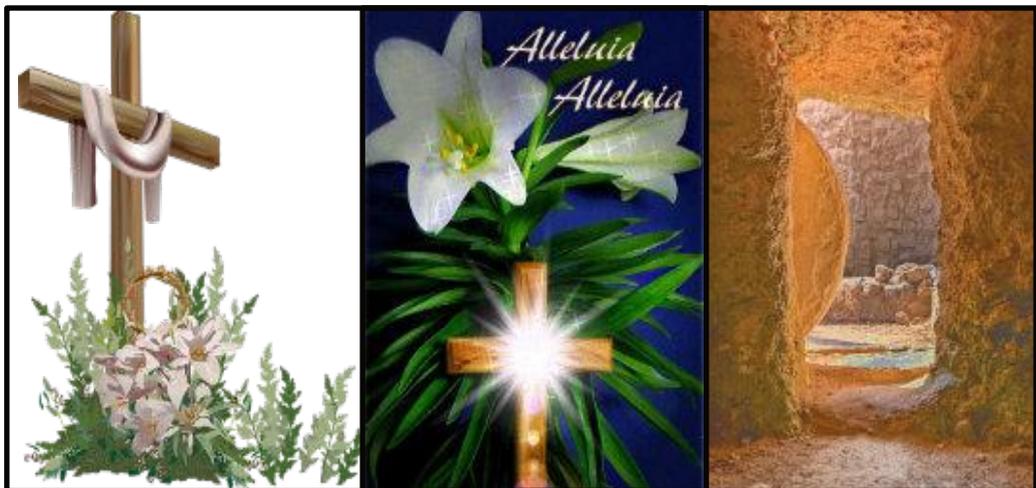


CONTACT

introduces and welcomes
YOU
to

Penwortham United Reformed Church



MARCH 2024

Web Site : www.penworthamurc.org.uk
E-mail: penworthamurc@gmail.com
Telephone - 07716129719

FELLOWSHIP FOREWORD

LANCASHIRE SOUTH MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

This week Anne and I went to our regular “Steering Group” meeting with other representatives of the Lancashire South Missional Partnership. We meet roughly every couple of months, talk about any problems or ideas we have. The first thing we always talk about is “Any sign of a new minister for our churches”! The answer is usually the same – no one seems to want to come and serve our churches. We are a bit of a problem within the Synod – there are ministers at other groups of churches and these are working quite well, but there would only one person coming to a place where there is not a minister to share the load with and that could be a bit daunting. Well that’s my opinion. There are very few new ministers coming through as well which doesn’t help. I know, you’ve heard all this before but we are working on your behalf by making ourselves heard. At a meeting last September the Synod did talk about adjusting the partnerships slightly so we had access to a minister, but the problems that would cause were great – huge distances to cover and churches fairly settled as they are, but at least we got our point across.

We were visited at this meeting by Peter S, the finance officer at the Synod. He is trying to visit all the Steering Groups to talk about the finances within the Synod and what would be happening during the next few months.

2 dates for your diaries from the meeting. There will be a zoom World Day of Prayer service at 12.00 on Friday 1st March. Join Zoom Meeting online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85485337049?pwd=VDRFK3FyME1jaHBZYUd5K0QvMzN6UT09>

Meeting ID: 854 8533 7049 Passcode: 466354

There is a Brick Service Training*** here on Thursday next. We are also planning another zoom bible course of some kind similar to the ones we had during lockdown.

Gill T

** (Note: usefully this online World Day of Prayer Service can for some be used as a substitute for the anticipated Penwortham Churches Together Service, which now does not seem to be taking place this year... Ed).

***(Note: Aimed at Youth and Worship Leaders interested in addressing issues with children in short talks through the use of toy building blocks).

FAMILY AND FRIENDS



It was sad to hear of the passing of our friend Marjorie P, who in former times attended church for many years.

Our thoughts are with one of our newer members Non T who has had a recent family bereavement in Wales, and Ann who is now getting out with her family.

Margo E and Valerie H continue to improve following their recent spells in hospital.

Barbara B and Hylda & Basil H have been unwell, and are now hopefully improving.

We wish everyone who has been under the weather all our good wishes for better times to come.

Anne H and Robert B have recently visited Mary L and Doreen B to serve them Communion. Mary remains in very good form despite her health issues, and Doreen is still awaiting a new hip.

If anyone who is unable to attend church for any reason, and would like to receive Communion at home, please speak to your Elder.

Paul M is moving back to Penwortham from Leyland, hopefully within the next few weeks (Builders permitting), and will again be attending Penwortham URC.

Please keep all our church family in your thoughts and prayers.

The Elders



IN MEMORIAM

MARJORIE P

Brenda, myself and others have been visiting Marjorie for the last few years and tried to keep her informed about Church and congregation, she always read her Contact thoroughly and asked about events and people past and present.

Marjorie was a very independent and private person, but she enjoyed remembering her life in PURC, the Choir, Ladies Group, Christmas Fair and going on some of our " Days Out "with John her late husband.

Some of the chats I had.

In her childhood Marjorie was evacuated from London to the countryside, with her twin sister, she enjoyed the freedom of the outdoors , climbing trees and making dens , but not the bread and dripping!

Marjorie loved her holidays and John enjoyed driving so they headed out to the Lake District and Scotland enjoying a stop on Shap summit to enjoy a bacon sandwich, getting 'modern' after visiting America and first tasting a BLT sandwich, which she thought was delicious and remained a treat for them both.

It was very hard for Marjorie when her health and strength began declining and she couldn't keep the independence of getting out and about on the Community Bus and other outings but going as long as possible, with the help of very good friends, to sing in a Choir, she so enjoyed singing and music, until a fall which resulted in her having to leave her home for residential care where she passed away on the 26th January 2024.

At peace now.

From Rita

COMMUNITY SOCIAL EVENT - MARCH

Anne H has arranged for our next Community Social Event in March - details below - thanks to Anne and all her helpers.

COMMUNITY SOCIAL AFTERNOON

at

PENWORTHAM UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Liverpool Road, Penwortham, PR1 0QB

Monday 18th March 2024 at 2.00pm

An Amusing Afternoon Talk by



*Matthew Lepp
of*



TigerMuffin Soaps



including Demonstrations



*The event will be followed by
Tea, Coffee and Biscuits*

The cost will be £4.00



Do come along and bring a friend

OTHER COMING EVENTS

SOUTH RIBBLE TOGETHER ROADSHOW (inc. COST OF LIVING)

South Ribble Borough Council are planning a three-week event where we will be taking a bus to various stops in South Ribble (see below) The Bus will have wi-fi and spaces upstairs for private conversations with the focus being on Cost of Living. We would like to have organisations available on hand to be able to signpost residents to services including our in-house social prescribing team, debt/budgeting advice, energy advice, additional benefits, personal development and employability advice/courses. ***The bus will go to key locations such as Leyland, Penwortham, Walton-Le-Dale, Lostock Hall and Bamber Bridge , Mon-Fri, 11am-7pm, for 3 weeks from 26/02.***

***Week 1: Tuesday 27th Feb 11am Kingsfold Community Centre,
3pm Tesco***

Week 2: Tuesday 5th Mar 11am Penwortham Cricket Club, Middleforth

GOOD FRIDAY WALK OF WITNESS - 29th MARCH 2024

The Churches Together in Penwortham annual Good Friday Walk of Witness on Friday 29th March 2024 will start from St Mary's Parish Church at 10.00am, returning to St Mary's by 10.50am The joint service will commence at 11.00am. Everyone is warmly invited to attend the Walk and/or the Service.

SPRING WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

A vertical poster for a Spring Wreath Making Workshop. The background is a collage of various flowers, including tulips, daisies, and hydrangeas. The text is arranged in three white rectangular boxes with black text. The top box contains the title and location. The middle box describes the workshop as suitable for all abilities and lists provided materials and treats. The bottom box provides contact information and booking details.

✧ Spring Wreath Making Workshop ✧
Penwortham United
Reformed Church Hall,
Liverpool Rd, Penwortham.

This fun floristry workshop is suitable for all abilities no previous experience needed. All materials and tools will be provided with sweet treats and drinks too!

If this sounds like something you would enjoy please don't hesitate to contact Katy
[@dottyblooms](https://www.instagram.com/dottyblooms)
and book your place 🌸 ✧
Saturday 23rd March
2pm - 4pm
£50

ZIMBABWE



Gender Justice In Zimbabwe
Regina Bhobo is a Gender Officer with the Evangelical Fellowship in Zimbabwe and coordinates the Zimbabwe Gender and Faith Network, also known as ‘Side by Side, Zimbabwe’. Side by Side encompasses around eighteen different organisations. Its flagship project is called ‘Against Gender-Based Violence’. It operates in six districts of Manicaland.

(Peter Snyman / Regina Bhobo)

Raising awareness about the issues surrounding gender-based violence is a key part of the strategy, giving women and men the awareness, language and tools to confront this awful scourge in communities.

The project has also harnessed the support of over five hundred pastors and ministers. Each was trained to be a gender champion in the local community. One large church created a well-respected refuge for survivors of gender-based violence.

Your support through Commitment for Life enables Regina’s work to thrive in Zimbabwe. You can hear Regina say more about the project in this filmed interview [Regina Bhobo](#)

PRAYER

Begin with silence; or use music as a bed for this prayer.

Living God, who clothes us in garments of gratitude, adorn this prayer with the light of your grace. We bring to mind the many blessings that you so generously give... Moment of silence...

We pray for those gathered in this place...those in our churches...those in our communities...for those who selflessly serve in making the world a better place.

Forgiving God, we too easily diminish the dignity of others, sowing division when you call for openness and trust. Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

We stand ashamed at the depth to which humanity can sink, how easily we march to the drums of war, how quickly we are swayed and seduced by the savagery of self-justifying narratives. Christ, have mercy.

May the Trinity of Love bind our wounds, challenge our complacency, bring freedom from oppression, and lead all to abundance of freedom. Amen.

A REFLECTION

JUST AS I AM

'By the grace of God I am what I am.'
1 Corinthians 15:10 NIV

There is a tale about a boy who comes home and does not know his mum is visiting with their pastor. He carries a dead rat in his hand. 'Mum, you will never guess what. There was a rat running around in the garage. I saw it, threw a stone, and hit it. It just lay there, so I went over and stamped on it. Then I picked it up and hurled it against the wall.' Then he sees the pastor, and if his mum's looks could kill, he knew that he would be in for it. So, he holds the rat up and adds in a pious voice, 'And then the dear Lord called him home.' That is the kind of talk people slip into when they want to hide their flaws and appear more 'spiritual'.

The old hymn 'Just as I Am, Without One Plea' is about taking off the mask and knowing that God loves you in spite of your problems. If there was a true 'just as I am' church where people could bring their baggage and brokenness, if there was a group where everyone was loved and no one faked it, we couldn't make enough room for them inside the building. Paul acknowledged that sometimes he acted like Dr Jekyll, other times like Mr Hyde. He talked of the times when he wanted to do good but evil took over. But he refused to throw in the towel because he realised, he was a work in progress. 'I..do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect' (vs. 9-10 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 (Margaret E)*



WORLD PRAYER NEWS

There are many local issues, as well as widely publicised issues in the media, which we are called to pray for. Sometimes it is good to focus also on lesser known issues in our world and on Christian endeavours that we can bring before God too. This page focuses on just a few of the world prayer articles on the website of [Global Connections](https://globalconnections.org.uk/)

Malawi – [Starfish Malawi](#)

Our prayers are for Hope Clinic and the Maternity Wing. The clinic saw over 44,000 attendees last year, across both general outpatients and the specialist clinics. Please pray for the ambulance team and that the vehicle will work well despite the state of the rural tracks. For the families in need in the community and many who struggle to get to the clinic. For the final stages of construction of the maternity wing and first midwife house. For provision of two competent midwives and provision of continued funding for the clinic and maternity facilities.

India - [Global Care](#)

Pray for Global Care's Dalit education project in Patripul, near Mumbai. Director Simon will meet our CEO in Sri Lanka next week (19th - 26th February). Pray for the staff team including managers Mahendra and Manisha. Pray for their protection from high caste groups who object to Dalit education. Pray for resilience and effective learning for more than 200 children attending the G Care Centres. Pray for Dalit girls, who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Kosovo - [Transform Europe Network](#)

Kosovo is going through a difficult time politically and economically. The national news is warning about the threats of Serbian military invasion in Kosovo. Pray for the peace of God to reign in this region. In the last month over half a million people have left Kosovo, which has brought economic instability. There is also a rise of religious tensions in the country, especially within the Islamic community. We have seen a decline within the evangelical church and the need for workers and missionaries is very high in the country

UK - [Soldiers' and Aviators' Scripture Readers Association](#)

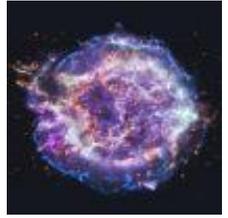
Please pray Army and Air Force Scripture Readers would speak the truth in love as they go "behind the wire" to reach British service personnel with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*above with the permission of Global Connections
<https://globalconnections.org.uk/>*

POETRY PIECE

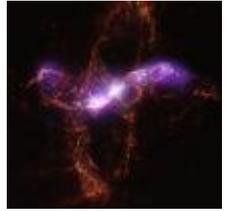
The Lord Is Eternal

*The Lord is eternal
And full of constant love
He won't fail you nor forsake you
When you feel you've had enough*



*The Lord is eternal
And ever near to you
He's always faithful to fulfill
What He's promised He would do*

*The Lord is eternal
And always understands,
That there are times you feel afraid
So, He holds you in His hands*



*The Lord is eternal
And created you to be
In fellowship with Him each day
And throughout eternity*

The Lord is Eternal!

© By M.S.Lowndes <https://www.heavensinspirations.com/>

public domain images by NASA/STScI

THANK YOU

MANY THANKS FROM INTERNATIONAL AID

All your donations were delivered to the warehouse on Wednesday 7th February, sorted, and labelled, ready for shipment.

These included, many various toiletries, children's and adult's clothes, games and stationery, gloves, scarves, hand, neck and ear warmers, 46 warm hats, 20 knitted jumpers of various sizes, 7 blankets from large, to baby blankets, towels, a pair of crutches, a cuddly monkey and elephant.

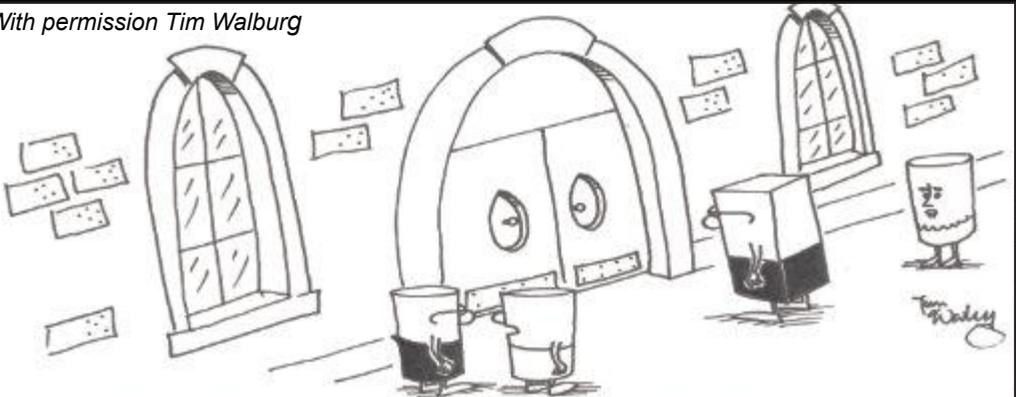
All your kindness is very much appreciated by International Aid.

Rita and Joyce.

(Many thanks to Rita & Joyce tooEd.)

CARTOON

With permission Tim Walburg



"I don't know if our new pastor will be able to fit in."

"CONTACT" PUBLICATION

The next "CONTACT" will be the April issue.

It is also published on our website, minus any personal or pastoral information when the Editor is advised that it is not for general publication.

See : <https://penworthamurc.org.uk/>

If you have anything you would like to contribute to "Contact", it will be most welcome. Either send it by

e-mail to purcmagweb@talktalk.net ; ring Alan E on 01772 740129 or deliver to 27 Hazel Close

Thank you for any contribution

Next submission date will be Sunday 24 March 2024.

Next issue date will be Sunday 31 March 2024.