothballs and join us for some good craft work and company.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Christine Smith



Not Church is a monthly act of worship, usually attended by around six people. We meet to search and question in a deep, spiritual way through words, images, meditations, silence and discussion.

If you are interested in honest, accountable, involving, inclusive worship then please come along to the Weavers Arms Pub in Bamber Bridge on the last Sunday of every month at 6.30pm.

Kate Bosman



METHODIST WOMEN in BRITAIN

2025 Conference Report



Once again the annual conference was held at the Glendower Hotel in Lytham and was well attended by ladies from all areas of Lancashire. Thankfully this year both Lesley Ross and Brenda Bleasdale were in good health and able to take part and were met by Linda Trafford, Christine Smith and myself on the sunny but cold morning of the 3rd February in time for coffee and settling in before a lovely lunch and the start of the proceedings.

Our leader this year was Charlotte Rumble, a young lady who is a lay pastor from Oswaldtwistle. She has such an open, warm, friendly nature that instantly drew all there in and made one ready to receive the inspiration she was to share. Charlotte had chosen Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10 as the theme for the two days, using the NLT version which uses the word masterpiece, other versions phrase it slightly different, the NIV uses the word Handiwork instead of Masterpiece. "For we are God's masterpiece; He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so We can do the good things He planned for us long ago..." Ephesians Ch2 v 10 from NLT Bible

Charlotte's recurring phrase was that: "We are all handmade and homemade by God". She is an artistic person and encouraged us to engage in various craft activities: some chose to paint or colour, others to make cards and the wordsmiths in the room wrote poems or prayers. All our efforts were our own masterpieces, none were judged but all enjoyed the activity as it allowed freedom of expression, communication, laughter and unity.

Like last year the time flew by and soon it was coffee and free time, before regrouping to enjoy a marvellous dinner and the games planned to entertain us in the evening, Chris Smith was a worthy inner of Bingo and the BBMC team, named as "The Briggers" were runners up after a tie break situation in the hilarious round of Give Us A Clue. Well done to "The Lancashire Lasses" who were gracious victors. The fact that there were only two teams competing is immaterial.

>>>>> more on the next page



METHODIST WOMEN in BRITAIN 2025 Conference Report



Tuesday started with our own Lesley leading the opening devotions with the poem by Christine Odell; "Open with God". The reading was from Matthew ch.6 v25-34: This lets us know that to God we are worth more to Him than anything we own. it serves us no purpose to fret or worry about things, as all good things come to us by His bounty. He knows our needs long before we do, as made us: **"Handmade and Homemade by God"**.

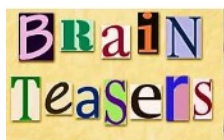
The afternoon was based on we are a collective creation. Each one of us is a brushstroke of colour on His great work of art. We imagined the works of art we had seen and that we had marvelled at, how our breath can be taken away by the skills of the artist, the sculptor, the writer. So how miraculous is it to know that we are the brushstrokes on God's canvas, that we are His masterpiece. Each one is unique; each one is special; each brush stroke precious and priceless to Him, the creator of all.

"Handmade and Homemade by God with love"

Three o'clock came too soon and it was again time to say our goodbyes until the next conference, the dates are already set for the 2nd and 3rd February 2026 at the Glendower. Ladies I cannot in these few lines portray the uplifting experience attending the conference brings. To know that you are with like minded people; in very comfortable surroundings, being fed extremely well in both body and spirit. Don't think of the word conference, please don't let that put you off attending, it is in no way, shape or form a dusty, boring, conference.

I hope that you will join with us for a good time at the next one.

Kath Cox



What 2 letters can be placed before these words to make 6 new words ?

APPLE EAT OWN OUT ANT ASP



Need a clue ? The letters may sound fierce.
See page 27 for the answer

Cuerden School News

Over the last half term, I have really enjoyed spending time with each class, watching learning and looking at books. I also try to teach each class whenever I get the opportunity (my favourite time of the week)! I never fail to be amazed with the creative approaches that the staff take to engage the children and the many ways they support them to make good progress.

For this edition of the newsletter, I wanted to share with you some of the incredible writing that has been produced recently by our oldest pupils (aged 10/11) whilst completing a unit of work about Ernest Shackleton. These short extracts really highlight how far the children come on their journey from arriving in Reception Class with little knowledge of letters and sounds! I hope that you are as impressed as I was when I read them. ***Enjoy!***

 <p>Everything is possible with God!</p>	<p>Nicola Sherry Headteacher Station Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 6ED</p>	<p>☎ 01772 335033 ✉ head@cuerden.lancs.sch.uk 🌐 www.cuerdenchurchschool.co.uk</p>
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It was cold. Colder than you can imagine.
The men's fingers were frost-bitten.
At one moment, they thought they weren't there. Frozen in time.

The desperate men tugged the rope mercilessly. Their feet were fighting against the thick snow. All hope was lost. Their breath trembling. Their minds wanted to stop but their hearts wanted



to carry on. Aching beyond belief, their bodies kept pushing as they thought about being stranded in the snow forever. They were trapped in an icy coat. Their beloved sheep had fallen to the deepest and darkest parts of the ocean.

Written by : Finley

Cuerden School News

Continued from page 20

As the thick, black smoke emerged from the crackling fire, the men's hearts were flooded with hope once more. In the distance, the ship was of a decent size and was filled with a pillar of pitch black smoke. And it was coming towards them. On the frosty ground beside them, stood jagged, rocky peaks piercing the sky like razor blades. The glowing and growing fire crackled and the flames burned higher. Rapid waves crashed mercilessly against the coastline, the salty spray attempting to hose down the seemingly never-ending fire. A pink and yellow sunset was finally brightening the sky as the men remembered their challenging yet triumphant expedition across the Antarctic. It was over.

Written by : Taylor

On the rocky shore, the fire was gleaming on their hopeless faces. In the distance, the snowy ice-topped peaks glistened like diamonds in the sunlight. The waves violently crashed on the shore, murky with a slight hint of purple under the sky. Above the freezing Antarctic sea, the moon stood bright for the night reminding them of the perilous journey they had endured. Billowing from the crackling fire, smoke starting to emerge and fill the frozen air. Then a boat appeared.

Written by : Fay

Editor`s note : both these pieces were inspired by the picture on the right.



Words of Hope & Encouragement

For when you are Happy : Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds. (James 1 v 2)

For when you are Thankful : I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2 v 20)

For When you are Angry : And my God will meet all your needs according to glorious riches in Jesus Christ. (Philippians 4 v 19)

For when you are Anxious : One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision; "Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent." (Acts 18 v 9)

For when you are Lonely : God causes the solitary to dwell in a household; He brings the prisoners forth into prosperity. (Psalms 68 v 6)

For when you are Sad : When we turn our attention to God, we can find comfort in sadness and strength in patience. (2 Corinthians 1 v 3-4 and 12 v 9-10)

Thanks be to God for His Word



Mark Your Calendar



1 st March	Circuit "Holy Smoke" event at Kingsfold begins for 4 weeks
5 th March	Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast at St Mary's
7 th March	Circuit "Unleashed" Youth event at Fulwood begins
9 th March	Circuit service at Fulwood at 10-30am - no service at BBMC or Trinity
15 th March	Creativity & Art day at Ashton
20 th March	Bereavement course at Hope church begins
22 nd March	Farmer's Market at Fulwood at 9-30am
25 th March	Talk by Rev. David Wood at Ingol
29 th March	Spirituality & Music day at Fulwood
30 th March	Summertime begins - clocks go forward 1 hour at 2am
2 nd April	Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast at BBMC at 8am
20 th April	Circuit "Sonrise" service at Beacon Fell at 6am (time to be confirmed)
27 th April	Circuit "Witness" choir event at Hope church
4 th May	Trinity church Annual Church meeting and Gift Day
7 th May	Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast at Valley Church at 8am
11 th May	BBMC Annual Church meeting
24 th May	Farmer's Market at Fulwood at 9-30am

Please keep an eye on church notices and notice boards for more information where necessary



Lighthouse group News

Our last few weeks at Lighthouse have been very different - we have looked at the game of cricket (the women's Ashes were being played) we focused on the passage from Genesis 1:27 – so God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them. How aim was to focus on our true value and what we believe God's purpose is for us and what difference it makes to us. Next up we visited Scotland for Burns Night! Unfortunately, no one wanted to try Haggis! So, we made Scotch pancakes, played golf, and coloured in some Celtic patterns, the theme for the evening being our identity.

The following week we celebrated Chinese New Year, the year of the snake and we were guided by Larry and Kaka who are originally from Hong Kong, they told us all about the lunar animals and the race, about certain customs including the use of red envelopes for monetary gifts, we enjoyed trying some food and tried to learn how to use chop

sticks and tried some Chinese cake made by Kaka and her Mum,

our craft for the evening was to make a snake from paper and we ended the evening taking home a fortune cookie and red envelop.



And the last meeting we looked at the stars looking at the bible verse Psalm 19:1 "the heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." And Psalm 147:4 – looking at God created the stars and knows how many there are and named each star, then carried on to Psalm 8:3-4 saying God's greatest creation was us and God's love for us is even greater than all the stars in the sky. After the lesson we created a box full of stars and had a quick look at the night sky through binoculars.

Darren Arnold, Circuit Children's Worker

Birthdays & Anniversaries

***Best Wishes to the following couples who
celebrate their Wedding Anniversary.***

Eileen and Ian Roberts - 17th of March

Sue and Terry Livesey - 19th March

Wendy and Lynton Yates - 23rd March

Rebecca and Martin Roscoe - 5th April

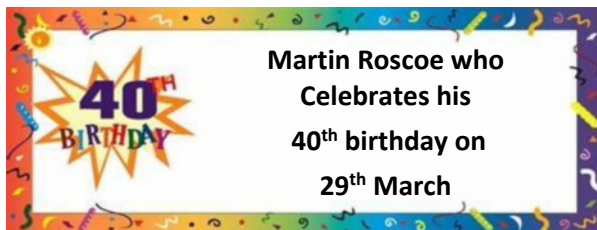
**Every Blessing on your birthday
to the following children connected to
Bamber Bridge Methodist Church**

23rd March - Violet Roscoe who will be 6

2nd May - Daniel Shone who will be 8

4th June - Michael Shone who will be 13

Best Wishes and Every Blessing to :



**May the Love of God surround you all
and your families on your special day**

Useful Contacts

Minister : Rev Sharon Thraves

Tele: 01772 323818 email : sharon.thraves@methodist.org.uk

First Contact Stewards

- Bamber Bridge : Eric Chatburn
Tele : 01772 337495 email : chatburn@talktalk.net
- Trinity, Gregson Lane : Jenny Tillotson
Tele : 01254 852108 email : andrew@adtillotson.plus.com

Ministry Team members :

- Denise Johnson - Circuit Pastoral Worker
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- Darren Arnold - Circuit Youth, Children's & Family Worker
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FROM THE EDITOR

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED
TO THIS ISSUE.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT



I would really like to hear what you think about SPHERE and would welcome any new ideas. So, if you would like something including : an article or birthday or anniversary. Please contact me : **Eric Chatburn**

[email] chatburn@talktalk.net Tel : 01772337495 Or Mobile 07963380923

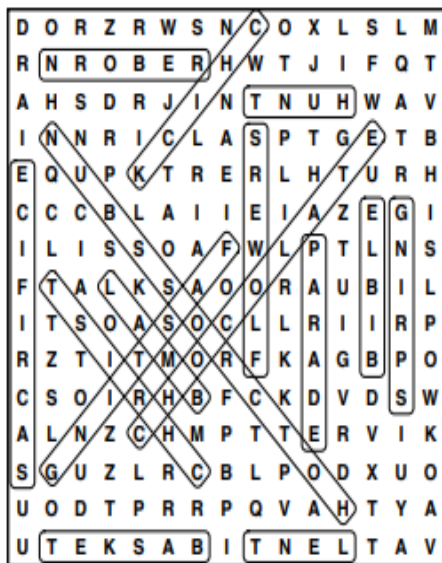
THE DEADLINE FOR INPUTS FOR THE JUNE 2025 ISSUE IS :

MONDAY 5th MAY 2025

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You can find our Privacy Notice online at :

(<https://www.tmcpc.org.uk/about/data-protection>) or in the circuit office.



Answer to the puzzle on page 19

The 2 letters are G & R



The 6 new words are :

Grapple Great Grown
Grout Grant Grasp



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