

CONTACT

MAGAZINE OF PRESTBURY AND OVER ALDERLEY METHODIST CHURCHES
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Dear Friends

Belated Happy New Year to you all! The new year offers us all the opportunity to start again, to reflect and pray about those areas of our life that need to change - as well as rejoicing in the great things that happened in 2008 - of which there were many.

Looking forward to 2009 and all that it will hold is exciting - where will God lead us, what new projects will He bring to life in the Church, and what does He have in store for us individually? These big questions we can leave with God, at His door - or we can, with God, take an active role in forging the future rather than simply letting it come to us and dictate to us. As we set out on this Journey of faith together, with God, I pray that you would know His purposes in your life.

On a slightly different note, reflecting on 2008, I'd like to thank the army of volunteers that serve in a huge variety of ways to make Prestbury Methodist Church the wonderfully warm loving and caring Church that it is - you know who you are and what you have done - thank you. And finally looking back over the past year, we must pay homage to our Great God whose goodness and faithfulness are beyond words, as He blessed and guided us through the challenges of life. In whatever 2009 brings I look forward to walking with you and praising our awesome God together with you, in the fellowship of our Church family.

God's richest blessings to you and yours for the coming year.

Yours in Christ's service.

Stephen

LENT STUDY GROUP

For Prestbury, over Alderley and Broken Cross Methodist Churches

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Come and join us for a 5 week course which will be held at Prestbury Methodist Church starting on Ash Wednesday 25th February.

25th February at 7.30pm Believing and Trusting

4th March at 7.00pm including a meal 8.00pm Peace with God

11th March - no meeting

18th March at 7.30pm Faith into Love

25th March at 7.30pm The Greatest of These

1st April at 7.30pm All Shall be Well

8th April at 7.00pm including a meal - 8.00pm Holy Week Reflection

The course includes a study book costing £2.99

To book a place, please complete the list in the foyer by 10th February so that books can be ordered.

A PRAYER FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT

Lord, I'm not always eager to do your will.

I'd often much rather do my own will.

Please be with me on this Lenten journey and help me remember that your own spirit can guide me in the right direction.

I want to "fix" my weaknesses

but the task seems overwhelming.

But I know that with your help anything can be done.

With a grateful heart,

I acknowledge your love and know that without you,

I can do nothing.

PRESTBURY NEWS

Beta Beta will meet at 7.00pm for a meal on Wednesday 4th February. At 8.00pm the topic will be "The Vicar of Baghdad" and will address issues raised by the work of this remarkable Englishman in a very unusual parish. And he does his job despite suffering from MS.

ACF will meet at 3.00pm on Wednesday 11th February in our meeting Room. The speaker is Rev. Stephen Dunn on "A Personal Perspective".

Craft Group The craft group continues to meet in the meeting room at 2.00pm on 9th February a Lace Making demonstration. 23rd February Crafts for Easter - Card Making All are welcome.

The Rambling Group This continues every Thursday, meeting at church at 10.30am for a local walk. Do join us or meet us for lunch at the Admiral Rodney at 12.00noon

The monthly Service at The Beaumont

Rev. Stephen will be leading a short service. Watch out for the date in Pews News and your support is welcomed.

The Prayer Group We meet for prayer every Sunday morning at 9.55am in the Upper Room.

The Christmas Cracker The concert raised the sum of £2413 of which half will go to the Church mission projects. The remaining half will go equally to East Cheshire Hospice and the Alzheimers Society.

East Cheshire Hospice Annual Service of Thanksgiving

This service, for the 21st year is being held at St. Michael's Church, Market Place, Macclesfield on Sunday 15th February at 3.00pm

Church rotas. In future rotas for each month will be on the table in the foyer for people to collect

The copy date for the March edition of Contact will be **15th February**

Church Website

We are in the process of re-designing the church's website. If you have not had a look at it, you'll find it at prestburymethodistchurch.org.uk



Currently, it just has a few pages, but it is planned to extend and develop it over the next few months, and we would encourage you to visit the site regularly, especially over these next few weeks, as it takes shape.

We would be very pleased to have any feedback about how it looks, or if you have any thoughts about what might be included.

WHY GO TO CHURCH?

As Christians we go to church to worship God, which is to honour and revere Him as the supreme Being in our lives who, despite our unworthiness, loves us. But why is it important to go to church and to do so regularly?

Here are four good reasons:

1. It can help to create and maintain a **Relationship with God** which helps to take away our self-centredness and put God at the centre of our lives.
2. It is a **Witness to our Faith** that Christ died for us and rose from the dead to give eternal life to those who believe in Him. In this increasingly secular world this witnessing to those around us is ever more important.
3. It is a Fellowship of Mutual Caring. In worshipping together we can give help and support to each other as we face the varying problems in our lives. In the words of Charles Wesley's hymn " *He bids us build each other up; And gathered into one, To our high callings glorious hope We hand in hand go on.* "
4. It is a regular opportunity **To express our Love to God**, responding to His love for us. In human relationships it is important regularly to express our love to people and in worship this is what we are doing to God.

In our congregation there are those of us who have drifted from the church at various times in our lives but who now fully recognise the necessity and value of regularly worshipping in a Church family. If, having read this you are presently in that situation or indeed have never regularly attended church but feel a need or an interest do come and join us one Sunday morning. Our services start at 10.30am and on the second Sunday of each month it is an all age service.

We can assure you that you will receive a warm and friendly welcome from our Church family.

(This is the first of a planned series of three short articles based on recent sermons at Prestbury)

SOCIAL EVENTS

Faith Lunch Faith lunch will be on Monday 2 February 12.30. Do try to Join us.

The Trafford Centre We are visiting the Trafford Centre on Monday 16th February leaving church at 9.15am. The cost is £9.80

Events in March

Faith Lunch is on Monday 2 nd March.

There is a trip to **Bakewell** visiting the market and having lunch on Monday 16th March. Cost to be advised later.

Events in April

Faith Lunch on Monday 6th April. After lunch there will be a presentation by Hotter Shoes. Hotter do not charge but request a donation for charity.

Events in May

Faith Lunch on Monday 11th May starting earlier at 12.00 noon. This will be a ploughman's lunch provided by the committee. After lunch Notty Hornblower will be giving a show with costumes from her museum. The cost will be £ 10. Please try to come and bring a friend. Names and payment to Cherry please.

SIGNS FOUND OUTSIDE CHURCHES

If you don't like the way you were born, try being born again.

This is a ch-- -- ch. What is missing (U R)

In the dark? Follow the Son.

Running low on falth. Stop in for a fill-up

If you can't sleep, don't count sheep. Talk to the Shepherd.

COFFEE MORNING & BRING and BUY

SATURDAY 28 th February
10.00am-12.00noon
in the Village Hall

home made cakes, greeting cards,
raffle, bric-a-brac, books etc.

COME & BRING YOUR FRIENDS
Proceeds for ACTION FOR CHILDREN

As from September the name was changed to ACTION FOR CHILDREN. It is hoped that the change will increase the public's awareness of us as a recent survey showed that only 1% of the population knew what NCH was and what it did. We are fortunate that an anonymous donor has covered the cost of the change - a very generous gift. On behalf of all the 180,000 children in 450 projects we hope that you will accept this change and pray for its success.

Ecumenical Prayer Group

The group will be meeting at 9.00am on the following dates
4th February, 11th February, 18th February, 25th February, &
4th March

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Jesus said 'I am come that they may have life
and have it to the full'

**Lord, when I'm puzzled, uncertain,
help me to remember
you're in control.
Your finger on the button.
And, whether I can see the end or not,
help me to accept
that you know where we're going.**
(from writings of Eddie Askew)

WHAT IS TRUE LOVE ?

Here are the answers that a group of four to eight year olds gave

When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails any more. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca - age 8

When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that name is safe in their mouth". Billy - age 4

Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other " Karl---age5

If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate. Nikka - age 6

Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well -. Tommy - age 6

When you love somebody, your eyelashes go up and down and little stars come out of you.---Karen -age 7

You shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget. Jessica -- age 8

Help me to pray - even without words.
Help me to pray with my breathing
to breathe in of your love and your pace
to breathe out of my pain and sadness
to breathe in of your cleansing and forgiveness
to breathe out of my guilt and impurity.
So in my breathing may my body and soul be at one with you in
harmony with you
at ease with you.
May I be still and know that you are God.
May I be still and know that you are the Lord who brings healing.
"Encounter with God" by Dennis Wrigley, the Maranatha Community.

The Spelling Checker

- Eye halve a spelling chequer
- It came with my pea sea
- It plainly marques four my revue
- Miss steaks eye kin knot sea
- Eye strike a key and type a word
- And weight four it two say
- Weather eye am wrong oar write
- It shows me straight a weigh.
- As soon as a mist ache is maid
- It nose bee fore two long
- And eye can put the error rite
- Its rare lea ever wrong.
- Eye have run this poem threw it
- I am shore your pleased two no
- Its letter perfect awl the weigh
- My chequer toiled me sew.

If the note said....

If the note said..

..... "One note can't make a score,
there wouldn't be a symphony.

If the word said:

..... "One word can't make a page",
there wouldn't be a book.

If the brick said:

..... "One brick can't build a wall",
.....there wouldn't be a house.

If the drop of water said:

"One drop can't make a river,
There wouldn't be an ocean.

If the grain of wheat said:

"One grain of wheat can't sow a field"
There wouldn't be a harvest

If the man said:

One man can't save humanity,
There wouldn't be justice and peace,
dignity or happiness on man's Earth,
As the symphony needs each note. As the book needs
each word, as the house needs each brick, as the ocean
needs each drop, as the harvest needs each grain of wheat,
as the whole of humanity needs YOU,
as and where you are
you are unique,
No one can take your place.

Adapted from a text by Michel Quoist, The Breath of Love

**SONGS OF PRAISE "BIG SING"
AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL 14th SEPTEMBER 2008**

The stranger who took a key place in our life

A few months before I was born my dad met a stranger, who interested him so much that he invited him to come and live at our house. He settled in and as I grew up I never questioned his place in the family.

He was a great storyteller, and he held our interest most evenings, making us laugh and cry in turn. He took us to great sports events and to the pictures. I sometimes wondered if mum would prefer him to leave us; she had a strong Christian faith, and some of the things he said seemed to upset her.

Bad language was not allowed in our house, and our lodger often used four letter words that made us feel uneasy. But nobody ever confronted him about this, or even when he told us how nice strong drink was and how we should try cigarettes.

He began to speak openly about sex, which was a private thing. He certainly made me think that the moral values of my mother and the church I went to were old fashioned and perhaps wrong. But dad never asked him to leave.

About 30 years have passed since the lodger moved in. I have long left home and have my own family. We have a close relative of this lodger in our house, too, and I often think it would be better to ask him to go, because his language gets worse and his ideas are just cheap and vulgar, but the children would not like that, nor would my husband, who likes to hear him talk about football.

His name? Didn't I tell you? He's called Telly.

(Digested from the magazine of the Congregational Centre church, Nottingham.)

At 9am on Sunday 14th September about 40 of us left on the coach outside Macclesfield Methodist church and after picking up other passengers on the way to Congleton, made our way to London in glorious sunshine (quite a change from the recent miserable summer) After arriving in London with 3 hours free time in the Convent Garden area we headed for the Royal Albert hall for the Big Sing rehearsals for the BBC Songs of Praise transmissions on Sunday 26th October and 14th December. It was wonderful to sing with around 5,000 voices accompanied by 4 superb choirs, a magnificent orchestra and the mighty sound of the Royal Albert hall organ. We were also privileged to hear excellent performances by the well known soloists, Katherine Jenkins, Ruthie Henshall (star of many West end musicals, e.g. "Les Miserables") and Darius Danesh (the Pop Idol finalist in 2002 with Will Young and Gareth Gates) as well as the 4 piece classical young male and female groups Blake & All Angels.

The first half of the evening made us feel that Christmas had arrived 3 months early, as we sang well known Christmas carols and heard Blake & All Angels sing the beautiful Christmas song "O Holy Night", Ruthie Henshall's "Have yourself a blessed little Christmas" and the Junior choir singing "Away in a Manger" with lighted Christingles. In the second half, well known traditional hymns were interspersed with Moody and Sankey Medley ("Blessed assurance", "I need thee every hour" and "When the roll is called up yonder".), a modern worship song "Over all the earth you reign on high", and magnificent performances by Katherine Jenkins & Blake (singing "Up where we belong").

One of the highlights of the evening was the moving testimony by Darius Danesh, who chose Christianity having been brought up with one Christian & one Muslim parent, followed by his powerful rendition of the song "from a distance". Altogether a most memorable experience & our Macclesfield party even got a mention from Aled Jones! We arrived back in Macclesfield around 2.30a.m. very tired but with memories of a superb day.

Finally, on behalf of all fellow- travellers from 4 churches in our Circuit (Bollington, Gawsworth, Macc and Prestbury) and friends from Bosley Methodist, St. Paul's and Henbury Anglian Churches (apologies if any churches are omitted from this list), thanks is extended to all involved in organising the smooth running of the day.

God's Telephone

"Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know" - God's telephone number from Jeremiah 33.3

Please note: available all year round - free connection -free calls day and night - UK and world coverage, 'hands free kit, free voice mail - immediate connection to anyone whatever status - no batteries required -switch on and speak to the Creator NOW!

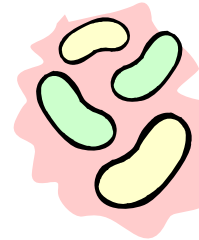


CELEBRATE?

Have you had a cold this winter?

Hope is at hand if you've got a sore throat because February 3rd is St Blaise's Day and he is the patron saint of sore throats. There is actually a church in London, St Ethelreda's, where they still hold a special service of Blessing the Throats.

Another way to celebrate February 3rd is to join in the Japanese festival of Setsuban. Setsuban (which means 'change of seasons') separates winter from spring. You throw beans to drive off imaginary devils and scatter beans in the home to discourage evil spirits.



I have a feeling that spreading baked beans on the living room carpet wouldn't be a good idea – nor throwing the odd tin at friends!

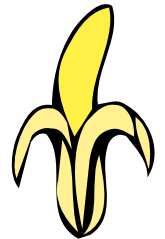
CELEBRATING

We all celebrate lots of different things – can you say what is celebrated when

1. You blow out the candles on a cake and have presents?
2. When children eat lots of chocolate eggs?
3. Jesus and his disciples celebrated it with a special meal?
4. People remember the day they got married?
5. We decorate our homes, sing carols and remember when Jesus was born?

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
What cake can you eat in heaven?
Angel cake.

Why did the banana go out with a prune?
Because he couldn't find a date.



My dad's a light eater. As soon as it's light, he starts eating.

