

Worship at Central	
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	12:30pm Coffee Shop Carols - see inside!
Sun 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 Denise Johnson
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup>	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Rev Jane Wild
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 Rev Jane Wild - Holy Communion
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup>	No lunchtime service today
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:30am A Christmas Nativity, Maureen Abson
Wed 24 <sup>th</sup>	No lunchtime service today
Thurs 25 <sup>th</sup>	11am Christmas Day with Rev Barbara Pettitt
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No service at Central today</i>
Wed 31 <sup>st</sup>	No lunchtime service today
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10:30am Carolyn Hothersall
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Rev Sharon Thraves
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am David Evans
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Rev Jane Wild
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am Rev Jane Wild, Covenant Sunday, Holy Communion.
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Carol Rose
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am Circuit Service at Ashton Methodist Church with Rev Tebbutt, Chair of the District
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup>	Lunchtime Worship at 1pm with Carole Spencer
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb	10:30 Denise Johnson

**CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH**

**The Gateway**

**December 2025 &  
January 2026**

*Loving God,  
Serving People,  
Changing Lives*

**Minister: Rev Jane Wild**

**Tel: (07340) 359890  
www.centralmethodist.org.uk**



Stewards: Ruth Millward-Hopkins, Julia Blackett, Sue Burgess, Roberta Malone and Alison Pettitt  
Safeguarding Officers: Sarah O'Halloran & Geoff Tyson

**Coffee Shop Tel (01772) 881851**



WiFi  
Password:  
Ezekiel37

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen*

Receive this newsletter by email...<http://eepurl.com/g9tQzf>

There will be an extraordinary Church Council after worship on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December.

The next regular Church Council will be on Wed 28<sup>th</sup> Jan

## Christmas at Central!

Our Alphabet Nativity is on Sunday 21st December and the service will be led by Maureen Abson, Join us at 10:30!



Christmas Day at 11am with Rev Barbara Pettitt. Join with us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Bring your favourite gift!



Tune into Lancashire sings Christmas on BBC Radio Lancashire. Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> at noon!



If you are visiting over the Christmas season, or joining us for the first time then welcome to Central! We hope you will enjoy your time with us. Feel free to ask if you are unsure about anything!



Our Sunday church services are available on zoom! Meeting ID: 992 4189 3207 Passcode: 453840



*The Olive Grove Coffee Shop Reopens on Monday Jan 5th*



## November was GDPR month!

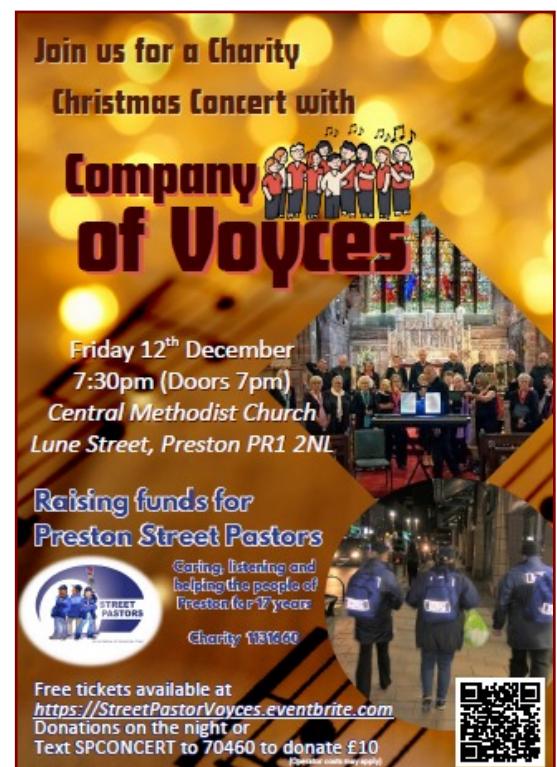
Did you complete a GDPR card and return it to your Pastoral Visitor or a Steward? There are cards in church to complete.. Thank you for helping us keep your data correct!



**Be part of our new team of Worship Stewards!**

Would you like to play a part in the running of our church on a Sunday, but don't have the time to attend meetings at other times? We would love to meet you, to see what you can offer!

**See one of our Stewards to find out more, all ages welcome!**



Today the flowers have been given by...	Dec 7 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>
	Sue Burgess in memory of Duncan	Sue Burgess	Maureen and Peter Abson	

Today the flowers have been given by...	Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>
	Ruth and Simon	Margaret Chetwood in memory of Evelyn and Ernie Shilcock	Sue Hardman and family in memory of Joan Cookson	



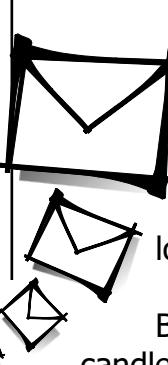
Over the month of December, there will be an opportunity to contribute to our special Advent and Christmas collection. We are raising funds for local families experiencing hardship at Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School, where we have had connections for many years.

If you would like to donate please leave your gift in an envelope, clearly marked RAMJS and put it in the collection. If you would rather donate by bank transfer, please use the same reference. Thankyou!



**Shoeboxes!**

Thank you to all who donated this year. 21 are on their way to International Aid!



*Dear Friends*

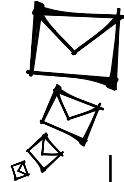
There is something quite special about going to church at Christmas time. There is a unique blend of tradition, love, calm, joy and togetherness.

Beautifully decorated with Christmas trees, poinsettias, candles, nativity scenes with twinkling lights, these customs create a sense of continuity and nostalgia. It also provides a warm, welcoming environment and an opportunity for family, friends and the community to share in the experience of the story of Jesus and join in with special services, whether it be a nativity play, Christingle service or singing carols, providing a beacon of hope, love, and unity, especially during the Christmas season. It also allows us time to reflect and remember loved ones, no longer with us.

We encourage our congregations to contemplate the true meaning of Advent—beyond the hustle and bustle of commercialism. Through messages of hope, love, and compassion, we inspire individuals to appreciate the blessings in their lives and to express gratitude for their faith and community. The spirit of giving is a central theme of Christmas, and the church often leads efforts to support those in need. From toy collections for families facing hardships, or hosting a Christmas Day lunch for people on their own. These acts not only help those in need but also reinforce the values of kindness and generosity within the community.

So let **YOU** be our **GIFT**, this Christmas time. Come in and join us, we will be pleased to see you.

Blessings, *Sarah*  
Sarah O'Halloran




# IN THE PRESS.....

## Eurovision star to play Messiah in Jesus Christ Superstar

Eurovision runner-up and social media star Sam Ryder is set to play the title role in Jesus Christ Superstar at the London Palladium. Ryder will make his West End theatre debut in the Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice musical, with performances running from June to September 2026.

Producers have come under fire for issuing "trigger" warnings over the "onstage depiction of the crucifixion" and scenes which include "some violence".

36-year-old Ryder became a household name in 2022 when his song Space Man earned the UK its best Eurovision result since 1998, finishing second to Ukraine. Prior to his success on the contest, Ryder gained a following by performing song covers on TikTok.

It is not known whether Ryder has a personal faith. In an interview with the BBC, he shared that he played guitar for a Christian rock group called Blessed By A Broken Heart in his early life. He has also described his 2022 Eurovision experience as "like being in a church" because of the "joy" and "togetherness" it brought at the time.

Jesus Christ Superstar first opened on Broadway in 1971, with its London production following a year later. The show, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice, brought a modern, rock-infused approach to the story of the final week of Jesus Christ's life.

[www.premierchristian.news](http://www.premierchristian.news)

## Christians respond to Reeves' Budget announcement

Christian organisations have responded to Rachel Reeves' new budget, announced in Parliament recently.

It was partially overshadowed by controversy, after a technical error by the Office for Budget Responsibility resulted in details being released around half an hour early.

Aimed at addressing slowing economic growth, the revised budget includes measures such as freezing tax thresholds, introducing taxes on homes valued over £2 million, electric vehicles and pensions, and raising the minimum wage. The budget also removes the two-child cap for Universal Credit benefit recipients.

Reeves remained confident about the new regulations, acknowledging that they would require "ordinary people to pay a little bit more".

Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch criticised the budget, describing it as a "total humiliation". Liberal Democrat leader Ed Davey echoed concerns, stating, "You can't tax your way to growth."

Christian financial planner Chinedu Mbakwe told Premier Christian News: "As Christians, we need to be wise in how we steward our finances. The first step would be to review your spending [in order to] free up some margin."

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) released a statement welcoming the removal of the two-child cap and other measures, but warned that "children may still face poverty." The charity also welcomed changes to the minimum and living wage, rail fare caps, assistance to employment, and prescription costs.

CAP Chief Executive Stewart McCulloch said: "Poverty steals potential and almost half of our clients simply don't have enough income to even pay for their food, heating and other basic needs." He added, "there are still significant gaps" in government welfare changes.

Sarah Edwards, executive editor of JustMoney Movement, expressed disappointment to Premier regarding the "substance" of the budget, calling the changes "half-measures". She also highlighted the "conspicuous" lack of reference to climate change, and urged the Chancellor to "make bold choices to tax wealth more, and more fairly... to... reflect our shared responsibility for one another and the planet."

[www.premierchristian.news](http://www.premierchristian.news)

## Peter Bonage

It is with sadness that we learned that Peter had died recently. Peter was a regular contributor to this newsletter for over 10 years bringing his everyday humorous coffee shop observations to print! Thank you Peter, from one Editor to another.



## 'Moved with compassion' Matthew 9:36

Was God telling him to stay in London rather than go to China? Thomas Barnardo had come to London for missionary training, only to have a ten-year-old child show him a rooftop where eleven homeless boys were sleeping. Barnardo was 'moved with compassion', and set out to find temporary lodging for them. Other midnight tours revealed more homeless youths – as many as seventy-three in one night. China would have to wait; God had given him London.



Barnardo sold some three hundred thousand copies of the Scriptures in public houses and marketplaces to raise money for his work among the children. He was often persecuted for defending them, even sustaining physical injury. When a cholera epidemic hit London in 1866, he worked tirelessly, only to see thousands die. Some would have given up in discouragement, but not Barnardo. He eventually opened a Home for Destitute Boys and, later, a Village for Girls. Through the next several decades, he built numerous homes and villages that cared for some sixty thousand abandoned children, and became known as 'the father of nobody's children'. And happily, he lived long enough to see seventeen of the young people he rescued enter the ministry and take the gospel to foreign lands.

You say, 'How can I be sure God is calling me to a particular need?' Because you will be moved with compassion. 'When He [Jesus] saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said... "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" (vv. 36-38 NKJV). (UCB.CO.UK)