

CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH

The Gateway



LENT

March 2020

*Loving God,
Serving People,
Changing Lives*

Minister: Rev Barbara Pettitt

Tel (07784) 791287
www.centralmethodist.org.uk

Worship at Central	
Sun 1st	10:30 Carol Spencer
Wed 4th	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Alan Gillies
Sun 8th	10:30 Rev Barbara Pettitt, Holy Communion 4pm SPACE at Ingol Methodist Church 
Wed 11th	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Rev Barbara Pettitt
Sun 15th	10:30 Jason McMahon, Marriage and Relationships
Wed 18th	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Carol Spencer
Sun 22nd	10:30 Rev Barbara Pettitt
Wed 25th	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm With Rev Barbara Pettitt
Sun 29th	10:30 Sue Davies

If this is your first visit, or first time for a while, then please stay after the service so we can say hello and chat over a cup of coffee!



We have welcome cards at the back of the church and we invite you to leave your details, or ask a Steward.

Would you like us to pray for you?

Leave your prayer on a card in the Prayer tree corner

Prayer



At Central, its ok to worship in whatever way you feel comfortable with. We are all different and God loves us all!

Times of worship are for keeping in touch with God, not your social network . So please, be considerate and switch your phone to silent! Thankyou!



Rev Barbara Pettitt, Central Methodist Church, Lune Street Preston PR1 2NL
07784 791287 (Mobile) or 01772 881851 (Church)

Stewards: Ruth Millward-Hopkins, Sue Higham and Julia Blackett
Safeguarding Officers: Sarah Steele, Maureen Abson & Ann Curtis

The Gateway Newsletter is published 10 times a year , monthly except for January and August. Notices for inclusion should be received by the last Sunday of the month editor@centralmethodist.org.uk



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Statement from the Circuit Leadership Team.

For the last three years the Methodist Church has been taking another look at our understanding of sexuality, the nature of relationships and marriage. A connexional working party produced an excellent report which was debated at Methodist Conference in 2019 and which will be voted on this year. The 69 page report is really helpful and the Circuit Leadership Team feels that every member of our circuit should, at the very least, hear the highlights of its content. Therefore, during the month of March this year, 3 dedicated preachers will take a morning worship appointment in every church in the circuit to present the highlights of the report.

Please come to worship 15th March, when a fuller explanation will be given by the preacher. There will be an opportunity to leave your questions and comments afterwards in the coffee lounge for the wider Methodist Church to consider. You might wish to bring your lunch.

Marriage & Relationships - 15th March



At the Cross Wednesdays 2pm in the Coffee Lounge

- 4th Mar - The Criminal: Finding Forgiveness Luke 23v32-43
- 11th Mar - Joseph of Arimathea: Finding Courage John 19v38-42
- 18th Mar - Mary: Finding Trust Luke 2v25-38
- 25th Mar - Thaddaeus: Finding Faith Matthew 10v1-8, 16-25
- 1st Apr - Martha: Finding Life John 11v17-27

At the Cross

The death and resurrection of Jesus are the 'crux' of the Christian faith. We usually remember those events over one weekend each year. This year we focus on those events during Lent – the six weeks leading up to Easter Sunday.

Come and hear voices from around the cross. Hear from ordinary people, people like us, touched by an extraordinary event.

Hear from a centurion who was 'only following orders', a criminal who 'got what he deserved' and a woman who clung onto her faith in the middle of death and loss.

Come if you are big, or little or non-existent in faith.

All are welcome



work with Preston Orpheus Choir at their 90th Anniversary Concert at St Michaels Church, Kirkham on Saturday 16th May 2020 at 7pm. Tickets £12 - inclusive of Cheese & Wine. Full details for both workshop & performance on the website. www.prestonorpheuschoir.org
Sunday 12th April: Easter Cantata - Hallelujah What a Saviour! by Preston Methodist Voices and Midge Hall Methodist Church Choir at Penwortham Methodist at 4pm

Night Church - a year on...

Its been a roller coaster year! Starting and ending with very busy nights on 'mad Friday's in December 2018 and 19., With people coming in to sit, light candles, pray, talk and in some cases, express how this night has changed their lives. We would love to be nearer the busy centre of the town but we will continue to open this year just on nights when the city is expected to be busy. The exception to this is our new venture with Facebook Live Night Church! On Friday 20th March we will be live streaming video of Night Church candles where people can watch from home, comment and we will light real candles for them in church. With over 200 people following us on Facebook we think its an opportunity to reach those who don't come into town. facebook.com/nightchurchpreston



God has already gone before you

'The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you.'
Deuteronomy 31:8 NIV

Are you feeling anxious today because you don't know what you're walking into? Israel was going into a good situation, the Promised Land. They had just come out of a bad one: a back-breaking, soul-destroying, hope-extinguishing 430 years of slavery. Now they were going to be free to own their own homes, raise their own families, work at jobs they liked, and be well paid for it. But the Promised Land wasn't problem-free. There were enemy strongholds that had to be conquered one by one, and it would take time. 'The Lord your God will drive out those nations before you, little by little. You will not be allowed to eliminate them all at once, or the wild animals will multiply around you' (Deuteronomy 7:22 NIV 2011 Edition). Question: is this a similar situation to the one you find yourself in today? You're embarking on a new relationship, a new job, a new ministry, or an unfamiliar area where you don't have all the answers? And because you don't know exactly what's involved, you're anxious? Don't be! Here's the word for you today: 'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you... The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged' (Deuteronomy 31:6-8 NIV 2011 Edition). Carry these promises with you. And when your confidence starts to falter and your faith fluctuates, read them, stand on them, and count on God to honour His Word. (UCB.CO.UK)

	1st March	8th	15th	22nd	29th
<i>Front Door Steward</i>	Ruth Millward-Hopkins	Sue Higham	Ruth Millward-Hopkins	Sue Higham	Ruth Millward-Hopkins
<i>Inside Door & Offertory Stewards</i>	Stella Swift & Bill Manning	Valerie & Andrew Waterhouse, Bill Swindlehurst	Simon Millward-Hopkins & Geoff Tyson	Ron Bosworth & Angela Parker	Stella Swift & Bill Manning
<i>Coffee served today by....</i>	Bill & Olwen Swindlehurst	Kate and Pete Johnstone	Stella Swift Julia and Sarah Blackett Rachel Rackley	Sue Higham & Sheena Rhodes	Andrew and Valerie Waterhouse Ron Bosworth
<i>Today the flowers have been given by...</i>	Did you know... <i>Our church flowers cost £24 a week and are provided by Margaret Mason Florists!</i> 		Olive Iddon		

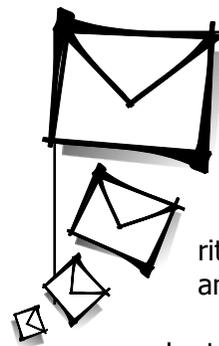
Tuesday 3rd March: Spirituality and Dementia Care, A Gospel Message of Hope - led by Sr Siobhan O'Keeffe. This is a reflection day that offers an overview of the clinical aspects of dementia and how as a community we may support people through Gospel based Person Centred Care. Siobhan is a registered General Nurse. Siobhan is currently working in community palliative care. Being held at Lund Church Community Hall, Church Lane, Clifton, Preston PR4 0ZE. 10.30am-4pm, with coffee from 10am. Cost £20 (please bring packed lunch). For bookings email: lundretreat@gmail.com

Friday 6th March: World Day of Prayer Services - Rise! Take your mat and walk. This year's World Day of Prayer (formally known as Women's Day of Prayer) will take place on Friday 6th March. The Service has been written by the women of Zimbabwe. All are welcome to join one (or both!) of the local Services: at 2.30pm in United Reform Church, Symonds Rd. PR2 3BL and at 6.30pm in Ashton Methodist Church, Wellington Road, Ashton-on-Ribble PR2 1BU.

Friday 6th March: Quiz Evening and Hot-Pot Supper from 7.30pm at Longton W.I. Hall, School Lane, PR4 5YA. Enquiries and tickets via Lilian Butler or Cath Greenlees 01772-613500. Proceeds for Christian Aid

Tuesday 17th March: Care for the Family event - The Wisdom House at Fulwood Free Methodist Church, Preston at 7:30pm. "The Wisdom House is an event where Rob Parsons shares his best stories to enlighten and encourage. You will come away with: The courage to pursue dreams, New confidence to be who you were made to be, Ideas on how to deal with difficult people, The ability to create and maintain genuine friendships, and how to play to your personal strengths. Tickets cost £4 each. For more information and to book tickets please visit www.cff.org.uk/wisdom or ring 029 2081 0800."

Saturday 4th April: Come and Sing Workshop - St John Passion - hosted by Preston Orpheus Choir at New Longton Methodist Church from 10am to 4pm. Only £15. A score can be provided if required. Bring a packed lunch. Hot drinks will be provided. Option to sing this



"This is my son, the beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him" Matthew 17v5

In my last letter I talked about the meaning of Lent with its rituals of prayer and fasting. As you read this Lent will have begun and you may have already given something up for the season.

Last Sunday we looked at the transfiguration of Jesus and I asked the question as to why we would explore that passage just before Lent began. I concluded that it might have something to do with these words spoken by God to the disciples; "Listen to Him".

Listen is an interesting word for it is an anagram of 'silent' which in turn an anagram of 'lent is'. It seems to me that is no co-incidence. Lent is a time to be silent and listen to God. Whatever else we are doing during Lent it is a time to draw closer to God, to grow in our faith and discipleship.

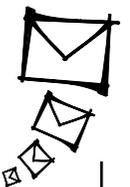
We live in a noisy world, surrounded as we are by sounds that follow us in all kinds of places. There is the background noises of living, traffic, children playing, people talking. There is often additional noise when we find ourselves shopping with music playing.

If we are to find some silence in Lent we may need to create it. In our busy, modern world, for some, silence is something we can and want to avoid. But perhaps it is only in stilling our external noise and internal chatter that we can truly listen for God's voice. For some people, of course, silence is an ever-present reality as they live alone and perhaps see few people. Making use of that silence becomes as much of a challenge as creating it.

Our challenge this Lent is to find ways to create and use silence that we might listen afresh to God, that we might hear. And all that in order that we might be transformed. Changed into more of the likeness of Jesus.

This is my son, the beloved, with him I am well pleased; listen to him.
Every Blessing

Rev Barbara





Wanted!

Do you have any games such as draughts, dominoes or scrabble that you no longer need? The coffee shop is looking for a few games in good condition to start a Games Cafe on a Thursday morning. Please see Sarah Steele or Paul Blackett if you can help. Thanks!

IN THE PRESS.....

Adopt a Lenten lifestyle for 40 days and for life

A campaign launched by a group of four Christian denominations aims to change participants' lifestyles by adopting one of six commitments to address climate change, for 40 days and then for life.

The Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), made up of the Baptist Union, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, launched its first green Lent campaign in 2019 which resulted in many people changing lifestyle habits including flying less, reducing meat consumption and buying only second hand clothes.

Rachel Lampard, JPIT Team leader, said "The climate is already changing and together we must act to limit its impact. The campaign offers information about the effect of our everyday lives on the environment, alongside ideas for living more sustainable lives.

Living Lent sets the challenges within the Christian Lenten journey to Easter, offering daily prayers and reflections. We hope that the journey through Lent will enable people to reflect on both the personal lifestyle changes we need to make and the changes that we need from our society and government in order to care for God's wonderful creation."

For 2020 the Living Lent campaign sets six challenges from which to choose:

- *Give up single use plastics. *Go meat free.
- *Commit to finding alternative modes of transport.
- *Reduce electricity use by 10%. *Live locally.
- *Buy nothing new.

Find out more at

<https://livinglent.org/community>

www.methodist.org.uk

Letter to the Church in China

Dear Wu Wei, Xu Xiaohong, Kan Baoping and all our brothers and sisters at CCC/TSPM,

I am writing on behalf of the Methodist Church in Britain to share our love and prayers for the people of China as you manage the health crisis associated with the Coronavirus outbreak in Hubei province. We are aware that many people are suffering and anxious and we are very concerned to hear of the rising number of deaths associated with the outbreak. We are particularly mindful of those families who have lost loved ones in recent days.

We thank God for all those who are heading medical research into the disease. At such times we realise that we are dependent on expertise, advice and cooperation from people across the world. We trust that the ongoing work of the Chinese health services, the World Health Organisation and other medical experts will soon limit the disease and succeed in finding the causes and cure.

We are glad that the Church in China is strong both in numbers and faith. We know that you will be working alongside communities to help people be calm and to support those in need. Although we are many miles away geographically, we feel close to you in prayer. Please be assured of our concern for you all, and our shared faith in the love of Jesus who shows us his strength in our human vulnerability.

We are also mindful of the concerns of the Chinese diaspora community across the world, particularly in the UK, and will be offering our support for them as best we can.

Yours sincerely,

The Revd Dr Barbara Glasson

www.methodist.org.uk

His Name Was Fleming (A true story)

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby boy. He dropped his tools and ran to the boy. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life." "No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family's cottage. "Is that your son?" the nobleman asked. "Yes," the farmer replied proudly. The nobleman responded, "I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow up to be a man you will be proud of." This arrangement was made.

In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved his life? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

This poignant tale reminds me so much of the phrase "God moves in mysterious ways".

Peter Bonage