

# PRENTON NEWS

The Magazine of  
Prenton United Reformed Church  
Prenton Road West, Birkenhead



**AUGUST &  
SEPTEMBER 2022**

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## Church & Community Activities during school term time

Monday	1 <sup>st</sup> Tranmere Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	5.00 p.m.
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Coffee Morning	10.30 a.m.
	Dance Class	5.30 p.m.
2nd in month	Mid-Week Communion	11.45 a.m.
	Lunch	12.15 p.m.
Thursday	Dance Class	10.00 a.m.
	Dance Class	4.30 p.m.
Friday		
Saturday	Dance Class	9.00 a.m.

Donations towards the cost of the magazine would be appreciated.

**Items for the October & November 2022 Magazine required on Sunday 18th September 2022**

## From the Manse

### WE'RE HAVING A HEATWAVE!

As I write this letter, we're experiencing a record-breaking heatwave with temperatures in the South-East expected to rise above 40c. Whenever I feel the heat of the summer sun I'm always reminded of an old children's hymn, 'Summer suns are glowing', which reminded me of my Godmother because it was one of her favourite's. And when I feel the warmth of the sun and remember my Godmother it makes me smile.

I'm hoping that, after the last couple of years, we might be able to enjoy this summer without the restrictions or fears of previous years under the pandemic, if the weather and the virus allows that is.

I've made it clear to anyone who will listen that I am a summer person. I love the warm weather and the energy it gives me. I love the brightness of the sun as it lifts the colours in the garden and makes me more aware of things I'd not noticed before; things that cause me to stop in wonder, but also things that require attention and a bit of TLC.

I love the long days and the general hope summer seems to carry with it and, it reminds me, more than any other season, of the relationship God longs for with each of us, a relationship full of promise of life in its fullness here and now and the promise of the life to come.

We need to hold on to that hope always because, even as we experience those beautiful summer days, we're reminded that others face storms and floods, droughts and famines.

But we can face those tough times too because of our relationship with God when we're reminded of those long summer days when everything feels right and looks right.

So, as we get busy in our gardens, enjoying the fullness of God's nature let's use this season to plant and prune; repair and repent so that our relationship with God will be strong when we face those other seasons too and life is full of storms and floods, droughts and famines.

I don't see many sunrises at the moment, 5.10 a.m. is a bit too early for me, but I know that the sun has risen because I can see things by its light. And I know that the Son too has risen because, as He lives in me and, through Him, I see everything new.

As we bask in the summer sun, or shelter from its heat; as we see the life it gives, let us too experience fullness of life as we bask in the light of the Son receiving power from Him to bear fruit that others too may experience that same life.

Have a wonderful summer.

God bless. Jeff

## **NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY and FRIENDS**

We remember in our prayers all our members and friends, and in particular those who are not able to join us every Sunday morning: **Jeanette Adams, Jean & Les Bayley, Carys Evans, Iris Hatton, Jo Johns, Dylis & John Letchford, Margaret Lloyd, Nora McGrath, Glennie Mortimer and Mary Segar.**

It is good to see **Harry Bradley** back in Church and **Maureen Makin** who had a “nasty tumble” outside her home.

Well done and thank you to **Marian Davies** and **Elaine Parkin** who put together a Service on the Saturday evening, when **Ron Taylor** was taken ill and unable to preach on the Sunday, the 26th of June. Ron has now recovered and we welcomed him back on Sunday 24th July.

Congratulations to our Organist, **Trish McClure** who fulfilled one of the items on her “bucket list” on Friday 22nd July, which was to “wing walk” and to raise money, over £600, for charity at the same time.



Trish said she thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would do it again tomorrow!!

### **THANK YOU**

**Jean and Les** would like to thank all who sent cards, messages and flowers when Jean fell and broke her hip. Silly thing to do!

Visitors have been a welcome break. Recovery is coming along well, as far as we can tell and Jean can do more now than when she first came home. Trouble is that doing things makes her tired, but we'll get there one day.

It was good to come for coffee on Wednesday and see people face to face - one step forward. Hope to be in church soon, but couldn't sit comfortably through a whole service yet.

Hope to see you all soon.

### **SUNDAY 17th JULY “OUR DAY OUT”**

It was a lovely hot day when **Pam, Barry, Barbara, Shelby, Pauline, Anne, Fred** and our Ukrainian family of Mum and two boys went to the Country Park at Thurstaston for lunch following our morning service.

After lunch, Mum took the two boys down to the beach twice and we then played bowls, football and punch bag, followed by something the boys could not refuse, Ice Creams!

Coming back, the 4-year-old held my hand and both gave a “thumbs up” and said “Thank You”, the only English words we heard.

At 4 p.m. it was time to go home having had a very enjoyable time.  
You would have enjoyed it too, perhaps next year ?!!

Fred



## OPEN HOUSE

Jeff and Heather are hosting an  
**Open House & Garden**

**at the Manse**

on Saturday August 20th 2022

from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Refreshments will be served  
during the afternoon.

We hope as many of you as possible  
will be able to join us in celebrating  
the start of another year of  
ministry at Prenton and Wallasey  
Village.

**You are all welcome**

## FABRIC REPORT

The Church had a few “leaks” during June due to quite a number of slates sliding off the roof. Mark has started repairing this as we speak.

Thank you to all who helped with the last garden clean up especially Heather who provided the sandwiches and Anne who provided the cake.

Hopefully we will see you at the next “clear up” in September.

Fred

Q. What did the grape do when the elephant stepped on it?

A. It let out a little wine!

Q. What do you get when you cross a ball of wool with a kangaroo?

A. A woolly jumper!

Q. What did the man say to his barber?

A. I moustache you a question, but I'll shave it until later!

## **UPDATE ON HOSTING A FAMILY FROM UKRAINE**

On Friday 3rd June, my sister Kristine and I started our “journey” of hosting a family from Ukraine.

Kristine drove to Doncaster Airport to pick up Nina and her two little boys, Misha (6) and Tima (4). The return trip to the Wirral gave us a taster of what was to come, with Tima exhausted and stressed, managing to undo himself from the child seat and clamber over the front seat to sit on his mother’s lap. No amount of cajoling would settle him so to the accompaniment of blood curdling screams, Kris drove the family to their new, temporary, home.

With the aid of Google, we managed a few preliminary conversations, set out a few ground rules, gave them a generous amount of personal space and left them to settle in.

The welcome from our friends, neighbours, family and church family, has been truly overwhelming. We have had donations of furniture (chest of drawers, beds and bedding, lamps, hanging rails, wash baskets and even a brand-new sewing machine), we have had parcels of food brought to the door, baskets of toiletries, bikes, scooters and toys for the boys to play with, clothes and shoes for both Nina and the children and all given with unconditional love.

The first 3 weeks, while I was away in Poland, was a whirlwind of form filling, going to various offices, trying to sort out Universal Credit, registering with the GP, trying, unsuccessfully, to find a dentist, meetings with Social Workers, setting up phone contracts, trips to Liverpool to sort out biometric passports . . . and we are still in the midst of all this!

This has not been an easy journey. Nina has left behind her husband and wider family, her home, her friends, her church family and her job. She has arrived at the home of strangers and speaks very basic English. For the first time in her life, she is having to look after 2 small, traumatised children on her own. Tima’s behaviour has been particularly challenging for her, and us. After 6 weeks we finally managed to get some support for her and the children from the Children’s Centre in Birkenhead, one and a half hours a week for 4 weeks.

Although there are several Support Groups for Ukrainians in the Wirral, Nina has found it difficult to make friends and spends a lot of time on her own. We have had several tearful sessions where she has completely broken down under the strain.

Nina is a committed Christian and belongs to a worldwide evangelical movement. Her faith is very important to her and she spends a lot of time reading the Bible, praying and speaking to her brothers and sisters in Christ on Zoom calls in the evening.

Until this week, Nina has been managing to live on the initial payment given to her by the Government. She was VERY grateful for the donation of £176 which was collected by the members of our URC via the Coffee Mornings and Mid-Week Lunch. Her Universal Credit payments have now started to come through, so she is now able to stand on her own feet financially, but wishes to thank everyone for their generosity.

The future for this family remains very uncertain. Her husband has not been conscripted to fight yet, but this may be a challenge to come.

The children are due to start school at St Saviour's in Oxton in September. Neither of these children have attended school before as children in Ukraine don't usually start school until they are seven. We face some serious challenges ahead as we try to prepare the children for school. Expectations, which we take for granted, such as being able to dress themselves, follow instructions, sit and eat together at a table, play co-operatively together and follow regular waking and bedtime routines, all need to be put in place in a few short weeks.

At the beginning of December, the period of time which Kristine and I agreed to act as Hosts will come to an end and Nina will be trying to move on to her own accommodation. This is likely to be the biggest challenge yet, as social housing is almost impossible to get without a long wait and private landlords are very reluctant to rent to Ukrainians as they are unlikely to pass credit checks, have large deposits saved, or find sponsors willing to stand as guarantors. So, if anyone knows anybody who knows anybody who has a house or flat to rent, please let us know.

On a sunny day last week, I asked Nina what her hopes or dreams for the future were. After a long pause she replied, "I have no hopes or dreams anymore. I am just trying to get through each day".

A few weeks ago, when I led prayers in church, there was not a single prayer request. Can I suggest that you pray every day for . . . Nina and her family, for the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, for hope and dreams to fill Nina's heart again.

God Bless,  
**Pauline**

The question to be asked about every congregation is not: How big is it? How fast is it growing? How rich is it? It is: What difference is it making to that bit of the world in which it is placed?

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin

## DIARY FOR AUGUST 2022

<b>AUGUST</b>			
Wednesday	3rd	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
Friday	5th	6.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
Sunday	7th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Holy Communion. Rev Jeff Hughes</b>
Wednesday	10th	10.30 a.m. 11.45 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 6.30 p.m.	Coffee Morning Mid-Week Communion Lunch Painting Party
Friday	12th	9.30 a.m.	Painting Party
Sunday	14th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Dr Philip Roper</b>
Wednesday	17th	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
Saturday	20th	2.00 p.m.	Open House at the Manse
Sunday	21st	11.00 a.m.	<b>Rev Jeff Hughes</b>
Wednesday	24th	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning in the Kinghorn Vestry
Sunday	28th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Mr Ron Taylor</b>
Wednesday	31st	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning

There will be a "Painting Party" on Wednesday 10th August from 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. to paint the skirting boards and doors in the hallway. Everyone is welcome to give a hand with the painting or making the cups of tea.

If we don't finish on the Wednesday evening, we will meet again on the Friday, 12th August at 9.30 a.m. to complete the task.



You will see on the September Diary that our Moderator is taking our Service on the 4th and he will also be conducting the Communion Service. He told Jeff that this is something that he misses doing now that he is a Moderator, so please make every effort to attend.

A Sunday School teacher asked her children as they were on their way to the church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping".



## DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
Friday	2nd	2.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
Sunday	4th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Holy Communion. Rev Geoff Felton Moderator of Mersey Synod</b>
Wednesday	7th	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
Sunday	11th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Mr Ray Craig</b>
Wednesday	14th	10.30 a.m. 11.45 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Coffee Morning Mid-Week Communion Lunch
Thursday	15th	7.30 p.m.	Elders' Meeting at the Manse
Saturday	17th		LICC Training Day
Sunday	18th	11.00 a.m. 12.00 noon	<b>Rev Jeff Hughes</b> Church Meeting
Wednesday	21st	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
Friday	23rd	1.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
Saturday	24th	9.30 a.m.	Gardening Party
Sunday	25th	11.00 a.m.	<b>Mr Ron Taylor</b>
Wednesday	28th	10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
Friday	30th	6.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
<b>OCTOBER</b>			
Saturday	1st	10.00 a.m.	Decorate the Church for Harvest
Sunday	2nd	11.00 a.m.  12.15 p.m.	<b>Harvest Festival &amp; Holy Communion</b> <b>Rev Jeff Hughes</b> Church Harvest Lunch



On Saturday September 24th there will an Autumn "Tidy Up" of the Church Gardens from 9.30 a.m. until lunch time when there will be light refreshments. Please come along and lend a hand and enjoy socialising with friends.



## **Oh dear! What a dilemma! Should I go on holiday? or should I stay at home?**

I wonder if anyone else has ever felt that this question was a problem. I wanted to have a break, but I was very nervous and unsure. So, when friends, Vera and Peter from Exeter, telephoned to say that they had booked a cruise to Norway in June and would I like to join them? I had a decision to make - should I go or should I stay at home?

I had not been away from my home since September 2019 and so many things, in my own life and in the world, had happened since then, but I needed to make that decision.

I was tempted, so I rang my travel agent and asked him about the availability of cabins and his answer was positive. So off I went to see him. My decision was made. I booked to go to Norway for 12 nights on the Queen Mary 2, with Vera and Peter.

Obviously, the conditions and requirements had changed since the outbreak of Covid-19. However, I am fully vaccinated but I also had to have an official negative Rapid Antigen test the day before we sailed, as well as specific insurance cover for Covid.

I travelled down to Southampton the day before we sailed and from my hotel bedroom window on the Sunday morning, I could see the cruise ships, the Queen Mary 2 berthed at the Mayflower Terminal, the Aida on the City Terminal and from the front of the hotel, the Britannia on the Ocean Terminal.

Our ports of call were Hamburg which is 80 miles from the North Sea, up the River Elbe and takes about 6 hours to transit. Hamburg has a splendid City Hall.

Ålesund which was our closest port to the Arctic Circle and is known for its Art Nouveau architecture.

Olden is at the head of the Nordfjord, and known as the Gateway to the Glaciers.

Bergen where the harbour has a well-known fish market and the Bryggen, a row of brightly coloured shops including a Christmas shop which is open all the year round.

Stavanger is the centre of Norway's oil industry with a 12th century Cathedral, and Grieg's Concert Hall in the shape of a grand piano.

Once we reached Ålesund we were in 24-hour daylight and we had only one day when the weather was inclement and another day when the temperature reached 81° Fahrenheit!

From Olden I went on scenic tour to the Jostedal Glacier National Park in Stryn with its mountains, lakes and valleys. The Jostedal Glacier Icefield is more than 60 miles long and is the largest glacier on the European mainland.

The coach driver and our guide were very good and we stopped at “view-points” so that everyone could get off the coach and take photographs. I am not a brilliant photographer but I wanted to share with you the beauty of Norway with its fjords, glacial waters and snow- capped mountains. These are Lake Stryn and the River Stryn.





If you are going on holiday soon, I hope you have a lovely time and that the weather is kind to you. Like me you might have to follow the Covid restrictions but I hope it does not spoil your long-awaited holiday.

**Margaret**

### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022**

Pauline, Heather, and I were part of a delegation from Mersey Synod who attended this year's General Assembly of the United Reformed Church which took place at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from 8th to 11th July.

It was hoped that this conference would be the first 'in person' since the pandemic but an outbreak of Covid during a Methodist Conference a week earlier meant this would be a hybrid meeting. There were in total 12 people representing Mersey, 10 who made the trip and 2 who joined on Zoom. And the conference was enjoyed by many and endured by others.

The Hayes Conference Centre is set in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside and had everything needed for a comfortable stay and long business sessions.

The Assembly commenced after lunch on Friday afternoon and ended after lunch on Monday. The business sessions started at 9.00 a.m. and concluded at 9.15 p.m. with breaks in the morning and afternoon, and for lunch and dinner.

There was lots of hard work done over the 4 days and some difficult decisions made and Rita Griffiths, Mersey Synod's Clerk is working through those decisions to see how they will affect local congregations. In the meantime, an Assembly Business Digest is available with some of the main points discussed and decisions made. These are available in church for those who want to catch up with the wider business of our denomination.

Thanks to Pauline, Heather and Jeff for representing Mersey Synod and for Prenton URC for supplying a quarter of the Synod's reps.

If you want further information please speak to Pauline, Heather or Jeff who will share their experience.

Thanks,  
Jeff.

## **EVERYBODY, SOMEBODY, ANYBODY, AND NOBODY**

This is a little story about four people named,  
Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and  
Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it.  
Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that  
Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody  
When Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

Anon.

I'm sure you've seen this little ditty before, and I know that at different times we are all one or another of these characters at some time or another, so I'm not excluding myself in any way from this, I assure you!

If you notice something that needs to be done, and you are able to do it, would you consider doing it? You may not have made the mess, left something out of place, but could you clean it, pick it up, put it away, wash it or do whatever is required?

Longer term, if you could take on a task that needs to be done, would you consider being a volunteer, to spread the work.

Don't let's leave anything to Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody ... they are getting really tired!

Jeff

# ROTAS FOR AUGUST 2022

## Duty Elder

August            7th   Sue Jones  
                      14th   Jean Bayley  
                      21st   Shelby Ambrose  
                      28th   Pauline Green

## Communion Elders

August            7th   Pauline Green & Elaine Parkin

## Door Duty

August            7th   Jean & Les Bayley, Maureen Makin  
                      14th   Joan Bradley, Pauline Green, Joan Lawrence  
                      21st   Elaine Parkin, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper  
                      28th   Margaret Higson, Sue Jones, Brian Woodhouse

## Readers

August            7th   Shelby Ambrose & Pam Lawrence  
                      14th   Glyn Roper & Fred Foulkes  
                      21st   Jean Bayley & Joan Bradley  
                      28th   Joyce Holland & Marian Davies

## Prayers of Intercession

August            7th   Heather Hughes  
                      14th   Barry Lawrence  
                      21st   Pauline Green  
                      28th   Jean Bayley

## Church Flowers

August            7th   Suzanne Holland  
                      14th   Glyn & Philip Roper  
                      21st  
                      28th   Glennie Mortimer

## Sound System

August            7th   Marian Davies  
                      14th   Elaine Parkin  
                      21st   Heather Hughes  
                      28th   Elaine Parkin

# ROTAS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

## Duty Elder

September 4th Elaine Parkin  
11th Fred Foulkes  
18th Sue Jones  
25th Jean Bayley

## Communion Elders

September 4th Jean Bayley & Sue Jones

## Door Duty

September 4th Shelby Ambrose, Joyce Holland, Barbara Jones  
11th Joan Bradley, Barry Lawrence, Maureen Makin  
18th Jean & Les Bayley, Joan Lawrence  
25th Pauline Green, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper

## Readers

September 4th Barry Lawrence & Glyn Roper  
11th Shelby Ambrose & Pauline Green  
18th Pam Lawrence & Philip Roper  
25th Marian Davies & Fred Foulkes

## Prayers of Intercession

September 4th Claire Thomas  
11th Sue Jones  
18th Heather Hughes  
25th Brian Woodhouse

## Church Flowers

September 4th Heather Hughes  
11th Anne Foulkes  
18th Peter Carroll  
25th Carys Evans

## Sound System

September 4th Marian Davies  
11th Elaine Parkin  
18th Marian Davies  
25th Elaine Parkin