

PRENTON NEWS

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



FEBRUARY & MARCH 2025

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Any information, pictures or articles for the website should be sent to Philip Roper at phil.e.roper@btinternet.com

Church & Community Activities during school term time

Monday	Little Movers	10.00 a.m.
	1 st Tranmere Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	5.00 p.m.
Tuesday	Guitar Jam 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.

FROM THE MANSE

NEW YEAR HOPE

The Roman god, Janus, the god of beginnings and endings; of doorways, gateways and transitions, famously has two faces, one facing forward and the other facing backwards. The first month of our New Year is named after him for obvious reasons as January is often a time when we look back at the achievements and failures of the year past and look forward into the hope a New Year can bring.

By the time you read this we're well into our New Year with maybe a broken resolution or two already behind us. I'm not really a resolution type person, probably because I fail to keep them, but I do like to look back, take stock and then consider how I can build upon those past experiences.

I found myself doing some looking back recently when two occasions prompted a little reminiscence.

The first was a visit to Prenton URC by Dame Patricia Routledge of Hyacinth Bucket fame from the TV show, Keeping up Appearances. Dame Patricia was visiting the Wirral on the occasion of receiving the Freedom of the Borough and she wanted to visit places that had shaped her childhood and early adult life. These included her old primary and secondary schools, theatres she had played in and her church, Prenton URC.

Although I had no shared history with Dame Patricia there were common points of reference in some of the people she spoke about and in some of the events within the building and the desire to share faith. She left the church in 1954 to pursue her career, but she was pleased that even now new people were being drawn into worship and into relationship with Jesus in the same place that had such a big influence on her life of faith.

The second occasion was a trip to North Wales when Heather and I visited Loggerheads Country Park for a walk and a talk. Loggerheads was the place we first met 50 years ago this year and, we often say, “we met at Loggerheads and have been there ever since.”

Both occasions made us look back at the experiences we had shared, the achievements made and the mistakes we’d longed to forget. But the reality is that all of those experiences have shaped who we are.

As we move into a New Year, we do so shaped by the past. And we use those past experiences, both good and bad, along with the knowledge that God has a plan for us to step confidently into the New Year.

When speaking of the completion of God’s plan for him, the Apostle Paul said this, ‘Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.’ Philippians 3:13-14

Paul wasn’t saying that the past didn’t matter but rather that his focus was set upon what God was yet to do.

We can all yearn for the ‘good old days’, whatever they were. But rather than living in the past let’s use our experiences to lead us forward and focus on what God has yet to do within and beyond our fellowship. In Isaiah 43:19 God says, ‘Look, I am doing a new thing...do you not perceive it?’

As we move into 2025, we long to grasp hold of the ‘new thing’ God longs to do in our lives and in our church. So, let’s focus not on what we can’t do or don’t have any more but rather on the ‘new thing’ God longs to do. And, as we look toward the period of Lent

and in anticipation of Easter and a time of new life and resurrection we do so under God's good grace and with signs of growth in our church.

God bless.

Jeff

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY & FRIENDS

We continue to remember, in our prayers, all the members and friends who are unable to join us regularly on a Sunday morning for whatever reason.

Elaine Parkin will not have a telephone landline after February 4th. You will find her mobile telephone number in the Church Directory.

A little bird has told me that **Fred and Anne Foulkes** will be celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in March - 60 years of married bliss!! We send you early congratulations on the momentous occasion and hope that you will have a memorable day. (The next issue of the magazine would be too late!)



It is with great sadness that we learnt that **Glennie Mortimer** passed away on Wednesday 29th January.

We send our sincere condolences, sympathy and love to her son, Michael and her daughter, Hazel and all her family and friends at this sad time. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all.

The Service on Sunday March 30th is Mothering Sunday and our Service "**Songs of Praise**" is being led by the Worship Group.

If you have a favourite hymn that you would like to be included in the service please give the details to Shelby or Marian by Sunday 16th March.

THANK YOU

The meal arranged for people from both Wallasey Village and Prenton congregations on Friday 20th December was a great success and we therefore owe Margaret Meade a big thank you for her hard work and meticulous planning.

Not only was the meal good value, but it was also substantial and enjoyable. We were so sorry that Margaret Higson from Prenton and Gill Peckham, Dave Oliver and Jean Copple from Wallasey Village were unable, for health reasons, to join us.

I do hope we will do it again and Friday 19th December 2025 is a possibility. So why not put this in your diary now, so that, God willing, we can enjoy our “Time Together” again.

Ron Taylor

On Sunday morning, 22nd December, something wonderful happened at the end of our worship time together.

Janette, a relatively new member of the congregation, asked if she could speak to the congregation. What Janette then said, were words of deep gratitude for the way she had been received by this fellowship. It was for all of us, a very moving experience and an unexpected Christmas Present.

Thank you, Janette, for your honesty and love. It will be something I will always remember.

Ron Taylor

ADVANCE NOTICE

Our next **SOCIAL** event is our **FISH & CHIPS EVENING on FRIDAY 11th APRIL at 6 p.m.**

Cost £10.00 per person.

More details nearer the date.



As many of you know, the Parkin and Thomas family have always been passionate about **Everton Football Club**. This season is particularly poignant as Everton prepares to leave Goodison Park for a new stadium.

Over the years their Charity, **Everton in the Community**, has made an incredible impact on the Kirkdale area surrounding the stadium. From building a school and supporting the homeless to organising community groups for those living with dementia, the charity has brought hope and transformation to a long-overlooked part of the city.

Erin spent her early years growing up in Kirkdale and her connection to the area remains strong. To support this amazing charity, Erin and Phil will participate in the **Goodison Sleepout** this April, spending a night sleeping in the stands at Goodison Park to raise awareness of homelessness and funds for this local charity.

If you would like to sponsor Erin, there will be a Sponsor sheet on the Notice Board nearer the date. or speak to Elaine or Claire.



I have been asked to arrange a **Christmas Church Lunch** in 2025 following the successful lunch in 2024.

I have made a provisional reservation for Friday 19th December at The Masonic Temple in Clifton Road.

Margaret



The Bishop thanked the congregation for inviting him to come and preach. As he moved into the pulpit they sang 'Dear Lord and father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways'

CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD - JANUARY 2025

Our Conversations this month focused on Resolutions. We've all made them, we've all broken them, particularly the ones about not eating too much chocolate or getting more exercise!

We discussed the idea of making **positive** resolutions. Instead of giving things up or setting restrictions on ourselves but instead we set ourselves small measurable goals.

A few to consider could be ...

Not to gossip

Give one compliment a day

Do a random act of kindness

Go outside for 5 minutes. Go somewhere you have never been and take someone with you.

Talk less, listen more. Think of one thing you are grateful for every night before you go to sleep.

Let go of grudges. Get rid of clutter.

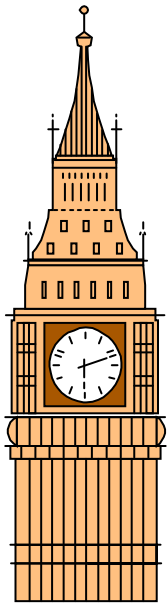
As Christians we thought about some Bible based resolutions that might help us to put God first in the year ahead.

1. **Spend more time with God.** Set aside time to pray.
2. **Connect with your Church.** Meet together with your church family, not just in church on Sunday. Get more involved with the activities of your church. Consider joining the Bible Study groups.
3. **Serve regularly.** Help each other. Use the gifts that God has given you.
4. **Read the Bible and Share the Gospel.** Make reading the Bible a habit. Set yourself a goal of learning a few verses. You can share the Gospel in actions as well as words.
5. **Give Generously.**

The “Conversations” notice board is changed each month in the church hall. Please find time to go and read it.

Our next meeting will be at 1, Prospect Road on the first Tuesday in February at 1.30 p.m. All welcome.

Pauline



Did you know that the “chimes” of Big Ben are not the same as the “bongs”?

The tune of the chimes come from the aria “I know that my Redeemer Liveth” and the words from it, from the Book of Job, are on a plaque in the Clock Room.

It reads “Lord, through this hour, be thou our guide, so by thy power no foot shall slide.”

GOOD SERMON!

After a long and boring sermon, the parishioners filed out of the church saying nothing to the preacher.

Towards the end of the line was a thoughtful person who always commented on the sermons. “Pastor, today your sermon reminded me of the peace and love of God!”

The pastor was thrilled. “No-one has ever said anything like that about my preaching before. Tell me why.”

“Well, it reminded me of the Peace of God because it passed all understanding and the Love of God because it endured forever!”

DIARY FOR FEBRUARY & MARCH 2025

FEBRUARY			
Sunday	2nd	11.00 a.m.	Communion. Rev Jeff Hughes
Tuesday	4th	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God
Wednesday	5th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
		6.00 p.m.	Meal
		7.00 p.m.	House Group
Friday	7th	1.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
Sunday	9th	11.00 a.m.	Mr Bernie Frost
Wednesday	12th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
		6.00 p.m.	Meal
		7.00 p.m.	House Group
Valentine's Day			
Friday	14th	1.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
Sunday	16th	11.00 a.m.	Rev Jeff Hughes
Wednesday	19th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
		6.00 p.m.	Meal
		7.00 p.m.	House Group
Sunday	23rd	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
Wednesday	26th		Warm Welcome Space
		10.00 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Lunch
		6.00 p.m.	Meal
		7.00 p.m.	House Group
MARCH			
Sunday	2nd	11.00 a.m.	Communion. Rev Jeff Hughes
Shrove Tuesday	4th	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God

DIARY FOR MARCH 2025

MARCH			
Ash Wednesday	5th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch Meal House Group
Saturday	8th		International Women's Day
Sunday	9th	11.00a.m.	Dr Geff Meyer
Tuesday	11th	9.30 a.m.	Elders' Meeting at the Manse
Wednesday	12th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch Meal House Group
Sunday	16th	11.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Rev Jeff Hughes Church A.G.M. Items for the April & May 2025 Magazine
Wednesday	19th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch Meal House Group
Sunday	23rd	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
Wednesday	26th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch Meal House Group
Saturday	29th	9.30 a.m.	Church Garden "Spring Clear Up" followed by Lunch <i>Clocks go forward an hour tonight</i>
Mothing Sunday	30th	11.00 a.m.	Songs of Praise. Worship Group

DRIVERS BE AWARE OF THESE 20 mph ROADS

A friend of mine was recently caught exceeding the 20 mph on Greendale Road in Port Sunlight. He has been fined £100 and 3 points on his licence!! I had not realised that the punishment is the same as any speeding ticket.



THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A DAME!

We may take this building, Prenton United Reformed Church for granted, we may be overwhelmed by the long list of maintenance jobs to be done, but on 17th January it was a place full of memories for a special visitor.



Dame Patricia with members of Prenton URC and friends.

Dame Patricia Routledge was born in Tranmere in 1929 and attended this church and was involved with the Sunday School, Choir, Amateur Dramatics, Brownies and Guides, and she left to pursue her performing career in 1954/5.

After 70 years Dame Patricia came back to visit the place that had been very important to her in her formative years. She was to receive the Freedom of the Borough of Wirral at a Civic reception that evening and wanted to spend her day revisiting places that were special to her. So, having visited her old school, Birkenhead Girls, she had arranged to come and be in this special place again.

Now in a wheelchair, Dame Patricia was delighted to share memories of people she remembered, she reminisced about singing solos at Christmas and Easter and, describing herself as a 'religious nutter', told us how she often brought people along to church with her.

I asked for a signature in our visitors' book, although her eyesight is very poor our visitor was pleased to sign the book to mark the occasion. I offered her a Meeting Jesus Bible, and she was pleased to accept it. I suggested that Emily, her companion and aide, might read it to her.

Dame Patricia now worships at Chichester Cathedral where she lives in a care home. Leaving this church for probably the last time, she thanked us for allowing her to spend a short while remembering the people who shared their faith with her, who sang songs of praise with her, who encouraged her to live a life of faith.

We can't always tell, we won't always know what impact our lives, our actions, our words will have on other people, or when those things will be remembered and by whom, so let's not take this place for granted, let's not consider it a burden, but let us remember that this is the place where God has called us to serve Him and each other no matter how old we are, our words and actions are remembered for a long time!

Dame Patricia Routledge receiving the Freedom of the Borough of Wirral



SOMEBODY LOVES YOU

Somebody loves you more than you know,
Somebody goes with you wherever you go,

Somebody really and truly cares
And lovingly listens to all of your prayers.

Don't doubt for a minute that this is true,
For God loves his children and takes care of them too.

And all of His treasures are yours to share
If you love him completely and show that you care.

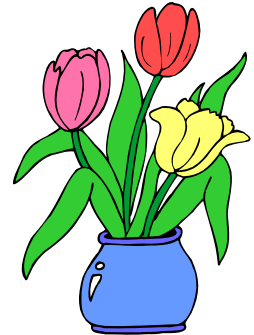
And if you walk in His footsteps and have faith to believe,
There's nothing you ask for that you will not receive.

Helen Steiner Rice (1900-1981)

CHURCH FLOWERS

There are still dates available for the provision of flowers for our Sunday Services and if you would like to contribute, please look at the list on the Notice Board in the Hall to see which dates are available.

After our Morning Service, the flowers are distributed to members of the fellowship who are poorly or housebound or are in need and these flowers tell them that they are not forgotten and they are in our thoughts and prayers especially when they are not able to be with us in person.



If you have difficulty in arranging flowers, which many of us do, please ask Pam to help you.

FABRIC REPORT

These gales have caused damage to our hall roof, dislodging 4 or 5 ridge tiles as well as some tiles. There is also water coming into the hallway from the architrave over the red door. I am trying to see if Martin or Mark can sort this out.

The kitchen is nearly finished but we are still trying to source a matching work top.

Until we sort out the black mould which is in a lot of places though thankfully not in the Church or the Hall, we cannot re-decorate.

We are in the process of getting estimates for this work from the professionals. You see all these areas are cold and damp in the winter months; the walls are wet and it is a very old building but we must get the building usable.

That's enough for now – we just need the money to pay for the work because the congregation is not getting any younger and climbing up ladders is difficult for some of us!

Fred



When winter holds us in its grasp
Spring seems so far away —
We feel that it will never come
Then all at once one day
We spy a snowdrop peeping through
The cold, hard winter ground,
And suddenly we dare to hope
The seasons have turned round!

The wind can hold a biting edge
As chilly winter lingers,
But eager gardeners can feel
A tingling in green fingers!
And then it seems that life bursts forth
As springtime bulbs are seen,
And winter-fusty houses need
A really good spring clean!

With new born lambs and Easter chicks
New life is everywhere,
And winter gloom is banished with
The warmth of mellow air.
If inward-looking winter is
A time of calm reflection,
Then graveyards filled with daffodils
Show joyous resurrection.

Eileen Hay

60s/70s Night

Friday 14th February

7.30pm 'til 11pm

Wallasey Village Church

**Dress to impress
and boogie the night
away!**

Raffle and Buffet

Bring your own bottle

Tickets £10 each

From Heather

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Email heatherhughes1@virginmedia.com



ROTAS FOR FEBRUARY 2025

Duty Elder

February	2nd	Pauline Green
	9th	Fred Foulkes
	16th	Elaine Parkin
	23rd	Sue Kite

Communion Elders

February	2nd	Jean Bayley & Elaine Parkin
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Door Duty

February	2nd	Deryk Jones, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
	9th	Pauline Green, Barbara Jones, Elaine Parkin
	16th	Heather Hughes, Sue Kite, Barry Lawrence
	23rd	Jean Bayley, Les Bayley, Deryk Jones

Readers

February	2nd	Marian Davies & Shelby Ambrose
	9th	Joyce Holland & Glyn Roper
	16th	Deryk Jones & Pam Lawrence
	23rd	Philip Roper & Fred Foulkes

Prayers of Intercession

February	2nd	Pauline Green
	9th	Jean Bayley
	16th	Claire Thomas
	23rd	Sue Kite

Church Flowers

February	2nd	Margaret Meade
	9th	Marian Davies
	16th	Shelby Ambrose
	23rd	Joyce Holland

ROTAS FOR MARCH 2025

Duty Elder

March	2nd	Jean Bayley
	9th	Shelby Ambrose
	16th	Marian Davies
	23rd	Pauline Green
	30th	Fred Foulkes

Communion Elders

March	2nd	Fred Foulkes & Sue Kite
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Door Duty

March	2nd	Pauline Green, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
	9th	Jean Bayley, Les Bayley, Barbara Jones
	16th	Heather Hughes, Sue Kite, Elaine Parkin
	23rd	Deryk Jones, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
	30th	Jean Bayley, Les Bayley, Pauline Green

Readers

March	2nd	Shelby Ambrose & Marian Davies
	9th	Glyn Roper & Barry Lawrence
	16th	Joyce Holland & Deryk Jones
	23rd	Shelby Ambrose & Jean Bayley
	30th	Glyn Roper & Philip Roper

Prayers of Intercession

March	2nd	Barry Lawrence
	9th	Philip Roper
	16th	Jean Bayley
	23rd	Pauline Green
	30th	Sue Kite

Church Flowers

March	2nd	Pam Lawrence
	9th	Joan Lawrence
	16th	Heather Hughes
	23rd	Marian Davies
	30th	Mothering Sunday