

PRENTON NEWS

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



**OCTOBER &
NOVEMBER 2023**

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Church & Community Activities during school term time

Monday	1 st Tranmere Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	5.00 p.m.
Tuesday	Phoenix Dance Group	6.30 p.m.
	Guitar Group	6.30 p.m.
Wednesday	Warm, Welcome Space	
	Coffee	10.00 a.m.
	Lunch	12.15 p.m.

Donations towards the cost of the magazine would be appreciated.

Dear Friends,

Summer holidays are over and the life of our Church, like a motor car, has got itself out of first gear in September and into second gear in October with our Harvest Festival celebrations and a church lunch and at the end of the month there is Halloween, a day of trick or treat which perhaps some of you celebrate with your children and grandchildren. Also, the clocks go back an hour and we feel that Autumn has gone and we are rapidly approaching Winter.

In November we will be “racking up” the speed and into third gear with All Saints Day on November 5th, which is also Bonfire Night; Armistice Day on the 11th and on the 12th Remembrance Sunday. At the beginning of December, we will be in top gear ready for Advent Sunday on the 3rd and the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, on December 25th.

In the non-conformist churches, we do not normally celebrate the “Saints” days but, as someone pointed out to me, many ordinary people are Saints.

So, perhaps this year, you could give some thought to the people who have influenced you through the various stages of your life. Your parents, your grandparents, your extended family, school teachers, Sunday school teachers, your friends in church and outside the church. They have all made you what you are and they are all “Saints”.

Today, our newspapers, television and radio news bulletins are full of doom and gloom and I shout at the television newscasters “Please give me some good and happy news instead of all this bad news”. And I do, quite often, wonder why God allows all these terrible things that have happened, as we approach Remembrance Sunday, and are still happening in our world today and why doesn’t he intervene and stop this suffering?

The answer is in the Bible, in Genesis, when God created Adam and Eve, he decided not to control them like puppets on a string, but gave them the freedom to make their own decisions. We cannot have a free choice on the way we are when it suits us, and then ask God to intervene and put up barriers when we don’t like what is happening.

We must accept that our “free will” results in some very bad news but it can also result in very good news which does not always make the headlines in the media. However, it is up to every individual to decide what they do with their “free will” in the same way that we choose whether Jesus Christ is to be part of our lives or not.

There is a hymn by Anders Prostenon and translated by our Fred Kaan, sums up the choices:

*The love of God is broad like beach and meadow,
wide as the wind, and an eternal home.
God leaves us free to seek him or reject him,
he gives us room to answer Yes or No.*

*We long for freedom where our truest being
Is given hope and courage to unfold.
We seek in freedom space and scope for dreaming,
and look for ground where trees and plants can grow.*

*But there are walls that keep us all divided;
we fence each other in with hate and war.
Fear is the bricks and mortar of our prison,
our pride of self the prison coat we wear.*

*O judge us, Lord, and in your judgement free us,
and set our feet in freedom's open space;
take us as far as your compassion wanders
among the children of the human race.*

I pray that we will always seek God's will for us and that we make a positive response to what God wants us to do.

Editor

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY & FRIENDS

We remember in our prayers all the members and friends who are, at the present time, unable to join us regularly on a Sunday morning and in particular: **Jeanette Adams, Peter & Joan Carroll, Iris Hatton, Don Howard, Jo Johns, Julie & Tim Jones, Dylis & John Letchford**, who is recovering from a hernia operation, **Margaret Lloyd, Nora McGrath, Glennie Mortimer and Mary Segar**.

It is good to see **Donna** back in Church and she has had her pre-op medical and hopefully her treatment should be going ahead soon.

I recently received this message from **Andrew Halliday** (former member of Prenton URC) which he has asked to be included in the Prenton News:

"I am home after extensive tests, with full overhaul of heart medication. I am going back next week to have a heart monitoring device installed which will monitor progress of new regime, but also will alert the Cardiology department of any untoward activity. They were marvellous with actions and supportive tests and monitor work."

Philip

FROM OUR CHURCH SECRETARY

OUR AUTUMN CLEAR UP OF THE CHURCH GARDENS

This will be on Saturday 7th October from 9.30 a.m. Please come along and lend a hand and you will be rewarded with Fred's speciality, Bacon Butties with a cup of tea or coffee.



WINTER SERVICES

We were planning to move into the hall for our services in October. However, as the roof of the West Room is still waiting for repair, we have decided to leave things as they are for a while longer. We don't feel that the West Room, as it is at present, is a suitable place to ask Agape to use. We wouldn't want to worship in there, so we shouldn't be asking them to do that.

As you know, heating the church is expensive, but we will do our best. Please come warmly dressed as it gets colder. If you want to bring a blanket as an extra layer, please do. We hope we don't have to wait too long for the roofer to begin, but we have no date as yet.

We will let you know on the weekly sheet when things start to happen. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us!



SHOEBOXES

We are planning to pack the shoeboxes on November 8th at 1.30 p.m. Help would be much appreciated. We need to make up the boxes themselves and then fill them.

Items for the boxes are coming in steadily, but we can always use more, so if you are shopping and see something suitable, please buy it if you are able.

We will also be pleased to receive any financial donations which we can use to buy items that we are short of and pay for the transport of the boxes. Last, but not least, many thanks for your generosity each year.

CHARITY NIGHT

We are planning another fund-raising Charity Night. The one last year was enjoyed by all who came along, so if you missed out, do consider coming this time. It was an evening of fun and fellowship as well as supporting a good cause. It will be a "Pie and Pud" night and will replace the Thanksgiving fish and chip supper. The date is Friday 24th November at 6 p.m. There will of course be food, also a raffle and other activities which are still being planned! Please support this.

THANK YOU to everyone who supported our Macmillan Big Coffee Morning on September 27th when we raised over £200. Special thanks to Pauline who set up and decorated the hall with the help of her daughter as well as organising the catering. Well done everyone.

SUNDAY 6th AUGUST 2023 WAS THE DAY I BECAME A CHURCH MEMBER OF PRENTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH.

Marian Davies, a neighbour of mine, had invited me to the Coffee Morning and everyone was so welcoming and friendly that I looked forward to a Wednesday morning. From there it progressed to coming to the Sunday morning service and again I was made to feel very comfortable.

I am, by nature, rather reticent but coming to Prenton has given me more courage to speak to other people and to listen to them and to talk about any problems we have. I have also been attending Pauline's "Conversations with God" where it became apparent to me that God was encouraging me to commit myself to becoming a practising Christian and to join the fellowship at Prenton.

Having spoken to Jeff, he arranged for me to take that final step on August 6th. I was perhaps a little apprehensive of standing up in front of the congregation but God gave me the courage and I did not stumble when speaking.

I had brought a special friend with me for support and to witness my commitment to Jesus and so many people came to the front of the Church to congratulate me. It was a wonderful feeling.

Now I know that when I feel troubled or despondent I can pray to God and he will listen to me and put his comforting arms around me and give me hope.

Thank you everyone for making me feel "at home".

Gwen Kerr

The hands of fellowship



A husband and wife were arguing over who should brew the coffee each morning. The bickering went back and forth until the wife finally said, "You should do it, because it's in the Bible that man should make the coffee".

"There's no way the Bible says that" the husband argued.

Without another word she opened the Bible and pointed to the proof printed at the top of several pages – **HEBREWS**

CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD IN SEPTEMBER

Our monthly “conversations” continue to offer support to our church family and usually seven or eight of us meet at 1, Prospect Road to discuss and pray about issues that affect us all.

In September our focus was on Motherhood. In a prayerful, safe and confidential setting, we shared our experiences of motherhood. We talked about our own mothers, stepmothers, mothers-in-law, surrogate mothers . . . and were thankful, or forgiving, for the experiences we had had.

We prayed for those women who “stepped up” to fill a mother’s shoes. We prayed particularly for foster carers, women who adopt, older siblings who bring up younger siblings and grandparents or aunts who care for children.



We prayed about some difficult aspects of motherhood; those who are desperate to have children and can't; those who choose to give up their children because they know that they cannot give the care that their child needs; those of us who have lost a child and the grief that comes with that; those who feel abandoned by their children as they age.

We prayed for Lucy Letby and all the families, including her own, who have been traumatised by her actions.

We turned to the Bible to look at some examples of extraordinary mothers, in particular the mother of Moses, the story of Ruth and Naomi and Mary the mother of Jesus. We thought about what these stories say to us and God’s expectations of us as mothers.

If you would like to join us as we learn to pray more purposefully you would be very welcome. We meet every first Tuesday of the month from 1.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. You are under no obligation to say anything and can choose to sit and listen. However, drinking tea and tasting cake is obligatory!

Our October meeting will be on Tuesday 10th October as I have a dental appointment on the 3rd.

God Bless,
Pauline.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When I say “I am a Christian” I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say “I'm a Christian” I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak and need his strength to carry on.

© Helen Campbell

DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2023

OCTOBER			
Sunday	1st	11.00 a.m.	Harvest Festival. Communion Rev Stuart Radcliffe
		12.30 p.m.	Harvest Lunch
Monday	2nd	10.00 a.m.	Distribute Harvest Gifts
Wednesday	4th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
Saturday	7th	9.30 a.m.	Garden Autumn Clear Up
Sunday	8th	11.00 a.m.	Dr Philip Roper
Tuesday	10th	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God
Wednesday	11th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
		7.00 p.m.	Elders' Meeting
Saturday	14th	10.00 a.m.	Synod Meeting at Heswall URC
Sunday	15th	11.00 a.m.	Rev Des Drury
Wednesday	18th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
Sunday	22nd	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
		12.15 p.m.	Church Meeting
Wednesday	25th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
Saturday	28th	<i>British Summertime Ends. The clocks go back an hour.</i>	
Sunday	29th	11.00 a.m.	Mrs Marian Davies
Tuesday	31st		Halloween



DIARY FOR NOVEMBER 2023

NOVEMBER			
Wednesday	1st	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Sunday	5th	11.00 a.m.	Communion. Our Elders
Tuesday	7th	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God
Wednesday	8th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 1.30 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch Packing Shoeboxes
Sunday	12th	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	
		10.45 a.m. 10.45 a.m.	Prenton War Memorial In Church. Mr Ray Craig
Tuesday	14th	9.30 a.m.	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday	15th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Sunday	19th	11.00 a.m.	Dr Geff Meyer Items for the December 2023 and January 2024 Magazine please.
Wednesday	22nd	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Friday	24th	1.00 p.m. 6.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies "Pie & Pud" Charity Night
Sunday	26th	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
Wednesday	29th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
DECEMBER			
Friday	1st	1.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies

REMEMBRANCE – THE POPPY

At the eleventh minute, on the eleventh day of the eleventh month 1918, the fighting of the First World War ended. Much of the fighting of that war took place in Western Europe, and despite the fields becoming muddy and barren the bright red Flanders poppies grew in their thousands.

The sight of these resilient flowers inspired John McCrae, a Canadian soldier, to write his poem 'The Poppy'.



After the war, people wanted to remember the thousands of soldiers killed in the conflict and having read 'The Poppy', Moina Michael started to make and sell red silk poppies.

In 1921, the newly formed British Legion, ordered nine million of these poppies to sell and raised £106,000, which was then, a huge amount of money and it was all used to help the veterans of the war.

Poppies are no longer made from red silk, but approximately fifty million poppies and ninety thousand poppy wreaths are made each year, the majority at the Poppy Factory operated by The Royal British Legion and established in 1922 which employs many disabled people and there is also the Lady Haig's Poppy Factory in Edinburgh which was set up in 1926.

Let us wear our poppy in gratitude for, and in remembrance of, the great sacrifice made by so many ordinary men and women who went to fight in the Flanders fields and beyond, in the First and Second World Wars, and the countless wars since and sadly, still happening.

**At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust,
Lead us from hatred to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our lives, our world, our universe.
Amen

OUR “AWAY DAY” on a STEAM TRAIN

Some months ago, there was a “flyer” in with the Wirral Globe from The Railway Touring Company, for a Coast to Coast Express from Liverpool to Scarborough on Saturday 16th September hauled by a steam locomotive and with Pullman coaches!! I showed the leaflet to Pauline and Elaine and they said, “Let’s do it”.

There were three prices: Standard, First Class and Premier Class. We agreed on Premier Class because that included a full English breakfast and a four course Dinner, freshly prepared on board, and silver served at your table on our return journey.

Another decision was required.” Were we going to go to Scarborough or were we going to get off at York?” We agreed on York because there was more to see and do, and we would be there for 6 hours.



The three intrepid travellers

On the Saturday morning we were at Lime Street Station at 6 a.m. and “Leander” had steam up, ready for our departure at 6.20 a.m. We were in Carriage B at the front of the train. Soon after leaving Liverpool they came around serving Bucks Fizz or orange juice. A good start to the day!!

Our first stop at 7.09 a.m. was at Manchester Victoria to pick up more passengers and our second stop was at Guide Bridge, just before Hyde, for water for the locomotive. This was a forty-minute stop as the water was delivered in a road tanker and during this stop they served our breakfast.



We had steam up again by 8.20 a.m. and off we went up over the Pennines to Sheffield, where we picked up more passengers.

Our next stop was at Pontefract for another forty minutes for more water from a road tanker. “Leander” is a thirsty steam train!! We were able to get off on to the station platform and stretch our legs and join the train spotters, who had gather there, to take photographs of “Leander”. Back on board, we only had half an hour before we arrived in York and during this time, they came around to take our order for the starter and any drinks that we wanted with our dinner and we confirmed that we would be getting off at York.



“Leander” steamed into York and she did make quite a display of letting off steam for the steam train fanatics on the platforms there to take photographs.

York was heaving with people and they had had rain just before we arrived as all the pavements were wet!

We walked to the Minster, took one look at the queues and the price to go in and decided to head for The Shambles which is traffic free with very old buildings and cobblestones which are not good for the feet!

Our first stop was a sweet shop. A proper sweet shop with rows and rows of jars on the shelves of all those sweets we had as children which they weighed out for you and put into a bag. This was not the only one, there were quite a few more who only sold sweets. A paradise for those of us with a sweet tooth.

The old buildings are fascinating and many have plaques on their walls telling you their history and one really surprised us. Now a pub but it was where Guy Fawkes was born and it has a Blue Plaque confirming this, and we all thought Guy Fawkes was a Londoner.

We walked around the open-air Shambles Market with a large variety of stalls which is open 7 days a week. There was a stall selling “homemade” soaps and I was able to purchase a tablet of “Gardener’s” soap, something I have been looking for ages with no success in our garden centres.

By this time Elaine and Pauline’s knees were telling them it was time to sit down and have a cup of tea! We consumed warm scones, a choice of plain or fruit, with jam and clotted cream and a very generous pot of tea.

It was now time to head back to the station and on our way, we came across a magical Christmas Speciality shop but I could only glance in the windows or we would have missed the train.

We had been told to get to the station by 4.45 p.m. as the train was due in at one minute past five and departing at four minutes past five and it was on time.

Once on board and back in our seats, we were surprised to find that our fellow travellers, who had gone on to Scarborough, had been served their starter and main course soon after they left Scarborough at 4 o'clock but

had to wait for us to catch up before they were served their pudding, the cheese and biscuits and tea or coffee with a chocolate.



Our carriage "Amethyst"

Our meals were served just before we reached the Milford Loop which is twenty minutes outside York where we stopped for forty minutes whilst they detached "Leander" and coupled up a diesel locomotive for the journey back to Liverpool, so we were able to eat most of our meal whilst we were stationary

I think there are several reasons why this was done. "Leander" was going back to Carnforth and it would be difficult taking on water from a road tanker in the pitch black.

We came back via Castleford, Wakefield, Hebden Bridge, Rochdale and into Manchester Victoria which was a different route from the outward journey. We couldn't see much because it was dark by then. We arrived safely back, early by seven minutes, into Liverpool Lime Street at 9.15 p.m.

We all agreed that it was a fabulous day out but we were a little tired by then. We had all got up at 4 o'clock in the morning, but we didn't fall asleep on the train like some of our fellow travellers!

We are looking forward to going somewhere next year; hopefully in the summer months with longer hours of daylight.

Margaret

ROTAS FOR OCTOBER 2023

Duty Elder

October	1st	Pauline Green
	8th	Sue Jones
	15th	Elaine Parkin
	22nd	Shelby Ambrose
	29th	Fred Foulkes

Communion Elders

October	1st	Shelby Ambrose & Jean Bayley
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Door Duty

October	1st	Joan Bradley, Barry Lawrence, Elaine Parkin
	8th	Jean & Les Bayley, Barbara Jones
	15th	Sue Jones, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
	22nd	Pauline Green, Margaret Higson, Elaine Parkin
	29th	Jean & Les Bayley, Joan Bradley

Readers

October	1st	Fred Foulkes & Glyn Roper
	8th	Marian Davies & Joan Bradley
	15th	Shelby Ambrose & Jean Bayley
	22nd	Pam Lawrence & Philip Roper
	29th	Joyce Holland & Glyn Roper

Prayers of Intercession

October	1st	Philip Roper
	8th	Pauline Green
	15th	Claire Thomas
	22nd	Barry Lawrence
	29th	Philip Roper

Sound System

Marian Davies
Elaine Parkin
Marian Davies
Marian Davies
Elaine Parkin

Church Flowers

October	1st	Harvest
	8th	Elaine Parkin
	15th	Sue Jones
	22nd	Peter Carroll
	29th	Barbara Jones

ROTAS FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Duty Elder

November	5th	Jean Bayley
	12th	Pauline Green
	19th	Shelby Ambrose
	26th	Sue Jones

Communion Elders

November	5th	Pauline Green & Elaine Parkin
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Door Duty

November	5th	Barbara Jones, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
	12th	Margaret Higson, Sue Jones, Barry Lawrence
	19th	Pauline Green, Maureen Makin, Elaine Parkin
	26th	Jean & Les Bayley, Joan Bradley

Readers

November	5th	Barry Lawrence & Fred Foulkes
	12th	Marian Davies & Shelby Ambrose
	19th	Joan Bradley & Jean Bayley
	26th	Joyce Holland & Barry Lawrence

Prayers of Intercession

November	5th	Sue Jones
	12th	Jean Bayley
	19th	Barry Lawrence
	26th	Pauline Green

Sound System

		Marian Davies
		Elaine Parkin
		Marian Davies
		Marian Davies

Church Flowers

November	5th	
	12th	Remembrance Sunday. Margaret Meade
	19th	Glyn & Philip Roper
	26th	Jean Bayley