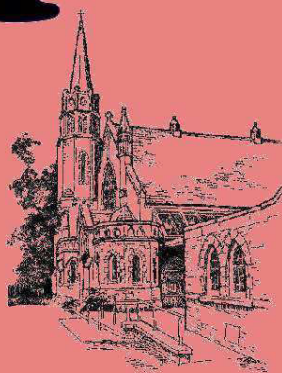




**Fulwood Methodist Church  
Crossroads Centre**



# **Christmas 2021**

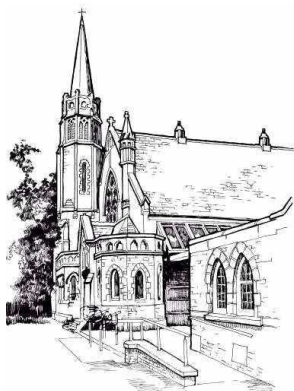


Twinned with the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche,  
Recklinghausen, Germany



THE FULWOOD METHODIST

**FULWOOD METHODIST CHURCH**  
Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 8EA  
Tel. Preston (01772) 718741  
Registered Charity No. 1133929



**MINISTER**

**Revd Jane Wild - [jane.wild@methodist.org.uk](mailto:jane.wild@methodist.org.uk)**  
**Tel. 01772 715134**

**YOUTH, CHILDREN AND FAMILY WORKER**

**Darren Arnold - [darrenarnold.church@gmail.com](mailto:darrenarnold.church@gmail.com)**  
**Tel. 07811 775825**

**CIRCUIT PASTORAL WORKER**

**Denise Johnson - [djpastoral@outlook.com](mailto:djpastoral@outlook.com)**  
**Tel. 07719 200451**

**NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES**

**Check the notices for present arrangements**

9.45 am SINGING PRACTICE  
10.30 am MORNING WORSHIP & SUNDAY CLUB

We offer a welcome to all ages on Sunday mornings, there is a CRÈCHE for babies and toddlers while parents are in worship. The first 15 minutes of worship are for all ages and then on most Sundays the children leave for their own time in SUNDAY CLUB, where there are groups for different ages. Parents can go out with the younger ones to see them settle, and then come back into Church for worship. Sunday Club and worship finish at the same time and an invitation is extended to everyone to stay and share in fellowship in the Willow Grove, where tea, coffee and orange juice are served.

The CHURCH MINIBUS provides free transport to and from Church on Sunday mornings. The timetable and route information are available at Church. Should you wish to make use of it please complete one of the request cards in Willow Grove.

6.30 pm. EVENING WORSHIP. With every 2nd Sunday of the month from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm - **SPACE** - Multiplex Worship and Discipleship for all, at various circuit churches. (*See weekly notices for details*)

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated monthly (morning and evening) and once a month there is ALL-AGE WORSHIP involving children from the youth groups.

For BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES AND FUNERALS contact Revd Jane Wild

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**If you need any help, or have any concerns, please contact**  
**Revd Jane Wild or Mrs. Sue Penrith (862273)**

or contact ..... Tel.....

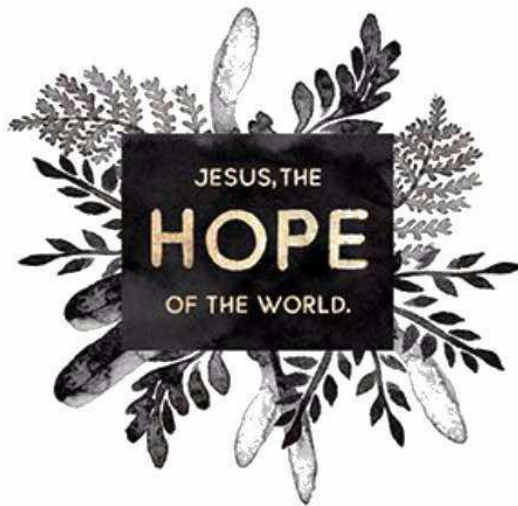
## EDITORIAL

Since I took over as editor, it has been my aim to convince you all that this is **YOUR** magazine and, from time to time, we've repeated the message hoping to encourage you to keep up the supply of material. Has it worked? Very much so, and we hope that it will long continue. Recently, however, the supply has been somewhat limited and we're reiterating our appeal.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a very limiting effect on all our lives and has brought about many changes, one of which is that more people are reading The Fulwood Methodist on line. However, 'hard' copies will still be available to those who would prefer them. Please collect one from church, or arrange for a friend to collect a copy for you. There will not be a charge for these, there never has been, BUT.....should you wish to make a donation towards our production costs, that would be most welcome!!

The **copy date** for our **Easter 2022 issue** will be **Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2022**. Any material in advance of that date would, of course, be most welcome – and please do remember that articles may be subject to editing!

*Roy Smith* (Editor)



## DO YOU NEED A VENUE?

**MEETING**  
**PARTY** **CONFERENCE** **CLUB**  
**COMPUTER CLASS** **CONCERT** **KEEP FIT**  
**SEMINAR**

We have a variety of rooms available - visit the website for details  
[www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk/rooms/rooms.htm](http://www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk/rooms/rooms.htm)  
or email Barry Crossley - [fulwoodmethodist@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fulwoodmethodist@yahoo.co.uk)



# PASTORAL LETTER

from Revd Jane Wild

Dear Friends,



As I write this, life is slowly returning to something approaching normality, but maybe recent news might change this. Once more we can visit each other's homes and meet with family and friends. It will be a special joy to meet again in Church this Advent and Christmas, even though our activities may still be restricted to protect ourselves and others. I want first of all to express my thanks to all within our Church and community; for the way in which each has been supported and encouraged for what, now, has been almost two difficult years.

It is always a joy to celebrate through worship, communion and fellowship. Within our tradition, Advent has been a time when we have thought much about life, death and eternity. This year our thoughts will be in the context of our many experiences over the last two years, remembering kindness and troubles as well as courage and loss. But we need also to think eternally, to think ahead, of the future and what we can do to increase justice, peace and health for all.

Whilst the last two years have seen us travelling to far fewer places than in the past it has, at least in my case, involved much 'journeying'. Times of thinking back to what has been and forward to what might be. It is a strange characteristic of human beings that we can 'journey' in different ways, even whilst rooted to the same spot. So, this Advent I am encouraging each one of us, collectively and individually, to go on a journey or perhaps to continue the one we have already embarked upon. 'Journeying', that is, in our minds and in our imagination and, as we do so, having the opportunity to grow in mind and soul. To take root and be nourished by all that has served us well in the past, certainly, but to look beyond, to what may be next.

After all 'journeying' features prominently in all the stories which have enriched our understanding of the Incarnation, the coming of Jesus Christ. The appearance of the angels, Mary's pondering over the message she received, the travels of Mary and Joseph, the visit of the shepherds, the pilgrimage of the Magi, all remind of this. Moreover, the coming of Jesus was the start of the journey of the Christian Church, a journey which continues even now as we read this magazine. At Christmas time, we are reminded of our ancestors in the faith moving from the old to the new, building on what has gone before, but in confidence that new pastures await. Saint Theresa of Avila once said that for we human



*St Theresa of Avila*



beings there can be no perfect earthly 'home' other than the one which displays a longing to build an eternal home, beginning in this life.

So, we have the chance to go on a journey this Advent, facilitated not only by events within the Church here in Fulwood but in many other ways as we live out our discipleship over this period. I pray this will be a very rich time for all of us. I pray too that our journeying will embrace fulfilment for ourselves and all who live in our community; that it will be an active

journey during which we not only meet and worship Jesus once more but a time when we will contribute to the building of a 'home', for ourselves and for others. Also that it will be a place of peace, a source of justice open to all and which will give shape and identity to our lives and to those of our neighbours. A journey too where we continue to reveal the Incarnation of God, in the person of Jesus Christ.

We needn't travel far physically, but we can engage our imagination and talents to create 'a new normality' here in our homes and in Fulwood. So, this Advent, this Christmas, may God be very real to you and all those you love. May you find much fulfilment as you journey, like all those in the Christmas story, in mind, body and soul towards the eternal life which begins here and now.

*Rev Jane Wild*

## **FAMILY NEWS**

### **BAPTISMS**

03-10-21 Olivia Florence Mounsey

17-10-21 Ayda Mary Elanor Lawton

07-11-21 Chukwuemezue Sunny Ogbodo

### **DEATHS**

10-09-21 Thomas Pond

07-10-21 Margaret Crook

29-10-21 Pauline Kirkham

19-11-21 Ann Myerscough

02-12-21 Barry Ollerton



*Pauline Kirkham*

## DIARY DATES

### December

19th 10.30am Messy Nativity  
5.00pm Carol Service  
24th 3.00pm Christingle service  
11.15pm Midnight Communion  
25th 10.00am Christmas Day Family worship  
26th No service  
26th 7.00pm Circuit service on Zoom

### January

2nd Covenant Service  
25th Messy Church

### March

8th Messy Church

\* \* \* \* \*

## CHURCH STEWARDS

John Ferris, Wendy Bennett  
Hillary Banks, Sue Rennie,  
Carley Miller, Sue Salisbury,

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE LORD IS MY PACEMAKER

### Psalm 23 for Busy People

The Lord is my pacemaker - I shall not rush.  
He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals:  
He provides me with images of stillness,  
Which restore my serenity.  
He leads me in ways of efficiency  
Through calmness of mind, and His guidance is peace.  
Even though I have a great many things  
To accomplish each day, I will not fret -  
for His Presence is here:  
His timelessness, His importance will keep me in balance.  
He prepares refreshment and renewal  
In the midst of my activity,  
By anointing my mind with his oils of tranquillity.  
My cup of joyous energy overflows.  
Surely harmony and effectiveness  
Shall be the fruits of my hours;  
For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord,  
and live in His house forever.

*Toki Miyashina*

## ADVENT

Advent is upon us and there is a hint of Christmas in the air (in fact the trees and tinsel have been in the shops since October). The lights have been on the streets and houses for a while, trying to brighten them up and offer a hopeful presence in the darker nights. I love lights, the dancing colours, the candle flames and neon strips. Against the darkness they lift my spirits.

Advent is a time of travel and the lights help us in the dark places; as we travel through a story towards a birth. This path leads us through lots of emotions and events: nativity scenes with children adorned in tea towels, christingles and tingly carols and songs. Sometimes we travel this path with others and sometimes we travel alone. This Advent I hope that we all find some time considering what our path might be and where we may be going. Consider all that we can offer to others or take time to replenish yourselves. I find the words below helpful. They are taken from Psalm 139 - a favourite Psalm of mine and a challenging one.

Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

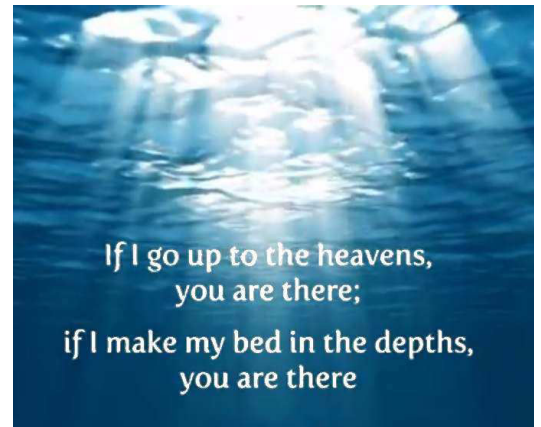
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me,

your right hand will hold me fast.



Whatever this Advent holds for you I hope that you feel a sense of God's presence with you in all that you experience.

Have a wonderful Christmas filled with the peace of God.

***Denise Johnson***  
Pastoral Layworker

\* \* \* \* \*

"It is but a week since I returned – in the company of Blencowe .....side by side for five dreary days in a lurching coach with not a word or thought in common. I would as soon have had a Methody for company!"

*'The Miller's Dance', Winston Graham*

We are the Bibles the world is reading; we are the creeds the world is needing; we are the sermons the world is heeding.

***Billy Graham***

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are endless.

***Mother Teresa***



## YOUTH, CHILDREN AND FAMILY WORK

A lot has happened since I last wrote! Firstly, I have to say, it is great being back to near normal!!! 3Generate went ahead with us taking five youngsters which included three from Fulwood. The weekend's theme was 'In Tune', where we explored what it means to be in tune with each other and with



God and how we all have a part to play as part of the Body of Christ. The event was held at the NEC in Birmingham spread over three halls with 750 children attending and 250 leaders all camped in 532 recycled tents. The event was based around the '3Generate Town' which had 15 different venues – complete with lots of immersive activities for every age and interest. Those attending were

encouraged to expect to encounter God everywhere – through physical activities and sport, creative and performing arts, quiet contemplation and discussion, debate and taking action as Agents of Change in the world. This culminated in us making our Sunday morning 'covenant' – a promise between us and God that we will try to act on what we've heard and experienced. Our small group attended lots of the activities including a Cobra Room, therapy dogs, inflatable chapel, and the great outdoors along with various music and worship activities, I won't go into too much detail, so this is your opportunity to ask those who attended, (John, Harry & Hope!). During the event the youngsters were encouraged to vote for the new Youth President (more about that later) and to think about becoming a Youth Rep. As a result I am delighted that Hope has been successful in applying to be an 'Agent of Change' rep, so well done Hope and please support her in this role. (see page 30)



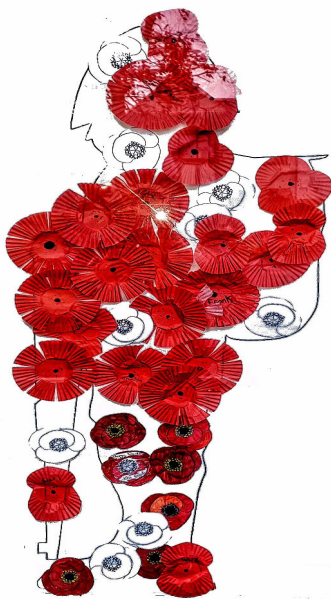
Carrying on the subject of the church youth groups we are looking at developing two age groups for our youngsters, 7-11 years will be OMG and we are looking forward to launching a group for 11-18 years which will meet for the first time during worship on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January (so if you or your youngster is in that age group, please keep the date in your diary/phone).



Toddlers Club is now up and running properly with numbers returning to normal. We do have a few men coming to the group, which is great, and they are now starting to turn up to the monthly 'Who Let the Dad's Out?' - for the bacon butties, I think.



Escape has now restarted on Friday evenings for the 7-11 year olds with 30 places available due to staffing. We are hopeful of opening up the older group after New Year, but we are really struggling with staffing the groups, as we have lost six staff after lockdown. If you feel you could help either weekly or on a rota system please talk to me.



*A Poppy Soldier*

A few weeks ago, on Armistice Day, we took 'Messy Church' on the road, literally down the road to Fulwood Barracks, where we were able to share crafts, fellowship and worship with about 10 youngsters and their families. You may have seen some of the crafts in our window display; we have another booked in for December and if successful this might become a regular event. This is a great opportunity for us to develop a good relationship.

On a personal note, I have been delighted in the past month to hear of a couple of youngsters I know from my previous jobs, who have been successful in their achievements. Firstly, a young lady from the Boys Brigade & Girl's Section I opened in Horsham, has been awarded the Queen's Badge. This is the highest award possible and she is the first Girl in the Brighton & Hove battalion to have achieved this. It's also congratulations to James Carver, who has just been announced as the new Youth President of the Methodist Church. I have known James since a baby and he comes from my home church in Nottingham where I began my journey.

Many thanks, take care and have a great Christmas.

***Darren Arnold***  
*Youth, Children's & Family Worker*

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It is easy enough to be pleasant,  
When things go on like a song.  
But the one that's worthwhile  
Is the one that can smile,  
When everything goes dead wrong!

***Ella Wheeler Wilcox***  
***1850 - 1919***

## A CYCLE JOURNEY FROM JOHN O’GROATS TO LAND’S END

The idea was a good one – to relive the experience of 2010 when my daughter and I cycled from Land’s End to John O’Groats, in mostly good weather and had a fantastic time. We wanted to retrace the route in the opposite direction. True we were both 10/11 years older, but I had kept up my cycling, was up for a challenge and was raring to go. But - nothing happened quite as planned...

First there were the Scotrail strikes that meant I had to travel up 2 days earlier than planned. As for my daughter, a delay on the overnight sleeper meant that the Caledonian company had to pay for a taxi for her and her bike from Inverness to Thurso! We enjoyed a day’s leisure in Thurso, including a bracing swim in the sea in beautiful weather. However, once we started cycling, the weather was not exactly kind. Our first few days were quite challenging with some big hills and poor weather. The scenery was as fantastic as ever in the north of Scotland, but the increase of traffic in general was very noticeable, even on the remotest roads. I had dreamed of the road down from Tongue on the north coast to Lairg for the past 10 years – I had such wonderful memories of it. It was still beautiful, but discovered by many more motorists and we were lashed by rain for a lot of that day. At the height of the British summer we did not have our windproof/rainproof jackets off for the first 5 days.



*On the road to Lairg*

From Inverness we continued down the Great Glen, but my daughter had started having trouble with wrists and hands from day one and by Fort William was forced to drop to a support role, continuing by train to meet me each evening. This was a new phase for me – cycling on one’s own is totally different from cycling with a companion. It took me time to adjust and sometimes took a lot of willpower to continue. However the start of this phase coincided with some good weather - over to Oban and down the Mull of Kintyre to the Isle of Arran – a lovely ride, and I toiled up the big hill out of Lochranza on Arran in the boiling sun (the only day I used suncream). I often took to singing as I cycled – mostly hymns, but found I could never remember words easily. It was harvest songs that came to mind most often as I marvelled at God’s beautiful world (apart from in the rain!) It was fascinating moving through changing scenery and different styles of architecture and I felt I was getting a real snapshot of daily life through the UK as I observed people going about their daily lives.

From Arran I headed over the hills to Dumfries, then some easier cycling down to Penrith before the big pull over Shap and so to Preston for a night. It required a strong will to leave next morning, especially as it was pouring and I was utterly drenched by the time I reached Chorley and remained wet for most of the next two

days. I can recommend the indoor market in Wigan, where I could wheel my bike in and gently steam over a cup of Ovaltine and very cheap hot food. After Warrington it got more rural again and after a brief stop near Delamere to meet my younger daughter and cuddle my then 6-week-old granddaughter in the car (yes – it was raining again), I pressed on.

Continuing through Cheshire and Shropshire I decided to have a brief rest in a layby just north of Ludlow. Unbeknown to me there was an unusually high kerb on entering the layby, which caught my wheel unexpectedly and I came off my bike quite spectacularly. Wonderful people stopped and helped and phoned the ambulance which took me to Hereford A&E. The paramedics were both cyclists and so, so helpful, as was everyone in A&E. Extensive X-rays showed the femur was not actually broken as was thought, but I had very severely bruised my left thigh as well as my chest. My helmet had saved my glasses from smashing. It took three days of resting up in Leominster before I could bend my leg sufficiently to get back on my bike, which I did and continued (having taken a taxi back to the layby!) towards Cornwall. Looking back, the accident took more out of me than I realised at the time.

The Wye valley was delightful, passing by Tintern Abbey, before circumventing Bristol and on into Devon where it seemed a choice between busy main roads or very narrow back lanes. I finally reached Cornwall, BUT another problem hit me just before Bodmin, when I developed a pulled muscle in the back of my right calf, which made it too painful to cycle on.

I decided this time to listen to my body (and to my husband and son!) and though I only had around 70 miles to go, I reluctantly came home to rest up, with the assurance of returning at a later date so I could ‘complete’. At the end of September I did return to Cornwall, this time in the car, bike on the back, with Steve. The first objective was to finish off those last 70 miles from Bodmin and on Wednesday 29th September I finally cycled up to the signpost at Land’s End on the one fine day of the week. Mission completed at last!



*Lands End - in the sun!*

Apart from the challenge and the celebration of an age milestone, the idea was to also raise money as well as increase the profile of some smaller charities, and I was most grateful for the donations I received from many people at church, which was also a great support and encouragement.

The £2,700 raised has benefitted Peer Talk [www.peertalk.org.uk](http://www.peertalk.org.uk); Shared Interest Foundation [www.shared-interest.com/gb/support-our-charity](http://www.shared-interest.com/gb/support-our-charity); and Carers Worldwide <https://carersworldwide.org>. Once again – thank you.

**Anne Garsed**



# RIBBLETON AVENUE METHODIST JUNIOR SCHOOL

*Having been bombarded with news over the past few weeks about progress and setbacks in Glasgow at COP 26 we hope you will be refreshed to read this recent news about developments at RAMJS.*

## **A Whole New World**

It is our school mission to provide ‘Brighter futures for all!’ and what better place to start than building a love of the great outdoors into our curriculum.

When thinking about the title for this piece, Aladdin and the signature tune, ‘A Whole New World’, came to mind as the lyrics really do sum up what we are hoping to achieve.

**“A whole new world  
A new fantastic point of view  
No one to tell us, “No”  
Or where to go  
Or say we’re only dreaming  
A whole new world  
A dazzling place I never knew  
But when I’m way up here  
It’s crystal clear  
That now I’m in a whole new world with you!”**

For many of our children, life experiences may be limited due to the high levels of deprivation in the community. Being an inner city school our ‘view’ is sometimes limited; the access to nature, outdoor activities and the opportunities to try new things are reliant on funds, transport and expertise. It is our hope that through the development of our curriculum, we can begin to give children regular life-experiences that make the world a ‘dazzling place to be’. We hope to impart life skills that will help pupils to develop new hobbies and give them the passion and confidence to push themselves to try new things and experience their ‘Best Life!’

Through our exciting new curriculum focus, Children at RAMJS have the opportunity to embark on some amazing outdoor learning and, as part of our quest, we are building our own outdoor learning space from scratch! There our children have a designated session, every other week, building on learning and life skills whilst impacting positively on our external environment.

What is most wonderful about this process is that as we develop our own forest and growing patches, fire pit and outdoor classroom, the RAMJS family will be part



of planting the seeds for future generations of children to enjoy God's world in all its wonder;

**“But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?”**

*Job 12:7-9*

To complement this new curriculum focus, we are also planning lots of trips; the purpose of these will be to give our children first hand experiences that both broaden their horizons and provide experiential learning opportunities. These trips are designed to allow children to experience different settings and develop an awareness of the seasons. Starting in December '21, our Year 6 pupils will be visiting a working farm to see how cows are milked and to sample ewe's milk cheese. Our second farm visit will see our Year 3 children visiting a fell farm where they will see how sheep are kept, explore the diverse woodland there and make their own pizza which they will then cook in a wood-fired oven.

At the heart of all we do are our school values, all of which were chosen by our wonderful pupils, and these underpin all we hope to achieve.

**Ambition** - to gain a greater awareness of the locality; exploring new activities that impact on life chances and encourage new hobbies and enjoyments.

*“I love outdoor learning because it allows me to try new, ambitious activities like orienteering and it is so much fun!”* **Haleema**

**Courage** - gaining the courage to try new activities and gaining a strong understanding of the activities that children enjoy/don't enjoy to ensure a wider future prospect.

*“Learning about first aid has given me the courage and confidence to help someone if I found them collapsed.”*

**Ollie**

**Respect** - to build an understanding of the importance of respecting nature and our environment which positively impacts on the world around us and beyond.

*“We got ingredients and made dough which we wrapped around a stick and cooked in the fire. I had to show respect because the fire could burn me. I loved eating the yummy bread!”* **Yahya**



**Love** - to develop a love of nature, the outdoors and a passion for trying new experiences that broaden life chances.

*"I love outdoor learning so much especially making the poppies and exploring the school grounds."* **Sravani**

**Hope** - to give hope to our community and our future generations of a sustainable, respected and loved planet based on a sound foundation of respect for the world in which we live.

*"I like the first aid lesson and learning about the recovery position as it gave me a skill that I hope one day I can use to help someone in need."* **Charlie**

**Faith** - to find peace and tranquillity in the world around us; recognising the gifts bestowed upon the world by our own individual God whilst using our own personal faith and beliefs to demonstrate thanks for all we have by taking care of our environment.

*"I think it is wonderful that we are looking at outdoor learning that fits into seasons and times of the year, especially the Remembrance work on Poppies."* **Elizabeth**

We look forward to updating our wider school community with regular posts about this exciting learning that is taking place. You can find more information on our school website -

**[www.ramjs.lancs.sch.uk/outdoor-learning/](http://www.ramjs.lancs.sch.uk/outdoor-learning/)**

As always the children can explain why this work is so important to them and how it is impacting on their learning and life skill development. So these quotes from Lily and Zaara really sum up why we are doing what we are doing!

*"I like building stuff and in outdoor learning we get to use different materials so now I can actually tie different types of knots!"* **Lily**

*I love being outside learning about nature and why it is so important to look after our environment for the future."* **Zaara**

After all those super positive comments, you are still not convinced, these wonderful smiles should tell us everything we need to know about the valuable experience our Outdoor Learning is providing!



**Fran Nickson** - headteacher



## NEWS FROM ACTION FOR CHILDREN

We are getting near Christmas! Thank you for your prayers and support throughout 2021. I pray you and your loved ones have a great Christmas. Here are a few updates on our work.

Action for Children collaborated with a Methodist youth worker and youth representatives to provide a Health and Wellbeing Centre at 3Generate. They also ran workshops.



It was an absolute pleasure and staff thoroughly enjoyed the conference. They would like to thank everyone who stopped by to say hello and show their support.

Be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child. For most of us the festive season is a happy time. But there are children all over the UK who face Christmas without food, warmth or love. Action for Children is doing everything they can to change this – and they need your help right now. Please be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child. Visit [iamsanta.org.uk.uk/Methodist](https://iamsanta.org.uk.uk/Methodist) to give a virtual gift or dedicate a gift to a loved one. Thank you!



Parenting through the pandemic report. Action for Children has published a report on

the experiences of parents during the pandemic. It showed that the pandemic exacerbated the challenges facing parents and that too many struggle to get the support they need.

The charity will use this research to start conversations with government officials and MPs about parenting support. To read the report, visit:

<https://bit.ly/Parent-Pandemic>

Blessings,

**Karis Kolawole**, Faith Partnerships Lead, Action for Children



\* \* \* \* \*

Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy.

**R.W.Emerson**

There are two things to do about the gospel. Believe it and behave it.

**Susanna Wesley**

The whited air hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

## IT'S BEHIND YOU! OH NO, IT ISN'T! OH YES, IT IS!

Every year, across towns, cities and villages halls, on stages large and small, these now immortal words are heard throughout the festive season and well into the new year. They are part of that particularly British phenomenon, the Pantomime. From Victorian times, pantomime has been a traditional part of our Christmas celebrations and there is no sign of this changing in spite of the influx of social media and “on-line” entertainment. For many, adults as well as children, it is their only experience of the magic of live theatre. It survived through two wars and it was only Covid19 that stopped it, briefly. I am happy to say that in 2021/2022 “panto” is back!

It's origins are to be found in Europe. The word pantomime comes from the Latin and Greek meaning literally “all mime” and roughly translated means a performance by a character playing all parts including all forms of mime. These type of performances date back to the Italian Commedia dell'arte where stock characters appeared and told their stories in dance and mime; Harlequin and Columbine, the lovers, Pantaloon the villain and Pierrot the clown. It was always the same story and always the same format and the costumes were universal as well; Harlequin in his spangled suit and Pierrot in his white clown's outfit with black buttons.



In 1702 a Shropshire impresario and manager of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, John Rich staged his burlesque ‘Tavern Bilkers’ which included a pantomime ballet featuring a harlequin and thus British pantomime was born. Soon other theatres were including ‘Harlequinades’ usually staged after the main show had finished. By the mid 18th century, these supplementary shows with their crowd pleasing mixture of slapstick, mime, spectacle and dance had become extremely popular and “serious” theatre managers such as David Garrick who in truth disliked the genre quickly realised they were money spinners. He limited such performances to his theatre in Drury Lane and only staged them during the festive period. By the end of the next century they had become fully entrenched as part of Christmas. In 1697 Charles Perrault published “Tales of Mother Goose” which contained stories derived from old folk tales. These included titles well known today and which have become the stuff of pantomime: Beauty and the Beast, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and Puss in Boots. Another source of pantomime themes were “Tales of the Brothers Grimm” bringing Snow White and Hansel and Gretel into the mix. Aladdin was first performed at the Strand Theatre in London April 1861 its origin being The Arabian Nights. By Victorian times pantomime spread out of London into the provinces and gradually Harlequinades were phased out and pantomime took over.

Still a vehicle for comedy as with its forerunners, characters were established: the principal boy and girl, the villain both male and female, the Fairy Godmother,

the comic foils be they broker's men, side kicks or what you will and probably the most popular of all, the Dame. Many famous actors down the years from Joseph Grimaldi and Dan Leno down to more modern stars such as Danny La Rue, Christopher Biggins and Craig Revel-Hallwood have trodden the boards as pantomime dames. They are always played by a man as the character of Principal Boy is always a young lady. Pantomime is still a vehicle for popular celebrities to tread the boards.

Part of our enduring fondness for pantomime is its familiarity. We expect music and dance and topical jokes. There will always be the love story, the comedy and slapstick and the audience participation. We know that the Ugly Sisters, Abanazar, The Terrible Giant, the Wicked Queen, the Demon King and the rest will get their come-uppance and that good will win in the end.

We know that poor Buttons will not win the hand of Cinderella and we know that in spite of all the hurdles put in the way of the hero the machinations of the villain will fail. When I played the role of the Wicked Queen in church's production of Snow White, I was assisted by a gloriously gormless duo in the shape of Ben Ferris and Martin Burt.

IT'S BEHIND YOU! OH, NO IT ISN'T

*Barbara Hothersall*

\*\*\*\*\*

## CELEBRATING AND REMEMBERING

At the Broughton High School Awards Evening this year, Charlotte Harrison was awarded the Dave Ridout Memorial Trophy for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. It is given to one student who has shown exemplary attitude and achievement in the four areas required to complete the Bronze Award. These areas are volunteering, skill, physical and expedition.

Charlotte initially volunteered at Rainbows as part of her D of E volunteering, but has stayed on with them to work on her Girl Guiding Young Leaders Award. Charlotte is a valuable member of our Messy Church team. Well done Charlotte.

It is lovely to think that someone associated with the Church had the honour of receiving this award. Dave is still encouraging others to adventure! Happy memories!



*Delma Whitman*



## A FARRAGO

We're always pleased to receive copies of magazines, newsheets and visitor guides from other churches. Received since the previous issue of our magazine are these examples from Suffolk: Bradwell, St Peter & St Paul's; Bury St Edmunds Cathedral; Bramford Road Methodist Church, Ipswich; the Parish of Ampton, Great Livermere & Ingham; Lavenham, St Peter & St Paul's (which is also part of the same Benefice as Preston, St Mary's!!!); Holy Trinity, Long Melford and St Mary's, Woolpit. From other areas there was the Highwood Parish News, Chelmsford, Essex and magazines from St James', Yeovil, Somerset; St John's, Cirencester, Gloucestershire; Wells Cathedral, Somerset and Guildford Cathedral, Surrey.

We also regularly receive a copy of the magazine from our twinned Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Recklinghausen, Germany and John has found a way of bringing a translated version of this to you. This is available via a link on the front page of the church website.

As you probably know, Preston was the birthplace of Teetotalism. A recently discovered copy of Seed's Street Directory for 1949 shows that no less than eleven establishments were still being listed as Temperance Hotels in the town. (Some of us are old enough to recall a number of them!! The County on Fishergate Hill is one example.)

Perhaps you will have noticed the headline in the Lancashire Post '*Sir Tom's Church Has Been Saved*' indicating that, at long last, Emmanuel Church on Brook Street has been rescued from demolition. Plans to restore it and create a building shared between religion and housing have finally been approved. Also the iconic cross on top of the tower is to be re-lit. (Sir Tom Finney and his bride Elsie were married there in 1945 and both their children were baptised there too.)

Did you read about the Canterbury church and its idea for solving falling attendances at Evensong? On the third Sunday of each month attendees are now offered a light supper in the adjacent church hall. The number enjoying socialising over the meal had grown and includes teenagers and young adults. Bigger congregations have meant the organisers have been able to attract a wider range of guest preachers. Sermons are kept to eight minutes too.

Thinking ahead to Christmas: one of the (sadly, disappearing) customs has been to attend a performance of Handel's *Messiah* (NOT *The Messiah* but simply *Messiah*, by the way.) Also it was written to be performed at Easter rather than at Christmastime, but it somehow moved from one season to the other.

Did you know that we're obliged to send a copy of each 'Fulwood Methodist' to the Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries, Edinburgh? Legal Deposit helps ensure that a nation's published output is collected and preserved for the future. As a publisher this means that our content will be securely preserved while also being

made accessible in the reading rooms of the Legal Deposit Libraries. There are six libraries in the UK Legal Deposit system: The British Library; the Bodleian Library, Oxford University; Cambridge University Library; the National Library of Scotland; the National Library of Wales and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

\* \* \* \* \*

## A SAD NOTE

The October-November issue of Fulwood URC's Newsletter contained the following notification:

*"It was unanimously agreed at the Church Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, that due to the significant reduction in attendance since we resumed worship on Pentecost Sunday, Fulwood United Reformed Church would close at the end of 2021."*



A final service is planned for Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2022, to celebrate the life and witness of the church and will be led by Rev. Lena Talbot. Former members and friends will be invited to the service but numbers attending will depend on Covid guidelines in force at the time.

\* \* \* \* \*

## PAST TIMES AT FMC

Pew or Seat Rents were paid by church members wishing to retain the same seat regularly. Families would usually have two places for parents and their children might sit with them – although the young people would usually sit in the seats at the front of church. (Have you ever noticed the brass labels still attached to those pews?) The Pew Rents were collected quarterly by Mr Hindley.

There are also several references to payment 'for cushions' but no mention of the number bought or the price.

Being a stranger could be difficult: newcomers hoped for a good Door Steward to show them to a vacant seat. It was not 'the done thing' to sit in someone else's pew, which could lead to strained relationships (...and that's putting it mildly!) Pew Rents ceased in the 1950s.

During the First World War FMC was a popular venue for soldiers billeted at Fulwood Barracks: they obviously had a warm welcome and activities were specifically put on for them. The Circuit Stewards paid for the Soldiers' Rents. After the war the military gave the church an annual contribution until 1930.

*Roy Smith*

## IT ISN'T EVERY DAY.....

..... that you have the pleasure of spending time in the company of someone who is now one hundred years old! Indeed, in my seventy-five years I think I am correct in saying that it was only very recently I had that opportunity for the first time.

Through Fulwood Methodist Church, I have been acquainted with Cyril Leeke for a couple of decades now. Over that time the opportunities have grown to learn a little about his life and experiences in chats before services and other social occasions. Never for more than a few minutes given the busyness of the moment but always enough to be intrigued and fascinated by his story.

So it was a delight recently for Janet and I to entertain him (and his daughter Veronica) at our home to learn a little more. Now I know a little more and look forward to more conversations every time we meet.

On 6 November Cyril celebrated his one-hundreth birthday. How different was his early life in Reading from that which we now experience! Cobbled streets, outdoor toilets, open trams with metal wheels and pastimes with his friends and siblings that are now museum-pieces or which have been transformed into computer games. The eldest of five children, his father had survived the First World War and returned to work in Reading as a barber, It was his skills in that trade that his father often suggested explained his safe return from France – officers were reluctant to place good hairdressers in the front lines.

His father's barber's shop occupied the ground floor of a three storey house: the floors above were the family house. Enterprisingly his father installed a coke furnace and baths in two cubicles where people paid to keep clean. The numerous one-up and one-down properties in the street behind shared two outdoor toilets. The pub was nearby with the beer being delivered on a dray cart pulled by shire horses.

From an early age, Cyril developed an interest in animals which has lasted and enriched his lifetime. He told me that his father developed an outdoor greyhound racing track where people paid to come and watch the races and where eventually bookies plied their trade. The family kept several animals, including greyhounds, not so much for sentimentality but to supplement the income and diet. Sometimes their bathtub was commandeered to store and cure the meat. His father became





increasingly an entrepreneur especially in the building trade, eventually building a new family home with additional properties being built on adjacent plots as the children grew. Throughout all this Cyril's interest in animals grew enriched by occasional visits to London Zoo.

Cyril is proud of his education and his role as a teacher in his adult life. He was one of a small number of youngsters to gain admission to Reading School at 11 where he thrived until he left at 16 to take up employment first with Reading University and then the local municipal electricity company. The second world war swiftly intervened and Cyril had taken the early step of enlisting with The Royal Air Force – he didn't fancy the army. Trained as an air frame mechanic on a range of aircraft, Cyril was posted to India where he remained for most of the war, making sure that vital air services were maintained and repairing damaged planes. Naturally his love of animals prospered as, one by one, he found opportunities to spot most of India's native birds and much other wildlife. He seems rather fond of pythons!

Returning to this country, Cyril resumed employment in the electricity industry, now nationalised, but was drawn to study – guess what, Zoology! This required him to travel from Reading to London (Birkbeck College) in the evenings for seven years. Only at the very end did a grant come along which enabled him to complete his degree and to train to teach. Qualified, he eventually returned to Reading School where he remained as its first biology teacher until his retirement. On his return from India he had married a childhood friend and raised a family – or as it seemed to me created a zoo! Birds of all types, especially owls, were kept in specially built aviaries in and out of the house and whatever animal I mentioned Cyril seemed to have either kept, or knew how to keep, it. It was possibly this hobby that helped him to cope with domestic loss and eventually, a move to 'The Arctic Circle' (otherwise known as Preston) as he puts it.

Cyril travelled to several far flung quarters visiting old school friends and his first-hand experience of the animal kingdom grew by the year. Aged 79, to the astonishment of his family, he announced that he had booked to attend an international convention in Kathmandu to learn more about pheasants. And then to his astonishment, whilst there, he was introduced in person to the future King of Nepal.

Nowadays, time is spent a little more sedately. Even so, as he left our home, he told us that that evening he was going out to dinner with his granddaughter.

It was my privilege to meet and talk to this gentle, witty, kind and unassuming man who is so clearly loved and cared for by his family. Prior to the pandemic I would often see Cyril at Sunday lunchtime in Booth's café with his grandson completing a cryptic crossword – another absorbing pastime. It has been my pleasure to meet most weeks, however briefly, with Cyril where his warm greeting has never failed to cheer me. Congratulations, Cyril!

*Ken Wales*

Look at the magazine online to see more photos of Cyril.

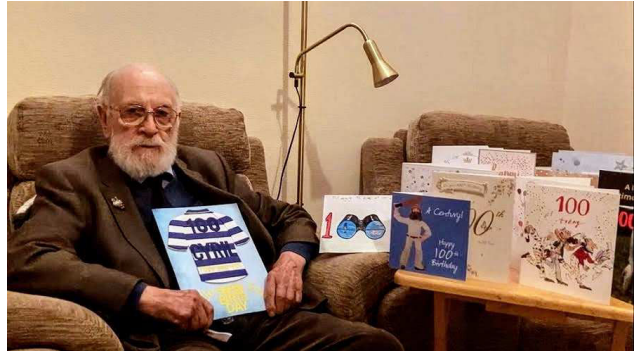
[www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk/fmcmag](http://www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk/fmcmag)

## CYRIL'S CENTENARY CELEBRATION 1921 - 2021

The 'War To End All Wars' had brought peace to our Earth -  
And here, in our town, came the wonder of birth...  
So bring on the band !  
A boy for our land,  
But would he be happy? A person of worth?

Your toys and your games were quite simple but fun -  
Marbles to roll down the street, in the sun.  
Then conkers on strings,  
Or swooping on swings,  
Racing and chasing and hoping you'd won.

But under your feet was a universe too -  
Ants building cities as summer birds flew.,  
A worm from its hole,  
A woodlouse to roll,  
While spiders each morning wove cobwebs with dew.



Now, a curious child like young Cyril, you see,  
Is eager for answers. How tall is a tree?  
And why is the sky  
Sometimes blue ? Or so high?  
No wonder a place was right there. Standing by.

The best of the best went to Reading School - so  
Our Cyril was given his blazer to go...  
There were Saturday games  
Plus long Latin names,  
Geometry, History - and more skills to grow.

The years hurried by as a fierce war began.  
A bomb battered Reading - so Fate chose a plan.  
You were shipped to a shore,  
Gaspes at temples galore,  
Then gazed at Mount Everest. Came home a man !

A new chapter started. A husband ! A dad !  
A home of your own - so much joy to be had...  
With a dear little girl,  
As ambitions unfurl -  
So now you're called 'Sir', where you once were a lad.

But, what an odd subject? Biology seems  
Nothing like Physics or fierce Rugby teams.  
Yet our world needs a star  
Whose visions range far -  
To stir up excitement, to capture young dreams.

When marking was done, there were creatures to feed.  
An owl in the aviary, grumpy with greed.  
A fox with her brood,  
All hoping for food -  
While exotic starlings would dazzle at speed.

Time can turn quickly - or pause with a sigh...  
Your two lovely wives had to wave you good bye.  
But your daughter, you knew,  
Was a good teacher too -  
And retirement was drab. Let's give Preston a try!

Then farewell to Reading - the best team of all.  
Farewell to memories street-names recall.  
There's a new life to find  
To challenge your mind,  
So you piled up your hobbies and schemes in the hall....

You play the accordion, dance down the keys;  
Load up your rucksacks with lenses to tease -  
More cameras (new!)  
Plus a tripod or two,  
Reflectors for sound and more gadgets to squeeze.



*Clare Bevan*

### **CODA**

Dear Cyril, this poem is joyful and true:  
A great teacher, great father, great grandfather too.  
But enough - Happy Birthday ! Good wishes to you...  
You're a great centenarian, Still young  
and still  
YOU !

*Clare Bevan*

\* \* \* \* \*

I asked my friend Nicky to write a poem for dad and this is it. Nicky is an author whose pen name is Clare Bevan. She's written children's books and many of her poems are in other, as well as her own, printed anthologies.

*Veronica Frost*

\* \* \* \* \*

But you knew me as Nicky Smith - and it was your owl I remember, because he hooted for our sound effects, when we performed 'A Phoenix Too Frequent' by Christopher Fry at the end of term.



## CHRISTMAS PUDDING CROSSWORD

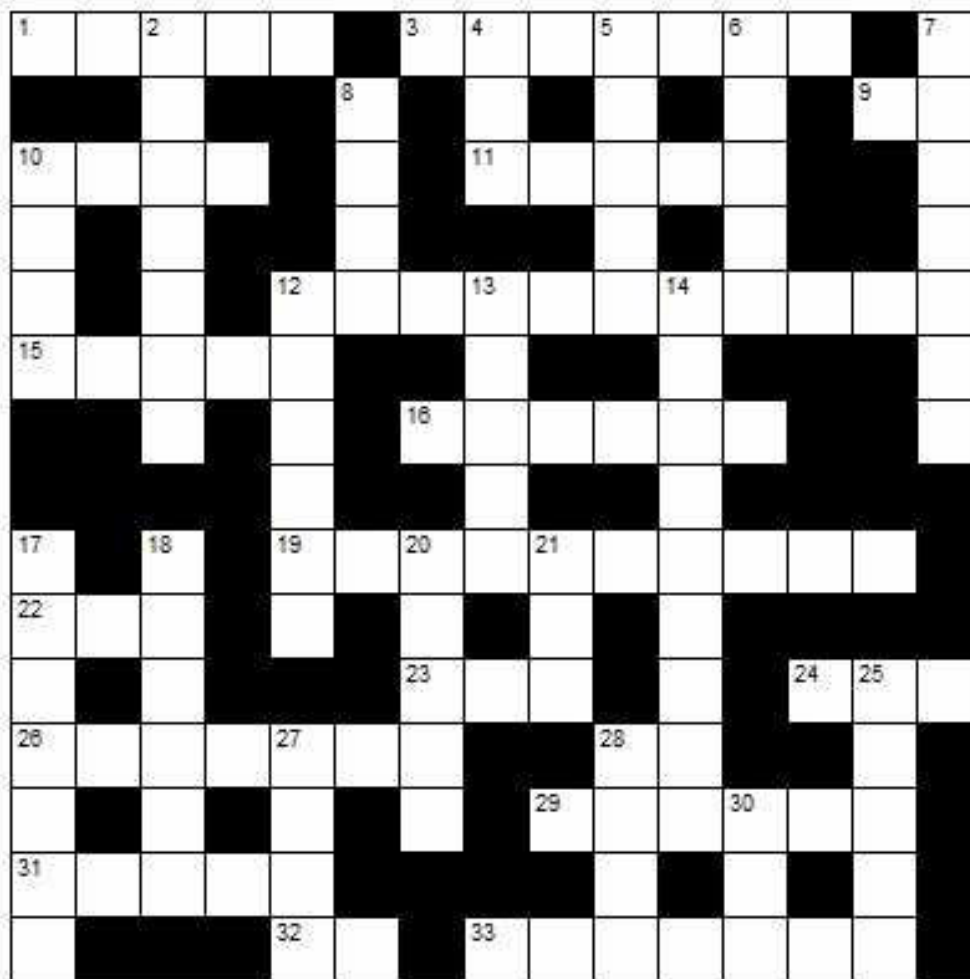
The feedback I received from the last crossword was that it was perhaps a little too easy. Well, at least some people tested it out!

So, this time we have one which may be a little tougher. Indeed, a *Christmas Pudding* crossword it might be said, although I hope your lunch is rounded off with something a little more digestible than this may be! I refer to it as such because it contains bits and pieces of a few things. Cryptic and general knowledge – styled clues add to the mixture.

Even so most, but not all, of the solutions have a seasonal link and it is my challenge to ask you to spot as many as you can. Those marked with an \* are even more particular because they are two of the four theme words which we will be using in Advent at Fulwood during our morning worship.

The other two emerge from an anagram: **PIECE JUST ACE (7 and 5)** which I hope describes your Christmas pudding. Can you get all four?

Next time, I hope to offer one based on north Preston – history and road names etc. If you would like me to include something of special interest to you, please let me know. [kenwales9421@gmail.com](mailto:kenwales9421@gmail.com)



The answers to the Harvest 2021 crossword are available on the church website. Type this short link to find it. <https://tinyurl.com/yzf3n9k2>

## Across

- 1 Ladies of merit or seasonal stage curiosities? (5)
- 3 Got married, turned the first upside down and acted as a good shepherd does? (7)
- 9 In 6 down Mary and Joseph would see this radioactive sun god? (2)
- 10 A group of animals sounds like they were listened to (4)
- 11 Two pupils in Olympic cyclist's tree (5)
- 12 Member of South American race, king and people, in process of coming to earth, theologically speaking (11)
- 15 Pop group folds (5)
- 16 \* How is domestic to display such a level of maturity? (6)
- 19 \* Cape accent disguises assent and perhaps obedience (10)
- 22 Ingest most of the meat (3)
- 23 With 10 across, much sung about at Christmas (3)
- 24 J.K.Rowling's Hedrig for example is a wise old bird. (3)
- 26 Real big upset for chief messenger (7)
- 28 Move to pass here on board (2)
- 29 Organiser of staff lost a makeshift bed. (6)
- 31 Topic for discussion - the setter (or the solver) (5)
- 32 President of China number eleven (2)
- 33 Placed in the 28 across by the 7 down, to meanly lay his head. (7)

## Down

- 2 Heard you missed out from the grieving this time (7)
- 4 Remains found in trashy environment (3)
- 5 Franco-Londoner enclosed part of digestive system (5)
- 6 Did the Holy Family take an early flight to here? (5)
- 7 Mary and Joseph, for example? Their cut backs had to include the second part of the Bible. (7)
- 8 Residential area development planned for nowt! (4)
- 10 The gospel writer has changed at the outset. Just listen, will you! (4)
- 12 First of the major prophets in the Christian Old Testament, his name offers us the phrase 'God saves' (6)
- 13 Stay offered in hospital department (5)
- 14 Party with a share? Whatever, I am thinking the world of it. (9)
- 17 Giving hydrogen to rowing boat crews allows them to reach such upper limits. (7)
- 18 Steady! Here you may find 29 across. (6)
- 20 A young person, but if 'with' goes before, it seems one is yet to be born. (5)
- 21 Ran out the rope to settle what is due (3)
- 25 Twisted around, we hear as we sing, and given Joy on Christmas Day. (5)
- 27 Latin name of 11 across, found in a worthwhile Xmas! (4)
- 28 Goddess starts green area in Africa? (4)
- 30 Lesser messenger than 25 across lost the indefinite article and became jelly-like. (3)

*Ken Wales*

## THE POWER OF THE INTERNET!

In the Easter 2016 issue of our magazine there was an article about a Baptismal hymn written by Rev Jim Stringfellow. Then at the end of August this year we received an email from his nephew, Nick Hearnshaw, as follows -

*Apologies if this comes out of the blue (and about 5 years late) but in looking into a bit of my family history, I was guided to your above magazine where a Veronica Frost asks if anyone knows anything about the Rev Jim Stringfellow, the writer of a Baptismal hymn.*

*I do, he was my uncle. We sadly lost him in 2017, but if anyone's still interested, a copy of his obituary from the 2017 Methodist Conference is below.*

James Edwin Stringfellow: Born in Bolsover, Derbyshire on 10 February 1927. The hard times of 'the Depression' were the backdrop to childhood. The eldest of three children of Methodist parents possessed of a proud faith. A scholarship to Chesterfield Grammar School led him into a wider world, but not before he was called up as a 'Bevin Boy' in the same pit as his father and uncles. He knew his call to the ministry at nine years and decided to follow Christ at fifteen and was a preacher at sixteen. He spent a pre-collegiate year at Chatham Central Hall and trained at Richmond College. He served in the following Circuits: Richmond, Berwick-on-Tweed, Adadia Eastern Nigeria, Derby (East), Harrogate, Doncaster, London (Hammersmith and Fulham) and Blaydon. While in London, he served part time as Secretary for Further Training. A nine year courtship with his childhood sweetheart Brenda led to marriage, and nine fruitful years in Nigeria, the joy of four daughters being born and the sadness of a son who did not make it. He was a one off, an original, an enigma, a reformer, and a mystic. He found his niche in developing further training courses and sabbaticals and was responsible for a range of new initiatives including a non-residential MA course and a farm project for budding artists. Jim's gentle and perceptive approach was compelling and the seemingly impossible could be attempted. His style was reflective and his metier was a genuine meeting at depth. In his last circuit his beloved Brenda died. On the eve of retirement he was knocked down and badly injured; a long recovery ensued. He made contact with Jill Bowden, a past colleague, and they married in 1995. In 1996 they responded to an appeal for two ministers to help in Nevis and in Montserrat and also the Leeward Islands, devastated by volcanoes. Jim led bible studies in shelters, preached and travelled the island tracing the displaced and letting folk know they were not forgotten. He died on 26 April 2017 in the ninety first year of his age and the sixty-sixth year of his ministry.

*With blessings to your congregation*

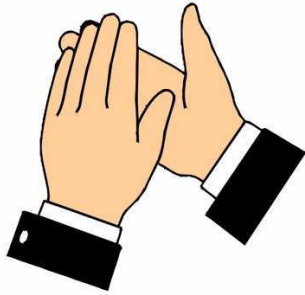
**Note** - He was at the Methodist Church in Harrogate at the same time as Revd Michael Wearing, a former minister at Fulwood, from 1974 to 1981.



## A COVID CHRISTMAS!



'Twas the week before Christmas,  
And all through the lands  
People wore masks, and sanitised hands.  
There were no carol concerts,  
And no Christmas plays  
There were no family gatherings,  
Or overnight stays.  
Visits to Santa,  
Were really quite strange  
As he yelled, "Merry Christmas!"  
From a two metre range.  
Office parties were cancelled,  
Celebrations postponed.  
'Christmas is ruined'  
People mumbled and moaned.  
But then streets came together,  
As they had months before  
When they cheered and applauded,  
Sharing joy from their door.  
They replaced faded rainbows,  
With bright flashing lights  
Again bringing hope,  
Through now dark winter nights.  
And then you'd hear stories,  
Of gifts and donations  
To families in need,  
And food bank locations.  
Pure acts of kindness,  
Goodwill all around.  
The true meaning of Christmas  
Had truly been found!  
For it's not about parties,  
It's not about elves ,  
It's not about what  
We receive for ourselves.  
It's a time to give back,  
And to all do our best  
To help other families  
Who aren't quite as blessed.  
A time to spread hope,  
Spread joy and laughter  
And show that there WILL  
Be happiness ever after.



**Food  
Bank**

**By Mrs S Walsh**, Head of Maths at Penwortham Girls School

## BROWNIES AT FULWOOD

Now that Fulwood Methodist Brownies are back in person we have been as busy as ever. We have been celebrating Guiding North West's 50th birthday by completing their challenge. This included writing pen pal letters to another Brownie unit, designing a flag, making lumis and of course eating cake.



In October we went on a pack holiday to Waddow Hall where the girls completed their Oink! Badge which as you may have guessed was pig themed. During the weekend we did a variety of crafts, decorated cakes and watched a movie as well as outdoor activities including archery and grass sledging.

The girls filled 18 Christmas boxes this year to send out via International Aid and this will help them gain their Charity Badge. We have lots of exciting things planned for the girls to enjoy and gain some badges, including a trip to the cinema in December.

If anyone has a daughter aged 5-10 years and would like them to join Rainbows (5-7) or Brownies (7-10) please contact one of the leaders.

*Hope Wild*



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**FULWOOD METHODIST CHURCH**

## A LETTER TO THE HEADTEACHER!

Dear Mrs Nickson,

We are writing to you for your approval to the eco-warders. Our key is to keep school ecofriendly by undergoing number of Sponsored Silences, sponsored by teachers. Nothing, though, will work without your approval / consent and I thought it best to write to you. Here is why you should say 'yes'.

As you know, the earth is going through global warming and if people don't start acting and the world heats up by 2 degrees, we will be in trouble. Yes: our voice matters, but not so much that we don't do anything With rights comes responsibilities and with the right of a loud voice comes the responsibility of using it for good. As we are mature, we have louder voices and we are using it to save earth.

Earth is your planet and mine and no matter how careless we are, nothing will change that. We only have a generation left so we need to act now.



Help us make our school a better place, help us make world a better place, help us improve our world. Thank you for your time, please give us your signature of approvance.

Thank you...

**Eco-warriors.**

Co-signed, **Mrs. F. Nickson.**

Headteacher - Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School, 22 Nov. 2021



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## A LAST BEATITUDE

And blessed are the ones we overlook;  
The faithful servers on the coffee rota,  
The ones who hold no candle, bell or book  
But keep the books and tally up the quota,  
The gentle souls who come to 'do the flowers',  
The quiet ones who organise the fete,  
Church sitters who give up their weekday hours,  
Doorkeepers who may open heaven's gate.  
God knows the depths that often go unspoken  
Amongst the shy, the quiet, and the kind,  
Or the slow healing of a heart long broken,  
Placing each flower so for a year's mind.  
Invisible on earth, without a voice,  
In heaven their angels glory and rejoice.



*Malcolm Guite*

\* \* \* \* \*

## AGENT OF CHANGE

Hello Everyone.

I have just been accepted as an 'Agents of Change' Youth Rep for the Methodist Church Agents of Change Reps. This Rep role is for those who are passionate about challenging injustice and working to make the world a more fair and inclusive place. It will give me a chance to help shape the Agents of Change work of the Children, Youth and Family Team - and bring my own areas of special interest to supporting and encouraging children and young people in their own work for justice.



I will link with the 'Agents of Change' work of the Children, Youth and Family team, to encourage children and young people to be activists, volunteers, campaigners, peace-makers and project starters by engaging them with social justice issues. This will

happen through the development of resources, social media and helping with the planning and delivery of events. I would value your prayers as I start this role.

*Hope Wild*

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your church

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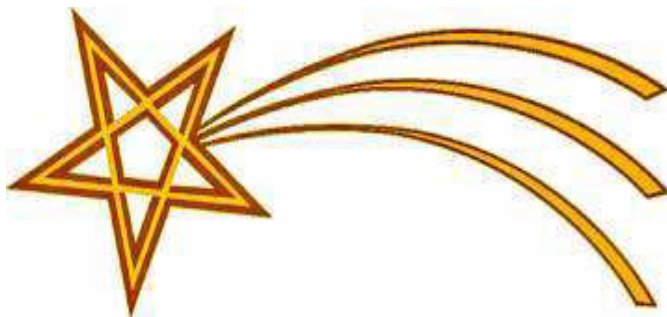
## CHRISTMAS

If Christmas is hard  
If you've lost someone dear  
Just look in your heart  
And you'll know they're still here.

The star in the sky  
The light falling snow  
The robin outside  
It seems like they know

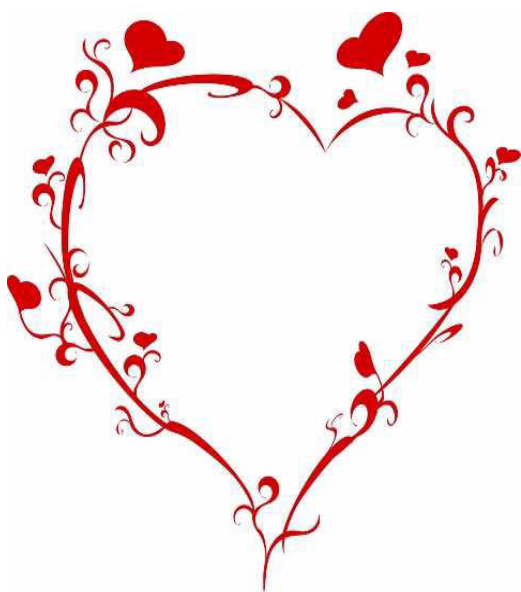
If this is a time  
When you're struggling through,  
Just do what you can  
For what matters is YOU

There's no need to be merry  
There's no need to be bright  
Just do what you can  
It will all be alright.



*Contributed by June Burrows*

## CHRISTMASTIDE



Love came down at Christmas  
Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
Love incarnate, love divine,  
Worship we our Jesus,  
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token;  
Love be yours and love be mine;  
Love to God and all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.

*by Christina Georgina Rossetti*



## MIND CHARITY



This charity is looking at hiring our church premises to host sessions promoting Health, Wellbeing, Gentle Exercise and Nutrition Advice. Sessions would be weekly and for 1 hour. They will be open to all ages and may be of particular value to church members. It is, of course, subject to interest and support and is assisted in its operation by professional people.

If interested please contact Malcolm Rae, Ray Armstrong or Dave Topping.

\* \* \* \* \*

## COMMUNITY CHOIR

We are hoping to venture out before Christmas into the community, singing seasonal songs. This may be as street singers or, if possible, at the Sue Ryder Home on Eastway, where we had a pre-Covid 'booking'.

We welcome anyone wishing to join us and we will have a rehearsal beforehand to go through the programme. If you wish to join us please let me know.



*Dave Topping* 07419 982058

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## FMC BOOK CLUB

Oh dear! The timing of the magazines in the second part of 2021 and the dates of our Book Club meetings have not been well-synchronised! Since the article was written for the last magazine there have been several meetings of the Club and the last thing you will want to read about is a blow-by-blow account of all our discussions. This article spares our readership from that but does offer what we hope is a tantalizing glimpse of what we will be reading and discussing in the next few months.

Membership of the Book Club is open to all and it has been good not only to start once again meeting at Church but to have had a regular attendance of around 15 ardent biscuit-eaters (and slightly fewer enthusiastic readers!). Those who have been unable to join us through illness have been much in our thoughts and we look forward to seeing them soon and to the group growing in numbers – growing in girth may follow if we don't curb the biscuit consumption.

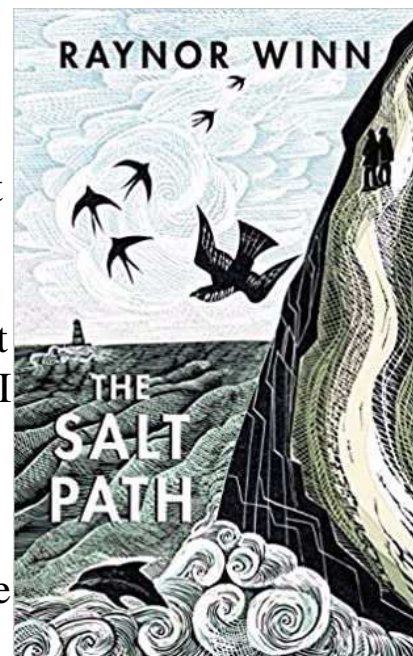
Our purpose as a group is to enjoy each other's company and, if we wish, to read and discuss what we have been reading (or just to listen to others doing that). None of us is very knowledgeable but we all can have opinions or questions and learn from each other. Sometimes our discussions can be quite moving as what we read reminds us of special times in our lives or when new meanings and understandings come to the fore. Some have left a meeting saying that they definitely would now read the book in question.

Our Christmas meeting will have been held in early December (we usually meet on a Tuesday at 7.00pm) and will have taken the form of a quiz with prizes (and hopefully some surprises). We hope to include some Christmas readings and mention some books which we would like to receive or to give as gifts.

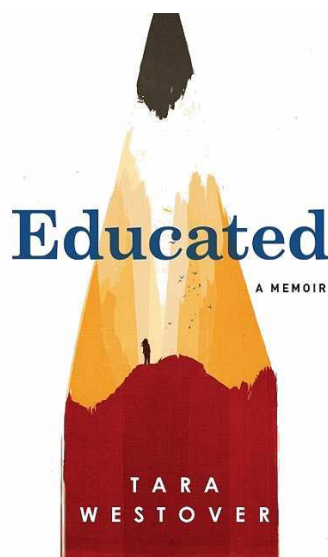
Four meetings are currently being planned for the first half of 2022. To start the year off we will be having a special evening centred upon the story of *Macbeth*.

Obviously, Shakespeare's take on the story will feature but reading some or all of it will not be everyone's cup of tea. I am sure though that we will all enjoy hearing about the experiences of Janet and Chris Porter who earlier this year spent time in Scotland pursuing some of the Macbeth history and folk lore. Those who have the wish to do so are also being asked to dip into a modern take on the story by crime writer Jo Nesbo. Should be a fascinating evening.

Then before Easter, we are going to hold a balloon debate where we will collectively decide which of three book will be allowed to stay in the balloon as it struggles for a safe landing. Three very different books have been chosen and, if possible, members have been asked to read at least one of them. They are *Diary of a*



*Young Naturalist* by Dara McNulty, *Salt Path* by Raynor Whin and *The House of Trelawney* by Hannah Rothschild. All are available in paperback and some will be in the charity shops by now.



We will then have the chance to read and discuss a more serious book called *Educated* by Tara Westover. This is a remarkable biography of an American lady brought up in a strict household. She ‘escaped’ to where education was not the highest priority and became a distinguished academic at an English university.

We imagine our final meeting before the summer will be a reading of one of the books in the Bible. Each year the Methodist Church recommends a single book from the Bible for closer study and we take the opportunity to read the book in its entirety and to discuss its structure and meaning from a number of different perspectives.

Once again there is a very warm invitation to those who would like to join the group or just to try us out. Dates and times will appear on the Church’s website and be listed in the weekly notices.

*Ken Wales*

\*\*\*\*\*

## DECEMBER CHRISTMAS

Christmass is come and every hearth  
Makes room to give him welcome now  
Een want will dry its tears in mirth  
And crown him wi a holly bough  
Tho tramping neath a winters sky  
Oer snow track paths and ryhmey stiles  
The huswife sets her spinning bye  
And bids him welcome wi her smiles.

Neighbours resume their annual cheer  
Wishing wi smiles and spirits high  
Glad christmass and a happy year  
To every morning passer bye  
Milk maids their christmass journeys go  
Accompanyd wi favourd swain  
And children pace the crumping snow  
To taste their grannys cake again.



From *The Shepherd’s Calendar*  
by *John Clare* (1793 – 1864) – with original spellings!

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## CHILDREN'S PAGE

1) Here is a Christmas wordsearch to keep you kids happy whilst you wait for the next Christmas party! Maybe one or two grown ups will want to do it as well. No instructions are necessary - you know how to complete these!



Nazareth, Justice, Wisemen, Star, Advent, Jesus, Angels, Candles, Prophets, Gabriel, Mary, nativity, Acceptance, Herod, Carols, Shepherds, Journey, Joy, Bethlehem, Manger, Faith, Joseph, Stable, Egypt, Tree.

2) Now, a challenge! We invite you to use at least twelve of the words you have found to tell an imagined story about the first Christmas. One of those words must be JOY. Something unusual or different that just might have happened but not been recorded in the gospels. This could be in words (story or poem) or it could be a picture. When it is complete, bring it to the Sunday Club and hand it to a teacher or pass it to Darren when you see him Or place it in an envelope and leave it in Janet Wales' pigeonhole. We promise to include at least one in the next magazine and someone will be offered a £10 voucher as a prize! We know you can do it!

*Solution in the next issue.*





## A tale of Churchmen

TEN little churchmen went to church when fine,  
But it started raining and then there were nine.

NINE little churchmen stayed up very late.

One overslept himself and then there were eight.

EIGHT little churchmen were on the road to Heaven.

One joined a Rambling Club and then there were seven.

SEVEN little churchmen heard of Sunday "Flicks".

One thought he'd like to go and then there were six.

SIX little churchmen kept the place alive.

One bought a T.V. and then there were five.

FIVE little churchmen seemed loyal to the core.

The Vicar upset one of them and then there were four.

FOUR little churchmen argued heatedly

Over ceremonial and then there were three.

THREE little churchmen sang the service through,

Got a hymn they didn't like and then there were two.

TWO little churchmen disputed who would run

The next Parish concert and then there was one.

ONE faithful churchman, knowing what to do,

Got a friend to come to church and then there were two.

TWO sincere churchmen each brought in one more,

So their numbers doubled and then there were four.

FOUR sturdy churchmen simply could not wait

Till they found four others and then there were eight.

EIGHT eager churchmen searched around for souls,

Praying, working, witnessing, drew others in by shoals.

SHOALS AND SHOALS at every service cramming every pew,

Oh, God, supply this grace and zeal in this, Our Parish, too.

## **CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

### **(Under normal circumstances)**

#### **Sunday**

9.45 am Singing Practice (Cedar Room)

#### **Tuesday**

10.00 am Men's AM Club (fortnightly) Graham Johnson

2.15 pm Women's Fellowship (weekly) \* Muriel Crossley

5 -7.00 pm Messy Church (half-termly) for families Delma Whitman

7.00 pm Alphabites (monthly fellowship) Margaret Holmes

7.00 pm Book Club (monthly) Janet and Ken Wales

#### **Wednesday**

10 till 1.30 Welcome Wednesday - food, activities, games and New2U stall

10.30 am Midweek Communion with prayers

7.30/8.00 WoW (monthly Women's Group) Wendy Gaskell

#### **Thursday**

2.30 pm Knitting Group Veronica Frost

8.01 pm Ladies After 8 group (fortnightly) \* Barbara Hothersall

#### **Friday**

9.30 am Toddlers' Club (under 5s & parents/carers) Janet Porter

### **FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

#### **Monday**

6.00 pm Beavers (6 - 8 yr) Fiona Jackson

7.00 pm Cubs (8 - 10½ yr) Karen Smalley

#### **Tuesday**

7.00 pm Scouts (10½ - 14 yr) Chris Thomas

7.00 pm Explorer Scouts (14 - 18 yr) Operated by Scout District

7.00 pm Scout Network (18 - 25 yr) Operated by Scout County

#### **Thursday**

5.45 pm Rainbows (5 - 7 yr) Jayne Myatt

6.15 pm Brownies (7 - 10 yr) Diane Bird

7.30 pm Guides (10 - 14 yr) Hannah Jones

#### **Friday**

6.30 pm Escape (7- 11 yr) Darren Arnold

8.00 pm Youth Club (Secondary School age) “ “

#### **Sunday**

10.30 am Sunday Club Janet Wales

12.30 pm OMG (2nd Sun of month for years 5 to 8/9) Wendy Bennett

\* 'WF' & 'Ladies after 8' have come together as 'Ladies Fellowship' on Tues at 2.00pm



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