



# ST ANNE'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

<https://www.stannesonseaurc.org.uk>

Facebook: Stannesurc

Registered charity number 1128043



## MAGAZINE OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2024

### MINISTERS OF LANCASHIRE WEST MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The Reverend Janet Calderley

Email

[janet.calderley@btinternet.com](mailto:janet.calderley@btinternet.com)

Telephone

01253 896056 or 07713 573622

The Reverend Jim Williams

Email

[revjimwilliams@hotmail.com](mailto:revjimwilliams@hotmail.com)

Telephone

01253 896371 or 07484 221809

### CHURCH SECRETARY

David Croall

### CHURCH TREASURER

Elizabeth Fleming

### PASTORAL CARE COORDINATOR

Sheila Howarth

### SERVING ELDERS

May Bishop

Jackie Dell

Eileen Garfitt

Sheila Howarth

Peter Melvin

Dorothy Myers

Chris Phair

Joyce Phair



## GOD THE POTTER

If God's the potter, as we're told,  
and He can mould us, young and old,  
but we're supposed to be able to choose  
the path we take, now I'm confused.  
These two don't seem to match.  
Free will, yet God decides is the catch.  
God's the potter and moulds us all,  
So ultimately, it's all His call.  
Why then are there such evil people?  
Surely everyone should be equal.  
Our world should be a kindly place  
with everyone gentle, loving, full of grace.  
I don't understand why this isn't so.  
How can God the potter let evil grow?  
I think in life we have different paths to follow.  
Which one we choose will decide our tomorrow.  
Perhaps the choice is really our task  
and God watches on and helps if we ask,  
because he's made us and moulded our voice.  
He knows us so well he foresees our choice.  
We're all made up of good and bad,  
so we must try to pick well from the choices we've had.  
Though we might be subject to pain and strife  
We must try to take the right paths in life  
and hope at the end we won't be afraid,  
because God will be pleased  
with the pot that He's made.

*The author wishes to remain anonymous*

## THE POST AND THE GASTROPODS

You may worry that your letter will be lost in the post, but you probably don't worry that your letter may be eaten by snails.

But perhaps it is time to start. Especially if your letter is being posted in rural Northumberland. It seems some hungry snails there have developed a taste for eating the post. They crawl through the flap of the post box and munch away.

Duncan Hutt, of Northumberland Wildlife Trust, explains that "Snails eat paper because most contains cellulose from the wood pulp, which they can digest and use for energy, and they also get calcium from paper and that's what they need to build their shells. Slugs and snails have a very varied diet." And it might include your letter!

## THURSDAY SHOPPERS' SERVICES AT 10AM IN THE HALL

3rd October	Leader - Eileen Garfitt
10th October	Communion led by the Reverend Jim Williams
17th October	Leader - Doug Clements
24th October	Leader - Liz Stone
31st October	Leader - Rene Kendall
7th November	Leader - Pastor David Grimshaw
14th November	Communion led by the Reverend Janet Calderley
21st November	Leader - Peter Melvin
28th November	Leader - Margaret Russell

## SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10.45AM

6th October	Communion led by Pastor David Grimshaw
13th October	Leader - the Reverend Janet Calderley
20th October	Leader - Stuart Gay
27th October	Leader - Margaret Russell
3rd November	Communion led by the Reverend Clare Downing, Moderator of North Western Synod
10th November	Remembrance Sunday Leader - Pastor David Grimshaw
17th November	Leader - Eileen Garfitt
24th November	Leader - Andrew Barratt

Note: unexpected events may make it necessary to make late changes to the list of leaders.

## FLOWERS

6th October	Sarah and David Croall
13th October	Sum Cheung
20th October	Church flowers
27th October	Church flowers
3rd November	Church flowers
10th November	Avril and George Cook
17th November	Church flowers
24th November	Margaret Russell

## A MESSAGE FROM THE REVEREND JANET CALDERLEY

Autumn - "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness." As I begin to write this letter it is a warm sunny day in early September, warm enough in fact to be the middle of summer, and yet there is a feeling in the air that the year is on the turn, leaves are falling from the trees, birds are beginning their migrations and there is a definite atmosphere of the completion of another cycle of growth and of preparation for the big sleep of winter. In the countryside harvests have mostly been gathered in and there is a sense of satisfaction over what has been accomplished, perhaps even a nostalgic looking back or reflection on life. At this time of year that "mellow fruitfulness" seems to seep into the soul and become a part of our very being.

By the time you are reading this, though, it will be October and autumn will be well and truly here. Grain harvests will all have been gathered in, marking the end of one cycle, but farmers will be preparing the ground for next year's crop and possibly sowing winter wheat, marking the beginning of a new cycle, although they will continue to harvest certain vegetable crops over the next few weeks and even throughout the winter.

One crop which we have become used to seeing in our fields in recent years, introduced from America, is the pumpkin. In Britain, however, its main use is not for eating but for carving into lanterns for Halloween, replacing the turnips (or swedes) of my childhood.

Halloween itself, at the end of October, marks another new beginning. In many ancient cultures it was the end of the old year and the beginning of the new, celebrated by the Celts as Samhain, when the barriers between this world and the next or spirit world were very thin, allowing them to be crossed. Lanterns and bonfires were lit and lots of noise was made to guide friendly spirits and scare away the bad. As Christianity spread evangelists and missionaries soon realised that it would be impossible, (if not actually undesirable), to abolish all the pagan festivals. People need to be able to celebrate, give thanks, and to remember and re-tell the stories which have shaped their communities. The festivals were, therefore, reinterpreted for a Christian community, and so Samhain became Halloween, when Christians got ready to celebrate all the saints who had died following Christ.

This season of endings and beginnings offers us such a wealth of images and opportunities for reflection on God's provision and care for us, time to consider who we are, what we have been and done, and where we are going. We are more than halfway between the two big Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas and in this quiet, winding-down time of year we have the chance to pause and take stock.

Before we reach Advent and start a new cycle of the Christian year, let us take advantage of this period of rest and reflection, and, as the clocks go back at the end of this month marking the end of British summer time, let us look back on what we have done and what we have achieved over the past year, as individuals, as each church, and as a partnership.

The partnership 'away day' at St. Anne's on **1 October** gives us a chance to come together and share our thoughts and experiences, to learn together and learn from each other, and perhaps to consider our identity, and our relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

So let us reflect, remember and celebrate with thanksgiving to God.

*Rev Janet*

### PRAYER FOR OCTOBER 2024

Lord,

As we move into autumn and the month of October, the normal seasonal changes are all around us, the beautiful colours, the falling leaves, the cooler days. And that is reassuring.

But, so much else in our world is changing so rapidly, often in ways we don't understand. And that can be worrying.

Thank you that You never change. You are always the same, faithful, present and loving. And You tell us in Your Word, not to be anxious about anything, but to bring all things to You in prayer and to trust You. When we do this, You promise us Your Peace - a peace of heart that steadies us and helps us move forward.

Thank you that, whatever comes, we are secure in You, when we put our trust in Jesus. In His name, we pray. Amen.

*Daphne Kitching*

### THURSDAY CLUB

Regular meetings of Thursday Club resume after the summer break on **Thursday 3 October 2024** at 2.30pm in the hall. The programme for October and November is:

3 October	Beekeeping	Viki Cuthbertson
17 October	Jackie Dell entertains at the Church's organs, with refreshments afterwards in the hall	
31 October	Sewing Bee	Angela Fletcher
14 November	Reflections of My Dancing Life	Bez Cooper
28 November	Russian Agent Sonya	Bernard Davis

Men as well as women are welcome to attend any of our meetings. Do come and join us if there is something which interests you.

*Margaret Hughes*

### CRAFT GROUP

The Craft Group, led by Sue Melvin, continues to meet fortnightly on Thursdays - alternating with Thursday Club - from 1pm until 3pm in the hall. All are welcome.

## CARE FOR CREATION

António Guterres (United Nations Secretary-General) has said that we're at '*Code red for humanity: the alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk.*'

At this time of Creationtide, how are we to respond to these climate concerns?

### The world belongs to God:

'*The earth is the Lord's and everything in it*' (Psalm 24:1). The world is not ours, but God's! We are called to share in care for God's world: '*Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.*' (Genesis 1:28). We represent God by governing with the same self-giving generosity that we see in His creation of the earth. This challenges our consumer mindset, that sees the earth's resources as both limitless and existing simply for our needs. For example, the fashion industry uses as much carbon per minute, as a car emits going six times round the world! How can we make a difference in our world?

### We belong to Christ:

We also belong to the one whose plan is: '*to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment - to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*' (Ephesians 1:10). We can look forward to the time when God will create a new heaven and a new earth and make everything new. Meanwhile, we are called to serve as He serves, caring for the earth and our fellow humans, by living simply, recycling, conserving energy and choosing reusable options.

In terms of our world, there is no plan B! God gave us only one planet!

**Canon Paul Hardingham**

## WALKERS COULD LOSE 40,000 MILES OF FOOTPATHS

Walkers in Britain could stand to lose thousands of miles of rights of way, because of the sheer size of the growing backlog of applications for footpaths to be recognised and protected.

The Government has set a deadline of 2031 for public footpaths and bridleways to be officially mapped. But local authorities still have nearly 8,000 applications still waiting to be processed. This has caused concern that some rights of way could be lost forever.

The Ramblers, the walking charity, reckons there are about 41,628 miles of missing rights of way. They are encouraging people to track these down, in their *Don't Lose Your Way* campaign.

## NEWS FROM ECO CHURCH

I should like to thank one of the readers of the August/September magazine who gave me a piece relating to feeding mealworms to hedgehogs.

A group called Hedgehog Blackpool advises that you should never put down milk and never feed mealworms to hedgehogs. Mealworms give them a bone disease similar to osteoporosis in humans, leaving them vulnerable to broken bones and ultimately death. It is also advised that, if we feed peanuts to garden birds, we should make sure not to feed whole ones which could fall on the ground and be eaten by hedgehogs who could get a whole one stuck across the top of their mouths and prevent them from eating.

Green Tips from A Rocha for the months of October and November are:

### **October - contribute to wildlife conservation**

Clean bird feeders to prevent diseases spreading to winter migrants. Install a nest box well before breeding season to provide a cosy retreat for small birds during cold winter nights. Prepare to support more birds next year, with more tips at [arocha.org.uk/give-a-bird-a-home](http://arocha.org.uk/give-a-bird-a-home). As you observe the local birds reflect on this verse: 'I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine.' (Psalm 50:11)

### **November - green your home**

Combat climate change and reduce heating costs by identifying and sealing drafts around your home. Find the gaps that let the cold air in and the warm air out (think keyholes, letterboxes, cracks around the edges or bottoms of windows and doors, loft hatches, floorboards etc) and fix these gaps using the correct materials and online tutorials. Additionally, place foil or radiator panels to reflect heat into your room. Pray for those who might be experiencing the cold this winter.

*Dorothy Tatton*

## OUR HEDGEHOGS ARE IN CRISIS

It is feared that there may be just one million hedgehogs left in Britain. This compares to about 36 million during the 1960s. About 150,000 hedgehogs are killed on our roads every year.

With this in mind, England's first 'hedgehog crossing' road signs have recently been launched in several Borough Councils around the country. The aim is to try and save the species from eventual extinction.

The new sign features a hedgehog with white quills inside a red triangle above a message that reads 'hedgehogs crossing'. The design has been approved by the Department for Transport and it is hoped that the signs will make a big difference in preserving the hedgehog population. The aim is to raise awareness among motorists, to get them to slow down, and also among people using a strimmer in their garden.

## REMEMBERING DESMOND TUTU

Forty years ago, on 16 October 1984, the South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu won the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the opposition to apartheid.

Born into a Methodist family in Transvaal in 1931, Tutu first went into teaching, but after three years retired in protest at the deteriorating standard of black education, in particular the discriminatory Bantu Education Act of 1953. Instead, he went into the church, enrolling at St Peter's Theological College in Johannesburg and becoming an Anglican priest, then studying theology at King's College, London.

In 1975 he became the first black person to hold the position of Dean of St Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg, following this by becoming Bishop of Lesotho and then, in 1978, the first black General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

Regarded by many as a prophet in the liberation theology sense of the word - someone challenging power - Tutu became Archbishop of Cape Town in 1986, therefore the leader of South Africa's 1.6 million Anglicans. Always a pacifist, he was already one of the most prominent voices calling for sanctions on the apartheid regime from the international community.

On the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990 after 27 years, when South Africa moved towards democracy, he saw his country as "the Rainbow Nation". Mandela responded by making him Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1995.

Exhilarated by a new vision for the future of South Africa, he described himself as "on cloud nine" when the election results came in 1994. He planned the religious component of Mandela's inauguration ceremony, including Jewish, Muslim and Hindu leaders.

Tutu's Nobel Prize medal was stolen in June 2007 from his home in Johannesburg but was recovered a week later.

*Tim Lenton*

## TOO ELOQUENT?

Fresh out of seminary, a young pastor found an associate position at a prestigious church. One Sunday, early on, he was given the opportunity to preach. He prepared diligently - perhaps a bit too excited to use all the learning he'd acquired - and worked hard to make his words eloquent and smooth.

Shaking hands at the end of the service, he was approached by one of the older ladies who was known and respected in both the church and community. "Sir," she said with a smile, "your sermon was like the peace of God!"

The young preacher's grin widened and his chest puffed a bit ... until she continued on, "it surpassed ALL understanding!"



## ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

It's harvest time at **Messy Church** and, although we have a summer break, we keep our families busy with tending, caring and nurturing their Bags 2 Grow and Eggbox Allotments. So, after all that tending and, most importantly, watering, our Messy Church families could be harvesting salad leaves, herbs, tomatoes and, for their beautiful scent and coloured petals, sweet peas, which have just been bountiful this summer.

But all these plants are living things and interact in this world by pollination. At Messy Church we care for the world around us, so, over the summer break, we have also encouraged our Messy Church family to participate in Citizen Science, with the Flower-Insect Timed (FIT) Count 2024. It runs until 30 September, so our wider church community can also participate in the last few days. Simply take a seat in our beautiful church garden for 10 minutes, relax, observe and record any sightings of pollinators, such as bumblebees, honeybees... Search <http://ukpoms.org.uk>fitcounts> to report your findings.

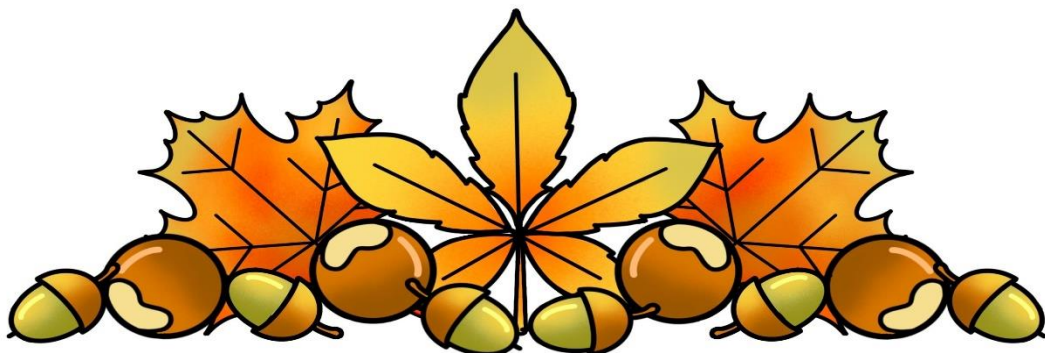
I am pleased to say that donations to [Easyfundraising.org.uk](http://Easyfundraising.org.uk) are beginning to take off and this is a wonderful way for everyone in our church community to help raise funds for Messy Church and our sister groups, like Starfishes and the church as a whole. So, if you wish to shop online with your favourite retailers, then log into Easyfundraising, select St Anne's URC as your cause, click on your selected online retailer, complete your transaction and your donation will be automatically processed. It is a wonderful way to support the activities of our Church. A big thank-you to those who have already generously supported our cause.

The next meetings of Messy Church are on **Friday 18 October 2024** and **Friday 15 November 2024** at 3.30pm in the hall. All are welcome.

*Jane Randles*

**Starfishes** continues to meet weekly in the hall on Monday mornings but there will be no gathering on **Monday 21 October 2024** because of half-term.

*Pat Allen-Frost*



## MEET THE MODERATOR

The Moderator of the North Western Synod, the Reverend Dr Clare Downing, is due to lead our morning worship on Sunday 3 November 2024 at 10.45am.

To enable members and friends to meet and greet her informally over a 'cuppa' there is an opportunity to do so on **Tuesday 22 October at 10am**, in the hall or community room.

This is an invitation to all group leaders and individuals to spend some time with Reverend Clare, and to share with her our commitment to the ongoing work here at St. Anne's URC and beyond.

*David Croall and Rene Kendall*

## CHRISTIAN ARRESTS AND ATTACKS CONTINUE TO RISE IN INDIA

Hostility towards Christians is growing in India. In the past four years, almost 1700 people have been arrested under anti-conversion laws in one state, Uttar Pradesh, alone.

And Uttar Pradesh is moving to tighten that law. A new bill increases the maximum penalty for fraudulent or forced conversion to 20 years with provision for life imprisonment.

Some 12 states in India have now passed anti-conversion laws, reflecting the rise in Hindu religious nationalism and accompanying intolerance in the country.

Intolerance against Christians has been growing since the election of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in 2014. The party's re-election in June has strengthened the hand of Hindu militants, and it is BJP-governed states that are leading the anti-conversion charge.

The Religious Liberty Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI) recorded a record 601 cases of persecution against Christians in India last year - a rise of 45 per cent.

And in the first six months of 2024 there were 361 attacks against Christians, according to India's United Christian Forum (UCF).

The growing *Hindutva* nationalist movement aims to keep India a Hindu nation and to prevent Hindus from converting to Islam or Christianity.

## PASSWORDS

An elderly vicar got a call from a scammer who said, "I've got all of your passwords."

The vicar replied: "Excellent! What are they? Just wait while I grab a pen."

## FUNDRAISING

A huge thank-you to all of you for your support during our August and September events. The coffee morning in August for the Amutee Children in Gambia was very successful and well attended. We were all delighted with the outcome and the money raised.

As we are now approaching Autumn, we will be hosting a Craft Fair on **Saturday 26 October from 10am - 3pm**. There will be a full complement of stalls with lovely ideas for gifts, especially as Christmas is not too far away. Our popular I will be in full swing with lots of tasty food and goodies for you to have with a coffee or to take home from our bake stall to eat later.

Thinking of Christmas, we will be holding our Christmas Fair on **Saturday 30 November from 10am - 2pm**. Again, we will have a full hall of stalls, with a wonderful selection of gifts for Christmas, plus handmade Christmas cards and jewellery, to name but a few; lots of lovely ideas. Our café and bake stall, too, will be open with all festive goodies for you to enjoy in the hall or at home.

We also have an advance notice for your diaries! Our Christmas concert will take place in Church on **Saturday 14 December at 2pm**. It will be given by The Wedgwood Singers, directed by Anne Shepherd, and our church choir, directed by our own Lisa Atherton. This is an event not to be missed.

We look forward to seeing you and your friends at our events.

*Avril Cook, on behalf of our hardworking team*

## SIGNS OF OUR TIMES?

### PEW-SHEET NOTICES THAT DIDN'T COME OUT QUITE RIGHT...

Would the person who took the church step ladder last week please bring it back, or further steps will be taken.

After Sunday morning coffee, please empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board.

Our visiting monster today is the Reverend Jack Bains.

Church toilet out of order. Please use floor below.

Worshippers are asked to wait, until the choir has been served Holy Communion.

We are always happy to have you use our facility.

The activity will take place on the church parking lot.

Hymn: 'I am Thin, O Lord.'

## DEATHS

It is with sadness that we have to announce the sudden death of Steve, known to the garden team as 'Steve, the bird man'. Steve visited the church garden every day to feed the birds. He was very knowledgeable about birds and wildlife and, in the past, submitted an article which appeared in the church magazine. He will be very sadly missed by everyone who visited our garden regularly.

*Sheila Howarth, Pam Stevens and David Blackburn*

We also commend to God's loving care Barbara Lardner, who died on 16 August 2024; Mary Matthews, who died on 24 August 2024; Margaret Greenwood, who died on 8 September 2024; Aud Rose, who died on 11 September 2024; Muriel Horam, who died on 13 September 2024.

Please remember their families and friends in your prayers.

## THE LEPROSY MISSION

Thank you to all our faithful supporters of The Leprosy Mission (TLM). Our church has taken the work of TLM to heart for many decades now and it is wonderful that we can maintain this support in these more challenging times.

Since the closing of our local branch of Barclays, things have been less straightforward as regards paying in to our special Barclays TLM Community account (checked every year by our church accountants). There is now a very helpful arrangement with the Post Office whereby cheques and notes can be paid in to this account, but only full bags of cash can be accepted. This does complicate book keeping to the extent that I now have to ask if those who still save their coins in collecting boxes would be willing to make their donations by cheque or to the nearest note.

All that we raise really does help to transform lives and give hope and a future to people affected by leprosy in different parts of the world. It does this in the name and love of Jesus. So, very many thanks again.

*Liz Stone, TLM Church Representative*

## THANK YOU

Thank you for the church flowers on the occasion of a Birthday and our 65th wedding anniversary. Much appreciated, too, were the visits by Avril and George and Bill and Barbara.

*Shirley and Lawrence Jones*

Items for the December/January magazine should be with the editors no later than **Sunday 10 November 2024**, please.