

CONTACT

introduces and welcomes

YOU

to

PENWORTHAM

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



LENT



*Humble yourselves,
then, under God's
mighty hand, so that he
will lift you up in his
own good time. Leave
all your worries with
him, because he cares
for you.*

1 Peter 5:6-7 (GNT)



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FELLOWSHIP FOREWORD



“We are all in the same storm, But we are in different boats”.

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the last year and how much the world we live in has changed, it is easy to see how although we are all weathering the same storm Many of us are in different boats. In fact, I think, throughout the year our individual boats may have changed a number of times for the better and the worse.

At times I have sat on my yacht, comfortable and happy with my lovely husband and daughter in our safe and secure home. At these times I have felt unaffected by the current situation enjoying spending time as a family, walking in the open green spaces we are lucky to have around us, and keeping in contact with friends and family via the phone, internet or even a doorstep visit.

Sometimes my boat has felt like a pedalo and no matter how hard I have peddled I have not been able to travel far. At these times I wish I'd had a battleship to tackle the balancing act of home schooling, full time working, fear of contracting Covid or even worse unwittingly passing it on to someone, maintaining a clean and tidy home (not likely to happen when there isn't a storm), pastoral duties and the many other roles of day to day life.

FELLOWSHIP FOREWORD cont'd

We have all needed people in their tugboats to rescue us and are likely to have unfortunately known those whose boats have been lost in the storm. But, somehow, through tenacity, strength and faith we continue to weather the storm together.

And for me, I believe that knowing we are in the storm together can make a difference. All our boats, whatever their design, form part of a fleet, a fleet fuelled by love, faith and solidarity, a fleet that it is a lot stronger than a single boat fuelled by fear, loneliness and isolation.

So, as we work our way through this coming month, and whatever the storm throws in our path, it is worth remembering that God did not always promise clear sailing and that dealing with adversity can open up a path to a deeper encounter with our faith. One where the storm helps us learn and build in strength, and one which we are all in together.

With love and blessings

Gillian



FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Shrove Tuesday this year saw Jen and I not making pancakes for our friends in the church hall but discussing the ingredients for pancake making, eggs (30), flour (3 lbs), milk (4pts), water (2pts) and a pinch of salt. It's always great fun. We miss the friendship, the chatter, the laughs even the moans and groans when the pancakes are too thick/thin !! We would hear tales of family, holidays taken, trips to look forward too, how people were feeling, hopes for the future.... oh if only life was "normal" again.



Yet we still hear about friends and family. You'd be surprised how many phone calls, emails we receive, not only from the elders and pastoral team but from anybody who has a concern, worry about somebody or even some good news to share!

We share the joy of those slowly recovering from Covid.

We know who has had their first job and where they had it.

Who is going for permitted exercise, where they are going. What people think of the new Tesco. What television is being watched.

Conversely we hear of those who have fallen and been badly shaken, those who need hospital treatment, those who are anxious, those who are just fed up, those who worry about family members, those who have concerns for family who are essential workers.

Please know that we are here for you, always.

Junior Church continues to meet regularly. It's a joy to see the children. When we are eventually back worshipping at PURC you will all be amazed how they have grown and matured!

It was several weeks ago Junior Church sent us a link to a song from a wonderful CD called "Scripture Lullabies: Hidden In My Heart." It's a collection of lullaby-style songs based directly on Bible passages. The lyrics are paraphrases of the Bible passages, not a word-for-word translation.



FRIENDS AND FAMILY cont'd

The song we were sent is:

I Will Never Leave You sung by Ben Glover

If you want to listen to the song put the above into your search engine.

It is based on Hebrews 13: 5-6

I will Never Leave You by Ben Glover

When your sky is cold and lonely, And your heart is full of fear
I will wrap my arms around you , Know that I am here
And I will keep you safe and sound,
Through the darkness that surrounds

*Chorus: I will never leave you Nor Forsake you
Know that I am with you You will never be alone*

When your way is bright and glowing. And your soul knows no despair
Can you hear me singing with you? In your triumph I will share
For I am watching over you , And I rejoice in all you do

Chorus

So remember, never doubt this Hold it tightly to your heart
I'm forever always with you, I will be right where you are

Chorus

Please keep safe and well. Know that you are
all in our thoughts and prayers.

God Bless,

Love and Hugs

Beverley and Jenny

URC NW SYNOD LENT STUDY

A reminder for those who have indicated that they wish to join "The Wellbeing Journey" Lent Study, hosted by Rev'd Daleen ten Cate, that the study takes place on Tuesdays between 5-6pm with the following sessions:

2nd March: The Wellbeing Mindset

9th March: Emotional Wellbeing

16th March: Spiritual Wellbeing

23rd March: Relational Wellbeing



Discussions with Psychologists, doctors, ordinary people, folk in break out rooms and reflecting on the Bible will all be part of "The Wellbeing Journey".

PURC CHRISTIAN AID UPDATE

On Feb 8th I took part in a Zoom Christian Aid meeting attended by eight others. Jane Wild, Methodist Circuit leader, had kindly hosted to give us Zoom time. The meeting allowed us to be introduced to Darren Staunton who has taken over from our previous C.Aid area rep for Lancs. The meeting updated on the resignation of both the previous Chairperson, Rev'd John Maiden, and Secretary, Peter Johnstone. Both have given their time and skills over a number of years and we are grateful to them. These positions are likely to be covered by members of the group but, as always, if you or someone you know are interested please come forward and let myself or Barbara know. Barbara and I would also welcome support from those more experienced with online and virtual interaction than we are. I'm sure this is the way forward for charities but personally I am not ready for the challenge!

Darren, as Church Engagement Fundraising Officer, re-assured us that fundraising for C.Aid is still do-able despite these difficult Covid times. Last year £3.7m was raised in C.Aid Week and £1.3m for the Emergency Appeal. Although a lot less than C.Aid's 2020 target it is still an amazing amount to raise given the situation of lockdowns. Darren told us that Facebook and virtual events, Just Giving online and "e" envelopes all worked well last year. These will be in use again this year however it is also hoped that door-to-door can also take place although it will be "delivery only" of envelopes and will always follow government guidelines. Perhaps you would be willing to deliver envelopes door-to-door?

Of course such a lot can change by May but Barbara and I need to give C.Aid Week careful thought as there is another Zoom meeting planned in March for sharing our thoughts and hopefully responses from supporters.

I will of course keep you updated from the C.Aid meetings and will pass on details of any fundraising events that Barbara and I are sent. Cath Greenlees from Longton has already mentioned a sponsored walk/cycle taking place in March that she has organised.

Date for your diary.....Christian Aid Week May 9-15th.

Lent/Easter resources available online for schools which may be useful to Junior Church. Also details of the Lent/Easter Appeal with prayers online. www.christianaid.org.uk

We are always interested to read thoughts and suggestions from church friends and thank you for your support.

Barbara E & Cath A



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

United by Fairtrade

Wednesday, 3rd March, 2021 at 7pm

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us more than ever how interconnected we are globally. This interconnection is at the very heart of the Fairtrade message, bringing people of all faiths, and none, together. Adam Gardner, Head of Campaigns at the Fairtrade Foundation, will talk about the challenges currently faced by farmers and workers in the global south – the 'key workers beyond our borders' and what we can do: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/united-by-fairtrade-tickets-141951722423>

Fairtrade Quiz: How much do you really know about chocolate?
<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/quiz-how-much-do-you-really-know-about-chocolate/>

PURC ECO MISSION - SHOW THE LOVE 2021.

World leaders meet annually at UN climate conferences known as COPs. They discuss how to address the climate crisis by limiting greenhouse gas emissions thereby restricting the rate at which the world is warming. COP26 will be the 26th time that the countries have met, and in November 2021 the UK will be co-hosts of this summit. This is an opportunity for the UK to lead the world into a cleaner, greener future and protect the world from the impacts of climate change.

The Climate Coalition would like everyone's help to raise awareness of the event and there are things we can do individually to help. The link to the website for ideas of how to get involved is:

<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/resource>.

Thank you very much for your help.

Gillian Ashurst



CHRISTIAN AID AND CHARITY EVENTS NOTICES

Christian Aid Advent and Christmas Appeal: Thank you

Thank you very much to all who supported the Advent and Christmas Appeal which was for communities suffering from the drought in Ethiopia and for help with Covid-19 protection in Ghana. The amount raised from donations, the Armchair Quiz and the Raffle was over £1800 for which I have had a very appreciative acknowledgment from Christian Aid. **Both the drought and the Covid virus are affecting millions in poorer countries - a fact with sadly is not always brought to our notice - and for some Christian Aid is able to bring very welcome relief.**

Lent Appeal: Plant an Olive Tree in Palestine!

During Lent we are hoping to raise money for the planting of olive trees through the Palestinian company Zaytoun. **£20 will pay for 5 three year old saplings (at £4 each)** and the trees eventually provide a much-needed income for Palestinian farmers who are often living in devastating poverty.

(Zaytoun is a Fairtrade company which markets Palestinian products in the UK, including olive oil and soap, almonds and dates - which are available from myself and on our local Fairtrade stalls.)

You will find more information on the website: <https://zaytoun.uk/>

**Envelopes will be available from Church Christian Aid Representatives or myself throughout Lent.
Donations may be gift-aided.**

Cath: 01772-613500; cathgreenlees@hotmail.co.uk



CHRISTIAN AID AND CHARITY EVENTS NOTICES cont'd

Sponsored Walk and Cycle: Saturday March 27th 9am - 3pm

Walk for Water or Cycle for a Bike!

It is possible to take part in this event either socially-distanced or in one's own bubble.

The walk takes place in Longton around the Brickcroft. It is under 2 miles in length - but may be repeated up to 10 times. The Cycle starts at New Longton and goes through Little and Much Hoole, Bretherton, (Croston and Ulnes Walton - optional), Midge Hall and back to New Longton, a distance of 17 (or 20) miles. (In the present circumstances, you may need to curtail the route so that you are not more than 5 miles from your own home at any time.) **Participants take part at their own risk. They are not covered by insurance from Christian Aid and must ensure that they abide by current regulations.**

[If you wish you may devise your own route for either a Walk or Cycle.]

Money raised by the walkers is for Christian Aid's Water and Sanitation projects for which £50 will help to buy a tap and a toilet; money raised by the cyclists will go towards bicycles, costing approximately £63, to take healthcare to remote areas.

As the Church buildings are unlikely to be open by this date, the check-out sheets will be available on the day for the Walk from **16 Franklands, Longton** and for the Cycle from **60 Station Road, New Longton** or **Goose Green Farm, Long Moss Lane, Much Hoole**.

Your Church Christian Aid representative can let you have a Sponsor Form at any time. Please enquire for further details

Cath: 01772-613500; cathgreenlees@hotmail.co.uk



A REFLECTION

HOW TO OVERCOME DISCOURAGEMENT

I stood up and said..."Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome." Nehemiah 4:14 NIV

Don't just think about the problem, think about the Lord. Nehemiah said: 'After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles...officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome.'" What specifically should you remember? Three things: 1) Remember God's goodness to you in the past. When you start thinking about all the good things He's already done in your life, your spirit will be lifted and your anxiety eased. 2) Remember God's closeness in the present. What is He doing in your life right now? The truth is, He is with you whether or not you feel His nearness. He said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5 NIV). 3) Remember God's power for the future. He will give you strength for your needs. When discouraged, get your mind off your circumstances and focus on the Lord, because circumstances can depress and discourage you. Chances are, if you're feeling disheartened it's because you are thinking gloomy thoughts. If you want to feel uplifted, make a concerted effort to think uplifting thoughts. Choose some encouraging Bible verses to memorise and quote them to yourself: 'I can do all this through him who gives me strength' (Philippians 4:13 NIV). 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' (Romans 8:31 NIV). 'Everything is possible for one who believes' (Mark 9:23 NIV). Keep in mind that it's your thoughts that determine your feelings, and by filling your mind with promises from God's Word you can overcome discouragement.

above with permission United Christian Broadcasters, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST64JF and taken from UCB 'Word for Today' - free copies are available for the UK at this address or online at www.ucb.co.uk/read

What a friend we have in Jesus
.....

*We should never be discouraged,
take it to the Lord in prayer.*

WORLD PRAYER NEWS

East Asia - Japan - Church leaders in Japan

Many Japanese Christian leaders are ageing, with few young people in, or pursuing, leadership roles in churches or mission organisations. There are a number of Bible colleges and other training organisations, however all report low applicant numbers with very few young people enrolling. Praise God for those young people who have already answered the call to Christian leadership and for the Bible colleges and other initiatives set up for training Christian leaders. Please pray for more of the younger generation to step forward for leadership, for all staff offering training and for those students currently in training. (*Japan Christian Link*)

Europe - France - Political Bill

In December, the French cabinet gave its backing to a bill "supporting Republican principles". Although clearly aimed at tackling radical Islamists after various terrorist incidents, the bill is worded more generally in ways that have raised significant concerns over religious freedom, especially for French protestants. Please pray for various representative organisations such as the National Council of French Evangelicals and the French Protestant Federation as they continue to warn of the dangers in the bill and seek to engage MPs. The bill is to be debated in the French National Assembly. (*France Mission*)

Central Africa - Sudan

Each day, several thousand refugees cross the border from Tigray Ethiopia to seek refuge in Sudan. Many have left family members behind after fleeing suddenly when their homes came under attack. Medair is providing an emergency response to this crisis in Um Rakuba camp to support newly arrived refugees. Please pray for those who have travelled great distances, leaving homes, family and livelihoods behind to seek refuge and safety. Pray that God will heal their broken hearts and help them to recover from the overwhelming effects of conflict. Please pray that Medair will be able to meet their most urgent needs, provide safe drinking water, basic health and nutrition services and psycho-social support to those arriving in Um Rakuba Camp. (*Medair UK*)

above with permission of - www.globalconnections.org.uk

URC COMMITMENT FOR LIFE ARTICLE

Flood waters have submerged homes in isolated Guatemalan communities such as Alta Verapaz. Many are left without supplies or places to stay.

Esteban Choc Giut, the Indigenous chief of the village, points to some rooftops in the distance. "That roof over there is mine," he says, "and that is the school building. We lost everything, including all of the 500 books."

The Guatemalan Coordinator for the Reduction of Disaster (CONRED) estimates that there are 234 communities left incommunicado following the rains from Hurricanes Eta and Iota in November.

CONRED lists 2.4 million people affected by flooding, with more than 270,000 in temporary shelters. Some of those involved in the relief effort have estimated that there could be as many as 50,000 people in isolated communities who are not receiving aid.

With no clean water to wash in, playing in stagnant water and living in cramped conditions, diseases are starting to spread. Health workers who have managed to get through report seeing coughs, stomach issues, diarrhoea, vomiting and fevers, as well as skin conditions.

Rohingya Moved to "Prisoner Island"

Authorities in Bangladesh have begun to relocate thousands of Rohingya refugees to what has been described as a "prison island."

Located at about 21 miles from the mainland, the controversial island facility can accommodate a tenth of the refugees who are in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, near the Myanmar border.

The island only surfaced only 20 years ago. It has never been inhabited and is regularly submerged during monsoon season. As such it is prone to the cyclones and extreme flooding that regularly beset the Bay of Bengal.

"They have taken us here forcefully," a 31-year-old man told Reuters as he boarded a bus near Cox's Bazar. "Three days ago, when I heard that my family is on the list, I ran away from the block, but yesterday I was caught and taken here," he said.

An 18-year-old woman said that her spouse had put their names on the list thinking it was for rations. He fled when they were told to go to Bhasan Char, she said, adding that she is also hiding in the camp.

Thank you for all you do in support of
Christian Aid partners through
Commitment for Life.



A Puzzle Poem



How many towns are also surnames?
It's a teaser in my brain that goes round.
I've asked others to make their suggestions.
Believe me, there are scores to be found.

I know several people called Bolton.
Part of my family, it's easy to know.
Three authors , John Osbourne, Barbara Taylor Bradford,
And Harriet Beecher Stowe.

I also know two names of Lancaster,
Other dear parts of my kin.
Sports stars, Gavin Hastings, Alf Ramsey,
Ron Pickering and the artist Russell Flint.



We all know Pat and Derek Poulton,
There's swimmer Rebecca Adlington, good at her game.
George Washington, Thomas Telford , Bing Crosby
Eric Morecambe, but it wasn't really his name.

Kate Middleton who became a royal duchess.
An actor, Don Warrington, another Orson Wells
Sir Robert Peel, Ann Widdecombe, Paul Ince,
Many more that also ring bells,



If looking for people from history
Abraham Lincoln must fit the spec.
Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery,
And soldier Claude Auchinleck

Of major towns also surnames, we have London, Dundee
Also Chester, Salisbury and Cork,
In the east there's Grantham, Boston, Gainsborough
Surname cities include Hull and of course York.

These thirty four are a sample,
Of those from my town surname collection.
If you'd like the full list of a hundred or more,
Just ask, they are there for inspection.



Hylde Hurst

CARTOON



With permission Tim Walburg



HUMOUR

1. Little Johnny was in church with his mother for Sunday Worship when he suddenly felt nauseous.

"Mum, I think I'm going to throw up!"

She told him, "I want you to run outside as fast as you can. Run across the lawn and go behind the bushes. You can throw up behind the bushes and nobody will see you."

So Little Johnny dashed for the door. Less than a minute later, he returned to his seat next to his mum. He had the look of obvious relief on his young face.

"Did you make it all the way to the bushes, Johnny?"

"I didn't have to go that far, mum. Just as I arrived at the front door, I found a box that had a sign on it: FOR THE SICK."

2. The very annoyed customer calling the newspaper office, loudly demanded to know where her Sunday edition was.

"Well madam", said the employee, "today is Saturday. The Sunday paper is not delivered until Sunday."

There was quite a pause on the other end of the phone, followed by a ray of recognition. "So that's why no one was in the church today."

WORDSEARCH - WORLD MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS D - F

G	Z	E	E	H	P	Z	O	F	H	M	Q	H	E	B
E	F	J	B	F	A	N	G	X	I	A	N	G	I	D
O	F	Q	U	Q	S	O	P	A	B	D	A	N	G	R
P	D	U	H	D	I	D	G	E	R	I	D	O	O	E
J	A	A	S	F	I	W	B	E	O	Y	B	L	J	J
J	E	O	X	E	L	V	E	V	R	M	C	I	E	E
B	Z	U	G	O	T	U	C	S	P	X	N	M	I	L
M	Q	S	P	D	P	A	G	O	R	Y	I	O	U	I
F	A	Z	U	H	A	H	R	E	B	A	V	A	J	R
I	M	K	M	E	O	B	O	H	L	K	J	D	N	E
C	W	S	C	L	Y	N	A	N	S	H	Z	O	O	A
F	L	U	T	E	N	S	I	K	E	W	O	B	N	Z
J	L	W	J	K	D	U	P	U	A	I	V	R	W	S
B	N	R	R	E	T	R	C	F	M	N	B	O	N	G
Q	Y	P	Q	F	E	R	H	U	P	F	E	M	G	Y

Dabakan	Dobro	Erhu	Euphonium	Flugelhorn
Daxophone	Drejelire	Erxian	Fangxiang	Flute
Didgeridoo	Eleke	Esraj	Fiddle	Fusetar

Words may be Horizontal, Vertical, Diagonal. Back to Front - Ed.
For solution contact Ed.

CONTACT

Dear Reader

"Contact" is being published as usual on our Website (minus any personal/pastoral information advised as not for general publication. See www.penworthamurc.org.uk/)

If you have anything you would like to contribute to "Contact" it will be most welcome. Send by e-mail to purcmagweb@talktalk.net or a text to 07538976140 or call Alan Edward on 01772740129 or deliver to 27 Hazel Close

Many thanks to those who are contributing.
Next submission date will be 7 March

Next issue will be 14 March

COLOURING PAGE

