

# CONTACT

*introduces and welcomes*

**YOU**

*to*

**PENWORTHAM**

**UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**



**May you know the  
Peace and Love that  
God extends this Advent  
and find His Joy  
in your hearts as you  
celebrate**



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

**and share the Hope promised in Jesus  
as you go forward into the New Year**

**Dec 2021 & Jan 2022**

Web Site : [www.penworthamurc.org.uk](http://www.penworthamurc.org.uk)

PURC E-mail: [penworthamurc@gmail.com](mailto:penworthamurc@gmail.com)

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## FELLOWSHIP FOREWORD

Dear Friends

This is the last magazine of 2021, which suggests a look back over the year – and a look forward to 2022.



Latterly, COP26 has tried to tackle a vital need. But overall 2021 has been dominated by Covid-19. There have been trials and inconveniences, and some folk have been very lonely. A few people in our Church have caught Covid, but no-one has died of it, for which we can give thanks to our Heavenly Father.

A lot of people have found they had good neighbours who rallied round to help with shopping and a variety of other things. Again we can give thanks for this.

And some people have developed new skills, which will continue to be useful. In Church, the most obvious of these has been putting hymns into Powerpoint for the projector, and getting the recorded hymn tunes played – both of which take quite a bit of time and expertise (as far as I am concerned, alas, on the part of others: as yet I myself have only learnt how to operate the computer during a service). But I'm sure many other new skills have been mastered and well used during this last year – another welcome cause for thanksgiving.



And what of 2022?

First, the vaccines are making an enormous difference, which suggests that we will have increasing freedom. Some of us will enjoy meeting friends again instead of merely ringing them. I myself have enjoyed being back on the (Scottish) dance floor since mid-October, despite having to gel my hands after every dance. For others, however, joining in with others again – even a few of them – will be difficult after many months of isolation.

But no doubt “We shall overcome”, as the song goes. And we can resolve to try to make the most of our new freedom, so as to have even more to give thanks for at the end of 2022. New Year resolutions to learn yet more new skills and do even more to help our neighbours?

In between now and then, of course, comes Christmas – with a renewed welcome for baby Jesus and cheerful singing of carols old and new – not to mention the prospect of more joyful family gatherings this time round.

No matter what sort of Christmas you have, I wish you all a peaceful one, and a healthy, happy and productive New Year all round.



*Brenda*

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS NEWS

Our love and congratulations go to Paul and Adele ( ), who have become grandparents for the first time. Hannah and David are the proud parents of baby Alice Elizabeth who arrived safely on Friday 5th November, and Jack is now a very proud Uncle.



Thank you to our Junior church children and to Gill, Gillian and Viv for the lovely Eco Service they did for us last week. It was lovely to see the children back in church.

Our best wishes go to anyone who will be celebrating a Birthday/ Anniversary in December/January

And finally..... We look forward to a more 'familiar' Christmas this year..... The tree is ordered, Junior Church are getting ready to perform, Our first coffee after church on the 5th, Candlelit Carol Service, Christmas Day Service. We look forward to welcoming you to all or some of these services.



Your Elders.

## COMMUNION STEWARDS - THANK YOU

*Pat and Derek have been our Communion Stewards for many years, but sadly due to health issues they have decided to 'retire'. We send them our grateful thanks for all their years of service and our love and prayers for a peaceful retirement.*



We are happy to announce that *Ken and Mavis* will be our new Communion Stewards, with Alan and Margaret helping out when needed. We wish them well.

*will be our new helping out The Elders.*



**December 2021 Services**

5 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Communion at 10.30 Followed by Coffee and Mince Pies	The Elders
12 <sup>th</sup> December	Junior Church Nativity at 10.30	
19 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>NO MORNING SERVICE</b>	
19 <sup>th</sup> December	<b><u>CAROL SERVICE at 3.30</u></b>	The Elders
25 <sup>th</sup> December	<b><i>CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE</i></b> AT 10.30 <b><i>NO SERVICE ON 26TH</i></b>	Worship Group

**January 2022 Services**

2 <sup>nd</sup> January	Holy Communion 10:30	Rev'd Nigel Lemon
9 <sup>th</sup> January	Family Worship 10:30	TBA
16 <sup>th</sup> January	Family Worship 10:30	TBA
23 <sup>rd</sup> January	Family Worship 10:30	James Mawdesley
30 <sup>th</sup> January	Family Worship 10:30	TBA

**COMMUNITY LINKS**



We have been contacted by Penwortham Primary School to discuss the possibility of forging links between PURC and the school, which is the nearest to church.

What a wonderful idea!

We have already visited the school and plans are underway for a class visit before Christmas.

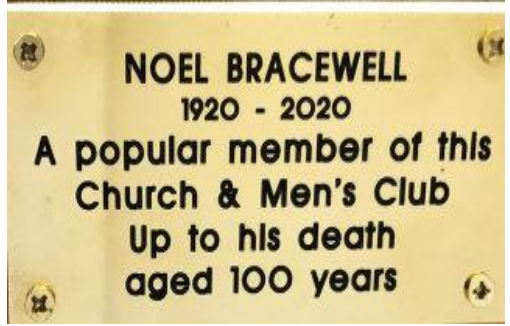
Many of the children haven't been into a Worship Space, the elders believe this is an opportunity to reach out to the community and hopefully forge strong links.

Jen and Bev

## PURC NOTICES AND INFORMATION

### 'Noel's Bench'

Noel Bracewell's daughter has bought a lovely teak bench for the church in memory of her lovely dad. It will be placed in the Guild room where Noel enjoyed the men's monthly informal meetings. We hope to get it dedicated in the new year.



### APPEAL

If anyone would like to provide a lift to Church on Sunday mornings to please speak to the Church Secretaries or your Elder.

and would be grateful of this assistance.

Thank you



(Robert Bulloch)

### WOMEN'S GROUP MEETING



All ladies are very welcome to join the **Women's Group Meeting** which will take place in the **Side Rooms** on **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 2.30pm** (Jean Frew)

### WOMEN'S GROUP BIRTHDAYS

The Women's Group send their best wishes to:  
**Mary** with a **December** birthday and  
**Connie** and **Jean** in **January**.  
**Many Happy Returns** (Jean Frew)



### LANCASHIRE SINGS CHRISTMAS

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021**  
**6.30pm to start at 7.00pm**

Penwortham Golf Club will be hosting Churches Together Lancashire Sings Christmas. This is a lovely evening; everyone in Lancashire joining together to sing Carols. A lovely start to Christmas. Afterwards there is a quiz with prizes, and usually Mince pies and mulled wine is provided. Please come along and join us. Everyone welcome (Anne Hall)



## MORE PURC NOTICES/INFORMATION

### PURC COMMUNITY SOCIAL EVENT - NOVEMBER

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November the first of the community social events organised by Anne was held in the Church Hall. 53 people attended an interesting talk "Extraordinary Women of Winckley Square" at what was undoubtedly an enjoyable afternoon. A big "Thank You" to Anne for initiating this event and we all hope that this will continue to be a popular and successful enterprise for both our members and friends and other people in Penwortham. We look forward to the next one.



Well done Anne and thank you to all those who helped her!

(The Elders)



### INTERNATIONAL AID

*International  
Aid Trust*

Christian Compassion For A Hurting World

Thank you for supporting The Shoebox Appeal by donating online, in person or kindly giving a cash donation to me, Gill Turner is keeping all cash safe and will donate it nearer Christmas.

Please continue to keep the charity in your thoughts and if possible support them in their hard work in places near and far, they work tirelessly and need gifts of items, money and time not just at Christmas but for 365 days a year.

(Rita Taylor)



### THANK YOU

Hannah & David have sent the following message, following the recent birth of their daughter Alice on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

"We would like to thank all the Church Family who have sent us good wishes, cards, flowers and gifts.

We are overwhelmed by your kindness and generosity. Everything you have done has been so greatly appreciated.

Alice is doing very well and we are of course very proud parents.

Thank you again.

*Hannah & David."*

**B A B Y**

## PURC ECO CHURCH NEWS

The Theme of our Junior Church service on Sunday 21st Nov. was protecting and preserving God's beautiful earth. We can all do our bit in our own homes and here are a few ideas:

### **Re-cycle soft plastics:**

Co-op have introduced a soft plastic recycling scheme which not only allows customers to recycle all soft plastic on co-op products but also soft plastics from other third parties. To check if your packaging is made from soft plastic all you need to do is scrunch it up and if it springs back like this then it is soft plastic. To allow our whole church community to be involved in soft plastic recycling we can now collect these items at church for those of you that cannot make it to the Pope Lane or Lostock Hall branches. Remember: Scrunch it, Clean it and then Co-op it. Once collected all the soft plastic is recycled in the UK into secondary products such as bin liners, buckets and material used in the construction industry.

### **Other ways you can help:**

Bring in your old spectacles and stamps.

Bring in copper coins for Water Aid.

Bring in your empty blister packets and we will take them to Superdrug for recycling. Car share, walk or cycle to Church.



### **Ideas from the children:**

Put all your rubbish in the correct bins for recycling.

Pick up rubbish when you visit the beach.

Take litter home so it does not get in the water or fields to harm the animals.

Help other people to do good things.

Look after your toys and things so that your parents don't have to buy new ones to replace them.

Turn lights off when you are not in a room.

Turn as many electrical appliances off as possible when you are not using them.

Turn your heating down by one degree, put on a jumper or have your heating on for a little less time.

Make things last; don't replace items unless they really need changing. Drink tap water rather than bottled drinks. Put your water in the fridge in a bottle or jug as it tastes much better cold.

Don't waste food products – only buy what you need.

Most Importantly we all need to remember to Reduce Reuse Recycle.

The link to the film clip we watched is

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5st12q>



*From Junior Church & the Eco Team*

## A REFLECTION FOR CHRISTMAS

### CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!

I am like an evergreen tree, yielding my fruit  
to you throughout the year.

*Hosea 14:8 TLB*

The word 'celebrate' means to rejoice, delight in, revel, and appreciate. Jack Hayford writes: 'There is so much done in the name of Christmas that is neither pleasing nor honouring to Christ. Even so, I find myself doing battle... with...religious superstitions which argue against almost every observation of Christmas... against giving...against decorations, trees, or just plain fun, as though such participation defiled something holy. Such harsh debunking is nothing more than "holy humbug". A Christmas tree...is a specific statement...By means of this tree we are saying: We believe in Celebration. We serve the God who "gives us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17 NKJV) and who through history assigned...sacred appointments of feasting and rejoicing..."great gladness" (1 Chronicles 29:22 KJV)...Although no one can make a "biblical case" for Christmas trees, we gather around ours with joy. We see in its living branches a symbol of everlasting life given us because of Jesus' death on the tree - whose naked branches crossed out death and ushered in forgiveness...and eternal hope. The lights... gleam a testimony of His Light-of-the-world glory. The ornaments reflect the decorative splendour with which His kindnesses adorn our lives. The star beams hope, with a heavenward ray, reminding us that from there He shall come again to receive us.' As you gather around the tree this Christmas, don't forget to celebrate the One who said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me...will have the light of life' (John 8:12 NIV).

*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](http://www.ucb.co.uk/read)*





## POETRY PIECE

### CHRISTMAS

We're in the bleak mid winter  
The darkest of months, December,  
The season of families and presents,  
Mostly, the birth of our Saviour we remember.



Two thousand years ago a child was born,  
far from home in a borrowed stable,  
Visited, welcomed by rich and poor,  
Bringing homage as they were able.



Led by a star the shepherds came  
to marvel and worship a king,  
The wise men offered him special gifts,  
The finest they could bring.

The gifts had their hidden meaning,  
Incense was laid at the manger,  
Gold to signify his royalty,  
And myrrh for sorrow and danger.



We bring our gifts as best we can,  
And follow the way that he showed  
of love to all in selfless lives,  
The most precious debt he is owed.



We welcome the child of Bethlehem,  
As we hear again the old story  
of a babe come to redeem the world,  
And reign in all his glory.

*Hylde Hurst*



## A REFLECTION FOR THE NEW YEAR

### THIS NEW YEAR, GLORIFY GOD AND ENJOY HIM

Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.  
1Corinthians 10:31 NKJV

In 1643, the Houses of Parliament in England abolished the Episcopal system of government in the Church of England. An assembly of one hundred and twenty-one ministers and thirty laypeople was called to Westminster Abbey to rebuild the English church. The documents coming out of that six-year assembly are some of the most famous in church history. The first question in the Shorter Westminster Catechism reads, 'What is the chief end of man?' Answer: 'To glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.' The implications of that question and answer are profound in their simplicity. And if you're wise, you will make them a blueprint for your life this coming year. *Glorify God. Obey God. Enjoy God.* When you know your life is glorifying God, you enjoy His presence, but when you know your life is not glorifying God, you tend to avoid Him. And that's bad, because without God's presence in your life, what are your chances of true success? Not good! As you look back on last year, are there things you regret because you know that God was not glorified in them? Well, God is giving you a new year to do things differently. And if you're making New Year's resolutions, base every one of them on the foundation of this Scripture: 'Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.' If you follow that rule, you will stay on the right path, and you will have the peace and joy of knowing your life is pleasing to the Lord. Whatever circumstances may arise, you will face them with peace and confidence, knowing that God is with you.

*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](http://www.ucb.co.uk/read)*



## URC COMMITMENT FOR LIFE EXTRACT 1

### ***Bangladesh – Update***

Christian Aid works hard to shift the balance of power in decision making to the local level. The current international humanitarian system in Bangladesh tends to be dominated by a few, large international organisations. These end up working with sizeable international actors, who frequently ignore local and national actors. This creates an imbalanced power relation between international agencies and local ones. Locals end up on the periphery of a humanitarian response, and all that local knowledge, leadership, and capacity for decision making is lost.

One of our trusted partners in Bangladesh is 'GUK.' They work with locals to enable sustainable change in the livelihoods of communities living in extreme poverty. GUK is well-known locally for its work with women, who are among the poorest of people in Bangladesh. GUK specialises in resilient livelihoods development, climate change, disaster risk reduction, gender and women's empowerment, and good governance accountability. Inspired by the belief in 'release not relief', GUK works with socially marginalised individuals and communities to bring about positive and self-sustaining change.



### ***El-Salvador – Update***

In El Salvador, one of the Central America countries supported by Commitment for Life, 25 % of children below the age of 5 face extreme poverty . 36 % of the rural population lives in poverty.

Urbanization is a problem developing countries face as cities grow and become a hub for economic, medical and commercial activity. This causes problems for those in rural areas as they have less and less access to resources. Currently, 60.3 % of citizens live in urban areas. This results in greater poverty for the people outside of cities.

El Salvadorans are also constantly at risk of facing greater challenges due to natural disasters. World Vision reports that the country "experiences frequent earthquakes and volcanic activity, making it known as the 'land of volcanoes.'" In December of 2013, the Chaparrastique volcano in eastern El Salvador erupted and caused the evacuation of 5,000 people.

Leaf rust has caused problems for the coffee industry in El Salvador, which is an important source of income for the country's economy. Heavy rain and wind carry rust spores from plantations to other plantations miles away.

Commitment for Life has been incredibly honoured to be a Christian Aid partner in support of Central America since we became involved in the region back in 2013/2014. As you know, Commitment for Life will reduce our global regions from four to three at which time our Central America involvement will come to an end.

## URC COMMITMENT FOR LIFE EXTRACT 2

### Zimbabwe - Update on Poverty

Poverty affects 76.3% of Zimbabwean children living in rural areas. Roughly 74% of the population lives on £5.00 a day and the average wage per month is around £230.

Half of Zimbabwe's 13.5 million people live below the food poverty line. - About 3.5 million children are chronically hungry.

Approximately 1.3 million Zimbabweans were living with HIV as of 2016. However, the number of HIV cases has been declining since 1997 because of improved prevention, treatment and support.

About 60% of rural Zimbabwean women face period poverty, meaning they lack access to menstrual supplies or education. Girls who experience period poverty miss an estimated 20% of their school life. Due to famine and the HIV/AIDS crisis, the average life expectancy for a Zimbabwean was only 61 years as of 2018. However, life expectancy has steadily risen since 2002 when it was only 44 years. In 2019, two million Zimbabweans had no access to safe drinking water due to drought.

### Israeli Occupied Palestinian Territories - Update

Our good friend William Bell, Christian Aid's Head of Middle East Policy & Advocacy, has said, "Palestinians face an even more grim future... Without justice and equality there will be no Palestine and without Palestine neither Palestinian nor Israeli can enjoy the security, dignity and prosperity that all need to thrive and survive."

What passes for normality in Palestine is unsustainable in the face of the inequalities and injustices that characterise daily life for millions of Palestinian people on the West Bank and Gaza. Christian Aid has urged a concerted action by the international community, including the UK government, to help address the underlying conditions that fuel the conflict, failing which here will be a continued cycle of violence and poverty.

The report shows how more than two decades since Palestinian and Israeli leaders signed the first Oslo Accord, there is no peace, with daily life for Palestinians worsening on many measures.



## **WORLD PRAYER NEWS**

### ***Central African Republic - Bangui - the Bible arrives***

At the end of September, 15,000 New Testaments finally arrived in Bangui, Central African Republic. The Gbeya, Kaba and Ngbugu translation teams each worked for about 25 years on these, and the 5,000 copies per language could reach almost a tenth of this war-torn country's citizens. Pray for the translators' safety, visiting their home areas to raise awareness ahead of celebration events in early 2022. Pray to the Lord that each copy would impact five, ten or more lives as it goes out, resulting in people's lives changed by this Good News. (SIL International)

### ***Cambodia -South East Asia - Siem Reap Families***

One in six people in Cambodia live in conditions of modern slavery, with children being particularly vulnerable. PEACE Team Cambodia, Viva's partner network of churches in Siem Reap, work together to train children and families to help them avoid becoming victims of trafficking. The network equips community leaders to recognise and respond to traffickers. Pray that the network will continue to be a bright light shining against the dark backdrop of trafficking in Siem Reap. Pray too for the rollout of learning spaces to enable children who have been out of school through the pandemic to catch up on their education, and have psychosocial support to help their wellbeing. (VIVA Foundation.Life)

### ***Croatia - Central / Southeast Europe - Reaching the Deaf***

There are over 100,000 deaf or hearing-impaired people in Croatia, many of whom feel isolated and disconnected from God's truth. Mario Casni & his team produce Christian TV programmes for local & national stations in that country but would also like to reach deaf people with Jesus' message of hope. That's why they're working with five volunteers who will be trained as sign language interpreters to take part in the TV programmes. Pray that funds can be raised to cover the training costs and that many new people can be reached in this creative way. (Reach Beyond)

*with permission of [www.globalconnections.org.uk](http://www.globalconnections.org.uk)*

## WORDSEARCH - ADVENT; CHRISTMAS; NEW YEAR

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

Advent	God	NewYear
Angels	Jesus	Shepherds
Bethlehem	Joseph	Star
Christmas	Mary	WiseMen
Gabriel	Nazareth	Worship

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

### CONTACT

**Dear Reader**

***The next 'Contact' will be for February 2022***

'Contact' is also published on our Website (minus any personal or pastoral information not for general publication).

See [www.penworthamurc.org.uk](http://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](mailto:purcmagweb@talktalk.net) or a text to 07538976140 or call Alan Edward on 01772740129 or deliver to 27 Hazel Close. **Many thanks to those contributing.**

**Next submission date will be 23 January 2022**

**Next issue will be on 30 January 2022**

*Ed.*

## CARTOON



## A POEM FOR JUNIOR CHURCH

### WHAT CHRISTMAS REALLY MEANS



Have you ever wondered  
What Christmas really means?  
Is it just like party time,  
With presents and ice-creams?



God promised in the Bible  
Lots and lots of years ago.  
A special baby would be born  
And He would love you so!

Jesus is His precious name.  
He is God's only son.  
Christmas is His birthday  
We celebrate with fun



Jesus is alive today.  
His love will never end.  
Because He came to save us.  
He wants to be your friend.



Happy Birthday Lord Jesus

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(we are grateful to Margo for passing this on)

COLOURING PAGE

