



# ST ANNE'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

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## MAGAZINE JUNE/JULY 2026

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### PASTORAL CARE COORDINATOR

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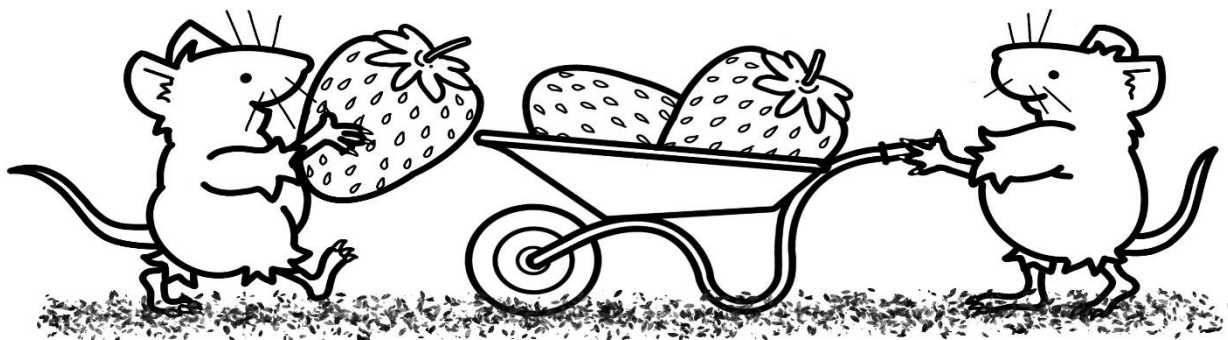
Jackie Dell

Elizabeth Fleming

Peter Melvin

Chris Phair

Joyce Phair



## PRAYER FOR JUNE 2026

Father,

Here we are in June - a beautiful month and a month when we remember a beautiful follower of Yours, Barnabas. He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and he encouraged Your people to remain true to You in what must have been dangerous times.

Lord, in these dangerous days, when so much seems alien and out of control, how we all need to be encouraged to be steadfast in our faith and in our lives.

How we need to remember that You are our faithful, sovereign Lord; that You never change; that in Jesus You have won the victory over sin and death. If we put our trust in Jesus, we are secure for all eternity.

Thank You for the example of Barnabas. Help us to be encouraged and to encourage others. May we enjoy June in all its beauty, knowing that nothing can separate us from You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

*Daphne Kitching*

## BIBLE STUDY

10 am in the Community Room (on alternate Tuesdays)

By the time you read this we'll be well into the book of Esther, but we've wrestled with at least two issues from 'Women of Holy Week'.

1. Since men would usually prepare a male body for burial in Biblical times why was it that the role was left to the women in the case of Jesus' death?
2. If Clopas and Cleopas are the same person, then the wife is Mary and they were likely returning together from Jerusalem to Emmaus after the crucifixion. It's more than likely that, as the risen Christ pulled alongside them, they were having a 'domestic'! (Clopas to Mary 'If it hadn't been for you we would never have set out on this wild goose chase to Passover in Jerusalem. What a waste of time that had proved to be!')

We shall be meeting on 9 and 23 June and on 7 and 21 July 2026.

Do feel free to join us!

*Margaret Russell*

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

4th June	Leader - Stephanie Johnson
11th June	Communion led by Margaret Russell
18th June	Leader - Stephanie Johnson
25th June	Leader - Pastor David Grimshaw
2nd July	Leader - Linda Lunn
9th July	Communion led by the Reverend Jim Williams
16th July	Summer praise led by Stephanie Johnson
23rd July	Leader - Margaret Russell
30th July	Leader - Rene Kendall

### SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10.45AM IN THE CHURCH

7th June	Communion led by the Reverend Peter Colwell
14th June	Leader - Elizabeth Fleming
21st June	Leader - the Reverend Jim Williams
28th June	Leader - Stuart Gay
5th July	Communion led by Doug Clements
12th July	Leader - Pastor David Grimshaw
19th July	Leader - Andrew Barratt
26th July	Leader - Stuart Gay

Note: unexpected events may necessitate late changes to the list of leaders.

### FLOWERS

7th June	Jackie Dell
14th June	Joyce and Chris Phair
21st June	Church flowers
28th June	Church flowers
5th July	Avril Cook
12th July	Church flowers
19th July	Church flowers
26th July	Elma Templeton

## ECO CHURCH

Spring at Eco Church has been busy with Bags2Grows (B2Gs) being distributed and a new project getting started.

Inspired by a Zoom meeting I attended on 'The road to Cleveleys attaining gold eco status', I put forward a proposal: to create a moss garden, which will act as a carbon sequester area.

At Cleveleys, being a rural area, they were sequestering carbon by planting trees in a field. That would not apply here but the church garden does have a woodland area, and trees that have been sequestering carbon for over 100 years, plus a lot of moss. Moss is an ancient plant, surviving previous climatic changes through millennia, and it can store more carbon than trees, so a proposal was put forward. Church members kindly agreed to a moss garden and a start was made.

With all good intentions, a spot was chosen. Upturned terracotta pots were placed at the corner of the woodland area to be visible from the garden bench, and moss was placed on the top of the terracotta pots and on stones laid in and around the pots, and watered in. All good! On a return visit, all the moss had disappeared - the universe had other ideas! The cause of the disappearance was probably due to all the beautiful little birds in our church garden using the moss to line their spring nests. So, the moss garden is a work in progress and, now that we are heading into summer, it will be put on hold until later in the year when damp conditions return.

On the 'Get Growing' front, B2Gs have been distributed to families at Starfishes and Sunday Club, and a gallery of pictures is now coming in to the Discover Hub Facebook page showing how their nurturing skills are being rewarded with the first signs of fruit, tiny beads of currant blossom, a glimpse of a pollinated strawberry flower and healthy green leaves of garlic.

The Mediterranean border has moved from lush, verdant, spring-green growth of spring flowers to being planted up with herbs to grow over summer. If successful, the Mediterranean border, in addition to the potted roses, grapevine, figs and bay, will be home to oregano, golden marjoram, chives, sage, lavender and camomile.

As always, please support Eco Church and our other church groups by shopping online through: [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) By shopping online through Easyfundraising, a donation will automatically be made once the transaction is completed.



As spring moves into summer, Eco Church wishes you all a beautiful, sun-filled summer.

**Jane Randles**

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE REVEREND JIM WILLIAMS**

**"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,  
kindness, goodness, faithfulness."  
(Galations 5:22)**

As we move into late spring and early summer, many of us have been cheered by the lovely weather. Blue skies, longer evenings, and time outside bring a fresh feeling to our days. It's easy to see how sunshine can lift our mood—helping us feel calmer, kinder, and more ready to smile.

In Lancashire West Missional Partnership this time of year brings more than just nice days. It can change how we treat each other. Warm weather helps us slow down, talk, and enjoy simple moments. A chat after the service, a laugh over a cup of tea, or giving someone a hand—these things often feel easier when we feel happy.

But this also gives us something to think about. If good weather helps us feel kinder and more caring, how can we keep that going when the days are grey or hard? How can we make sure our kindness and joy are not just for sunny days, but part of our life as a church?

So, here are a couple of questions for us all. How can you bring a bit of warmth to someone this week? And how can we make our church a place where people always feel welcome and cared for?

As we enjoy the sunshine, may we also grow in love and kindness, so that our church is full of joy in every season.

*Rev Jim*

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Each year, the Christian Police Association (CPA) hosts an International Day of Prayer for the Emergency Services. This year it will be on Thursday 25 June 2026.

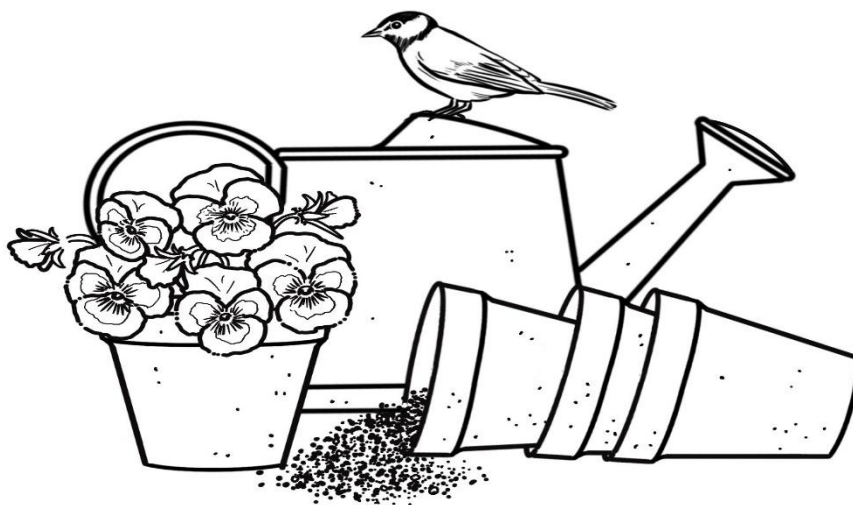
There are four ways to get involved:

- Watch the CPA YouTube channel 'International Day of Prayer' playlist
- Join one of the Zoom meetings held on the day. Contact CPA for details.
- Use the Pray 4 Your Police (P4YP) material on its Publications Page.
- Engage in its social media using the hashtag #WaveofPrayer

Please help support Emergency Service colleagues around the world, as they face a variety of challenges.

More information is available at: <https://cpauk.net/events/>

## FEED THE BIRDS - BUT THOUGHTFULLY



If you enjoy feeding the birds, you are not alone. Up to 60% of all households in the UK regularly feed their wild birds, according to surveys from UK Pet Food. It all adds up to an estimated £250 million in sales annually, with roughly 150,000 tonnes of seed being sold.

When feeding wild birds, here are five mistakes to avoid:

**Not keeping the feeders clean.** This can spread disease. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) advises cleaning bird feeders once a week with a mild soap such as washing-up liquid. Do it outside, using brushes that you keep for this job alone.

**Leaving too much food out.** It attracts rodents. Instead, the RSPB advises that little and often is best. But keep an eye on those feeders and keep them topped up. When birds are nest-building and raising broods, they need a lot of energy. Feed peanuts in a rigid mesh feeder, so that large pieces of nut cannot choke baby birds. Avoid putting out fat in hot weather - it can go rancid.

**Feeding bread.** This can lead to malnutrition. Bread is high in carbohydrates, while garden birds require a protein-rich and high-calorie diet. A chick with a stomach full of bread can freeze to death overnight. Ideally, feed a combination of mealworms, seeds, sunflower hearts, dried fruit, peanuts and fat.

**Forgetting to provide water.** Birds need to drink and bathe daily, especially in hot weather. Change the water every day and keep the basin clean.

**Putting feeders in the wrong place.** Place your feeders near to shrubs, trees and bushes, to provide cover. Blackbirds and robins are ground feeders, whereas tits and sparrows prefer to feed from hanging stations. Using an array of feeders will attract a wide range of birds.

## MESSY CHURCH/CONNECT

This has been a very difficult time for our Messy Church team.

One of our ministers, the Reverend Janet Calderley, became ill during the summer of last year and was admitted to hospital. Unfortunately, she did not recover and died peacefully in Trinity Hospice in October 2025.

Since she joined us at the start of the pandemic, Janet had been our inspiration (even from her hospital bed), full of ideas and always supplying the resources for Messy Church.



With the number of children dropping, we felt it was time to put Messy Church on hold. Over ten years the core team had formed a strong bond, and we felt we could not let this strong connection stop. After discussion with our Missional Partnership Mentor, the Reverend Daleen ten Cate, we decided we wanted to keep this connection by holding monthly meetings on the third Friday of the month, as we did for Messy Church, but at lunchtime. We would eat, talk and pray together in a relaxed non-threatening atmosphere. No one should ever feel pressured to speak unless they wish to.

This goal has been achieved, and the attendance is good. So, although disappointed that Messy Church is no more at the moment, we are very positive that this new venture is a way forward, not only for Church members, but also as an outreach to the wider community.

*Sheila Howarth*

## STARFISHES

As we commence the Spring / Summer term, our last meeting for 2025/2026 being on Monday 13 July, we realise that Starfishes has been a feature of our church and local community for over 20 years now.

We have not had one birthday or anniversary celebration over those 20 years, but instead we make sure that every week becomes a time of celebration.

Looking in at a Starfishes morning, it may appear busy, noisy, hectic, but underlying our meetings there is always an unseen, fairly tight timetable which enables all present - children, carers and leaders - to continue to enjoy Starfishes on a Monday morning.

*Doug Clements*

## GIVING THANKS FOR FATHERS

There is no finer sound in the world than your child calling you 'daddy', or 'dad'. I love it!

And as I look around our neighbourhood, dads today are far more involved in their children's lives than when I was a child. Pushing prams, holding hands while out on a walk, bathing, playing games. Dads are in all these activities and more. I see the dads on either side of our house, and they obviously love their kids with all their hearts.

Unfortunately, too many kids grow up without a stable and involved male figure in their lives over the whole of their childhood and beyond. And no prizes for guessing the outcome; when they reach fatherhood, their kids often grow up without a stable and involved male figure in their lives.



The month of June brings Fathers' Day - this year on 21 June. May all dads reading this be pampered like never before! If it's a fine day, it may be a case of 'Stand back everyone- dad's going to bar-b-q'. But before we get carried away, let's spare a thought for those who for one reason or another couldn't be dads, or whose dads fell far short of the high expectations we invest in them, or who lost a dad at a crucial time in life and feel a permanent ache where 'Dad' should be.

Our Christian faith teaches us to look at God as 'Father'- we address Him as such in the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, and it was Jesus' custom to talk to God as 'Father'. Maybe, taking into account those who have had a very mixed experience, or a bad experience of fathers, we should qualify what we say of God and call Him 'the Good Father', or 'our Good Father'.

Because that is what the experience of countless Christians would testify to; that God is a good father. I think of the picture Jesus paints in the parable of the Prodigal Son; the father on the look-out for his wayward son day after day, and, when he sees him in the distance, runs all the way to him to embrace him. Now in Jesus' time, in that culture, fathers did NOT run, least of all to welcome returning no-goods who had wasted half the father's fortune. Fathers were people of dignity. Run? Never!

Jesus has turned that on its head. We can be sure that a welcome awaits us; we turn to God, or return to God, and find that He's already half-way towards us, coming at speed to embrace us.

***The Reverend Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York,  
where he is a spiritual director.***

## THURSDAY CLUB

Thursday Club has arranged to have afternoon tea in the Bedford hotel in St Anne's on **Thursday 25 June 2026**. We will gather from 2.30pm and the tea will be served at 3pm. The cost is £20 per person. If you would like to join us, please give your name and money to Heather Edney no later than noon on Thursday 18 June 2026.

*Margaret Hughes*

## FUNDRAISING

It's hard to believe we are almost halfway through our fundraising year. It's been busy, but we are pleased with the way our plans are working out.

On **Saturday 27 June 2026** we have our bumper Book Sale from 10am - 2pm. We will also have jigsaws, a wide selection of DVDs and CDs, and other stalls for you to browse. There will be a raffle and a bake table with food for you to take home and enjoy, and our cafe will be in full swing, serving delicious food. Entry is by donation. Come and grab a bargain.

On **Saturday 25 July 2026** starting at 2pm we invite you to come into our hall and enjoy an afternoon of music with Lisa, our church organist. She will be playing songs and tunes you will know, so maybe you will sing along or even have a waltz or two. Tickets are £7 and will include a strawberry afternoon tea; they will be available soon. We will also hold a raffle. This is something for everyone, so bring your friends.

We look forward to seeing you at any or all our events. Thank you for supporting us.

*Avril Cook on behalf of the fundraising team.*

## GOSPEL WITNESS IN LEBANON

In the midst of warfare, a Release International partner in the Middle East is seeing the gospel of Christ bearing fruit.

The partner in Lebanon provides a haven for Christians and other minorities fleeing violence elsewhere in the region. While they provide food, clothing and bedding for those with nothing, they are also telling people about Jesus Christ.

Only recently nine Alawites (a minority group that supported the former Assad regime in Syria) came to faith in Christ and were baptised. An Easter service, attended by more than 500 people, was led by a group of youngsters who our partner has been nurturing, and who have been sharing the gospel with thousands over social media.

Release says: "Our partner is a beacon of light shining in a dark place and attracting many."

More information is available at: <https://releaseinternational.org>

## CHRISTIAN GROWTH IN EAST AFRICA

The church community is growing fast in East Africa. There were 55 million Christians in the Eastern African Region in 1970 and, 50 years later, in 2020, there were over 300 million, spread across 435,000 congregations.

That is an average *annual* rate of increase of +3.5%. That is *faster* than the average rate for population growth of +2.9%.

The Eastern Africa Region is made up of some 20 countries, ranging from very small (Seychelles with about 96,000 people) to the largest (Ethiopia with about 113 million).

## WELL-DRESSING IN DERBYSHIRE IN SUMMER MONTHS

Derbyshire is known for its wells and well-dressing. The annual tradition followed in many villages of decorating the village wells, or 'well dressing', attracts sightseers from miles away.

By ancient, centuries-old tradition, five wells are decorated. Boards are set up around each one which is then covered in clay. The clay is then impressed with thousands of colourful flower petals to create pictures and tableaux. Often the stories illustrated are from the bible.

It is thought the practice may date back to the 14th century, and it may have started as an act of thanksgiving when the community escaped the Black Death. Over the years, and before piped water became available, it also became an act of thanksgiving for the village's supply of clean, clear water.

Today more than 80 Derbyshire villages still follow the tradition, and the season extends through the summer. Many well dressings have a biblical theme or are inspired by royal occasions or sporting events.

Generally, the Derbyshire wells are *not* considered holy or named after saints. Most were just the original village water tap. However, Buxton does have a celebrated holy well, where people regularly line up to collect its special waters.

Buxton mineral water is bottled and available in supermarkets, but in the town itself, at St Anne's well, it is free. Through medieval times there was a chapel on the spot, and pilgrims came seeking cures and to leave offerings.

Later the town became a spa, and patients came to bathe and drink, much as the ancient Romans had done in pre-Christian times. Today the free Buxton water emerges from a pipe set in a modern plinth containing a statuette of St Anne, the mother of Mary and Jesus's grandmother.

## QUIET PRAYERS

The little boy was saying his go-to-bed prayers in a very low voice.

"I can't hear you, dear," his mother whispered.

"Wasn't talking to you," said the small one firmly.

## **"THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL, BUT THE WORKERS ARE FEW"**

**(Luke 10:2)**

Across our church family, God is at work in ways both seen and unseen. The elders carry a significant responsibility in guiding, caring, and praying for the congregation, yet they are not called to do this work alone. Scripture reminds us that God delights in using ordinary people—men and women like us—to accomplish extraordinary things for His kingdom.

It is remarkable to consider that the growth of God's kingdom on earth does not depend on human strength or status, but on willing hearts. Throughout the bible, we see God calling fishermen, shepherds, and tentmakers—people without special titles or influence—and working powerfully through them. That same invitation is extended to each of us today.

The question we must ask ourselves is simple but important: what has God given me that I can offer? Each of us has been entrusted with unique gifts, talents, and experiences. Some are gifted in teaching or encouragement; others in hospitality, administration, practical service, or prayer. No contribution is too small when it is offered in faith and love.

The elders are seeking not just helpers, but partners in ministry—people who are willing to step forward, serve faithfully, and share in the joy and responsibility of building up the church. Whether it is supporting pastoral care, assisting with outreach, or strengthening the life of our congregation, there is a place for everyone.

As we reflect on God's calling, let us be encouraged: He does not require perfection, only willingness. Perhaps now is the time to step forward and ask how you might serve. In doing so, you become part of something far greater—the unfolding work of God's kingdom in our midst.

Please speak to an elder. They would love to listen, pray with you, and explore how your gifts can bless your church family.

**Rev Jim**

## **SOME OF THE GREAT QUESTIONS OF LIFE**

Why are buildings called buildings when they are finished? Shouldn't they be called built?

Why is abbreviated such a long word?

Why is it that when you tell a man there are 400 billion stars he will believe you, but when you tell him there's wet paint, he has to touch it?

If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

## **BBC PROMS WILL STILL CELEBRATE THE UNITED STATES - DESPITE TRUMP'S LAWSUIT**

The BBC will mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence with a programme of American classical music this summer.

That is while Donald Trump pursues his multi-million lawsuit against the Corporation. But he is not the only thing that is making the BBC uneasy. BBC insiders are also wary of the shifting political situation between the US and Iran, which could make the Proms concerts at the Royal Albert Hall a target for anti-war demonstrations.

However, the concerts will still go on to showcase the music of famous US composers, including *George Gershwin*, *Aaron Copland* and *Leonard Bernstein*. American conductors will even lead several of the shows.

Sam Jackson, the BBC Radio 3 controller, said: "The 250th anniversary of American independence is a major moment in world history. We live in uncertain times, but our current geopolitical situation should not lead us to 'cancel' great music, or to deny licence fee payers the opportunity to hear repertoire of both the past and the present."

The Proms will launch with the First Night on 17 July 2026.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you so much to Avril for the beautiful flower arrangement in Church on Sunday 3 May in memory of my husband, David, on the eleventh anniversary of his passing. This was so appreciated by Joanne and myself.

***Sheila Howarth***

I would like to thank you all for your generous retirement present. I am not going to miss getting up early in the winter mornings. I will think of Joanne when I cuddle up in my warm bed. The church and hall are in good hands with Joanne in charge. Thanks again.

***Pam Stevens***

Thank you to Avril and all the church family for the beautiful flowers we received in April. They made us both feel much better!

***Liz Stone and Duncan Foulds***

Thank you to everyone at our church for the lovely flowers sent to me. They are much appreciated.

***Shirley Warhurst***

Items for the August/September edition of the magazine should be with the editors no later than **Sunday 12 July 2026**, please.