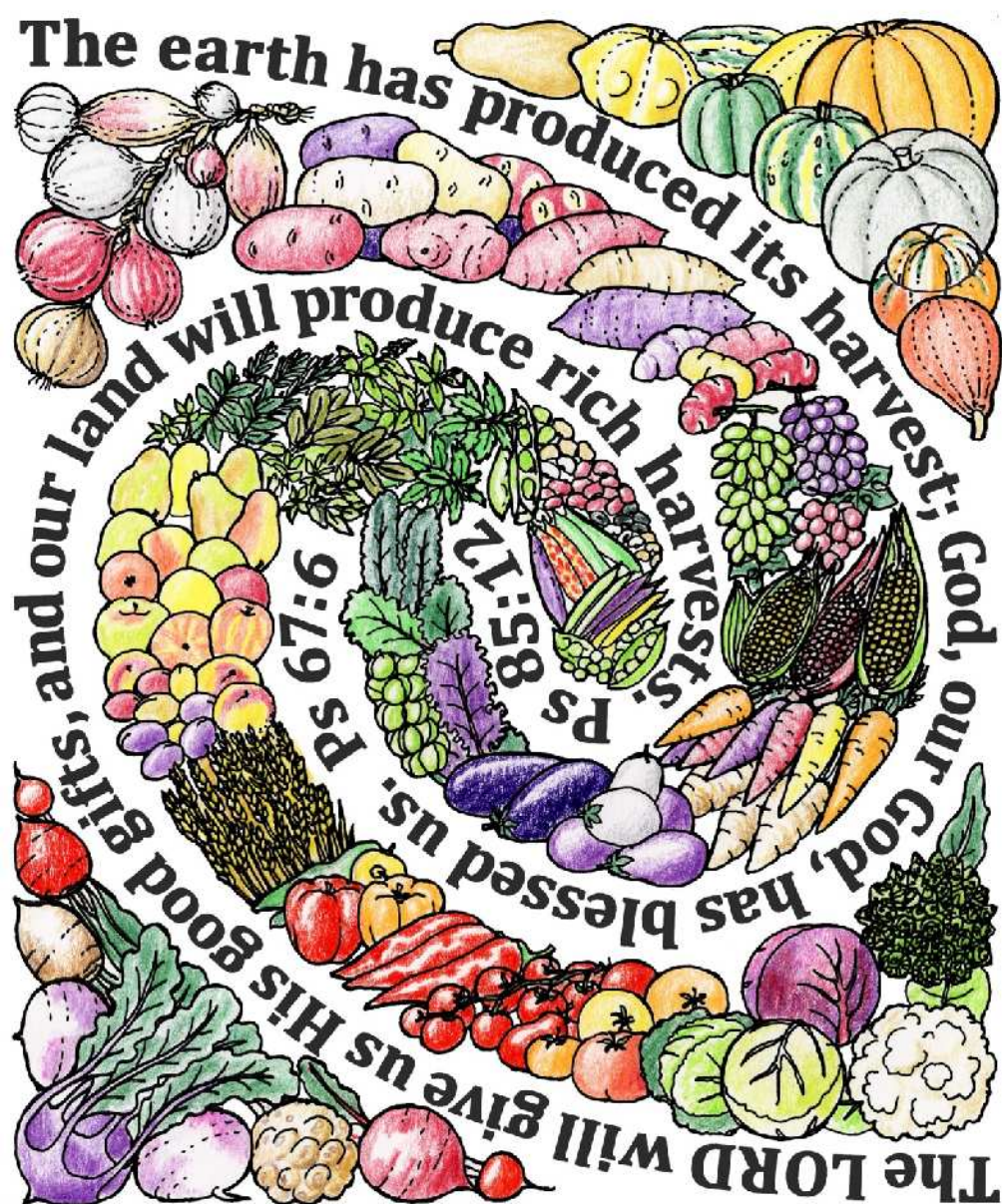


United Reformed Church of
St Andrew and St George - Bolton



October &
November 2022



A Member of the Bolton & Salford Missional Partnership
and a Member of Christians Together in Bolton Town Centre

Minister's Letter

Dear friends,

The new term has started - not just for schools, colleges and universities, but for all of us. As we get ready to move into autumn, various groups and meetings are restarting,.

This year there is talk in the air of 'getting back to normal', but I'm not sure that we can ever go back. We can only build on what has gone before, whether it was good or bad. There are a lot of positives from before the pandemic on which to build, as well as a few good things that came out of the pandemic, alongside some difficult things that we need to contend with.

Our perceptions of the world have probably changed more in the last three years than for a long time. The pandemic eradicated a lot of the certainties that we had built up and the war in Ukraine has pulled down even more. The death of the Queen is also the end of an era. On top of everything else, the cost of living crisis will be with us for some time.

In all this swirling change, we are fortunate to have a rock on which to stand – or to cling to, dependant on how we are feeling. 'The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.' (Psalm 18:2)

Since we know that our God is steadfast and sure and will not let our foot be moved (Psalms 36 & 121), then there are only two things that we need to do. The first is to stand firm on our rock and the second is to follow God's ways, as we search for our path forward.

At this time, one of the best ways of following our God is to reach out to those in most need. Over the summer, a number of you did this by getting involved in the distribution of lunches to those who are eligible for free school meals. Some were getting up early to prepare the lunches, others were collecting them and taking them to distribution points, with still more working to actually give out the lunches.

This year two of our churches were distribution points: Red Lane for the second year and Rosehill for the first time. In addition, the Children's Centre at Tonge Moor was also a distribution point.

The volunteers ranged in age from twenties to late eighties. There was a role for everyone and folk from at least three other churches helped at Rosehill. As people age, we'll need to do this work as a partnership, if we are to continue it. The need is great and we have buildings in the most deprived areas of Bolton, so the way is clear to follow God's call to feed the hungry.

If you are able to sit and tick names off a list, or put sandwiches and fruit into pre-packed bags, then you could be part of this. If you are fit enough to carry trays and able to drive, then you could help in another way. The mid-day slot is from 10:45-12 and the delivery slot can be early enough that you can still be at work for 9. Even when I delivered to both churches in one go, I was finished by 9:30.

Let's think and pray about how we can come together to keep this going, whenever the next session is, because Urban Outreach may well try to do something more, even before next summer.

May God bless you all this term, Jacky



October Peace Candle



During October please pray for the Destitution Project

The Destitution Project is a Bolton based registered charity which supports asylum seekers and refugees by

1. A drop-in at Victoria Hall every Wednesday
2. Casework services for asylum seekers who have no access to public funds.

It's mission is to provide a safe environment in Bolton where asylum seekers and refugees can find friendship, food and practical help.

It received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The drop-in is a place to relax and meet others; to get a hot meal; obtain clothes and bedding; receive groceries and toiletries; get a haircut; have English lessons – all free.

The Home Office sends asylum seekers to areas around the UK and Bolton receives among the highest number in the North West. Asylum seekers are awaiting a Home Office decision before they are granted refugee status, they are given a home and £39.63 per week to live on. Refugees can claim mainstream benefits and are allowed to work. In 2020 DP helped over 1000 people from over 40 countries, the majority coming from Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Ethiopia and Afghanistan.



What you can do to help:

Stuff – you can donate much needed supplies such as food, toiletries, baby items, bicycles, etc.

Funds – you can make a financial donation to:
The Cooperative Bank
Credit: the Destitution Project
Bank Sort Code: 08 92 99
Bank Account No. 67225161

Time & Talents – you can join as a volunteer.
For more information on any of these, please contact:

DP (The Destitution Project) Charity No. 1194734

DP, Victoria Hall, 37-39 Knowsley Street,
Bolton, BL1 2AS

Email: dropindp@gmail.com

Tel: 01204 387221

Web: www.boltondp.org

with thanks to Gé Horsman

Peace Candle

During November please pray for ISRAEL & OCCUPIED PALESTINE

Commitment for Life is the world development programme of the United Reformed Church. We celebrated 30 years of faith in action in 2022. We encourage participating churches to take action, pray and give for people across the world but especially in our three partner countries of Bangladesh, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory and Zimbabwe. We work in partnership with Christian Aid and The World Development Movement raising over half a million pounds a year from contributing churches.

AN EMERGING DEBT CRISIS IN PALESTINE & ISRAEL

Debt is strangling the poorest people in Palestine and Israel, and in any sane world would immediately be cancelled. ISRAEL'S national debt is around US\$208 billion.

That equates to 66% of GDP or US\$24 000 per citizen. Each year \$US9 billion is added to the bill.

Palestine's debt to GDP ratio has exceeded 63% - well over the 40% limit set in law.

The Palestinian Authority's ability to service that debt is hampered by the illegal occupation and oppression of its people. For both Israel and Palestine, there is an emerging debt crisis that will affect the poorest citizens enormously, brought about by a deeply problematic global financial and economic architecture. In fact, the global financial system beggars belief.

Take the British foreign aid budget. The majority goes not to poor people but to a colonial-era investment firm called CDC that invests in luxury hotels, malls, and restaurant chains. In the end, only 3% of this aid goes to suppliers in the global south, with over 90% being paid to British firms.

"This is the real scandal," says economist Jason Hickel. "Aid money is taken from the pockets of British taxpayers and sent straight into the already-gilded coffers of the British business elite. It's a shameful abuse of our most compassionate impulse," he concludes. Together with Global Justice Now, Commitment for Life works to cancel the debt of the highly exploited nations. Thank you for all you do to bring about justice in our world through effective debt cancellation.



Extracted from the Internet by the Editors



As I write this, our thoughts are very much with the Royal family, who are grieving for a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. They have challenging times ahead and our love and prayers are with them. Our own family also have their problems, with Lorna in hospital again, hopefully not for long, and several others awaiting treatment from an over-stretched N.H.S. Dan Muir has moved to Mill View care Home where

care will be more suitable for him. We hold all those who face difficulties in our prayers..

Jacky, our minister and a friend decided to tackle the Christian Aid challenge of doing 300,000 steps in May. They both managed it, partly because they were both on holiday for the first week - Jacky in Inverness and Jean on Anglesey. Thanks to all who supported them. Belated congratulations, both of you!

I was delighted to receive an unexpected phone call from Botswana yesterday, from Naledi. Many of you will remember her from quite a few years ago when she was at Bolton College and a regular member of our church. She wrote the following, especially for Link.

Please find the attached photos for my family, my daughter One Sello, myself Naledi Magetse and my son Kealeboga Joshua Sello. We are still active members of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA). We pass our warmest greetings to all the members of the United Reformed Church of St. Andrew and St George - Bolton. We also pass our condolences for the passing of HRM Queen Elizabeth II. May her soul rest in perfect peace.



Naledi, One and Kealeboga Joshua

Thank you, Naledi!

Congratulations to our latest octogenarian, not mentioning names! And even more congratulations to our URC on its 50th birthday!

Shalom, Margaret Allen

Church visit to Knaresborough

Jim & Elizabeth MacKinnon, Joyce Borland, Bill, Joan and Keith Williams, Jane and Catherine and Sue McNeill in 3 cars enjoyed a fine day in Knaresborough.



Jane and Catherine



Please send any item for inclusion in Family News to Margaret Allen,
44 Blackburn Road, Edgworth, Bolton, BL7 0BB.

Tel: 01204 852285 or email: margaretvallen@gmail.com

Young at Heart

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
John chapter 2 verses 1 to 10

Jesus, his mother, and his disciples were
guests at a family wedding in Cana. The bride-
groom was responsible for the food and drink.

The wedding feasts
went on for days

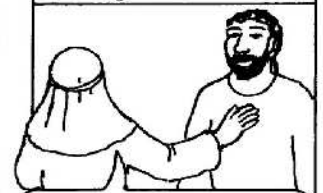


Then the wine ran out...



What a disaster!
The bridegroom and his family would be
shamed for life, and perhaps even sued!

Mary noticed...



Jesus, they've run
out of wine!

So why are you telling
me?



But Mary wasn't put off.

She told the servants



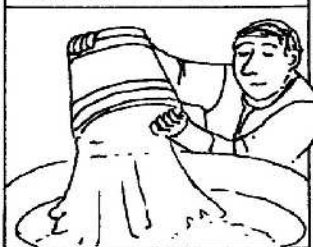
Do whatever he tells you.

Fill those six jars to the top
with water



The water was for the special
washing of hands before meals

and each jar held
about 100 litres



Now take some out and
serve it to the toast-
master



He tried it....



...then he called
to the bridegroom..

Most people serve the best wine
first, then the rest later, but..



...this is the best wine
I've ever tasted!



Impressive!



THURSDAY FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE MEETINGS			
6th Oct	At the Victoria Hall	1st Dec	At the Victoria Hall
13th Oct	At Jill Edisbury's Home	8th Dec	Christmas Meal - tba
27th Oct	At Joan Williams' Home	15th Dec	Advent Reflection
3rd Nov	At the Victoria Hall		
10th Nov	At Margaret Allen's Home		
24th Nov	At Gé Horsman's Home		
Timing 2pm to 4pm may be changed depending on the activity.			



CHURCH CALENDAR 2022

October

Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Worship led by Leo Roberts
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Worship led by the Revd Alan Kennedy
Tuesday	11th	10.00am	Link Editorial meeting Online
Tuesday	11th	7.00pm	Elders' Meeting Online
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Communion Service led by Revd Jim Hollyman
Sunday	23rd	10.30am	Worship led by Mr Walt Johnson
Sunday	30th	10.30am	Worship led by Revd Tony Burnham

November

Sunday	6th	10.30am	Worship led by Mr Alan Nuttall
Sunday	13th	10.30am	Worship led by Mr Walt Johnson
Sunday	20th	10.30am	Communion Service led by Revd Jacky Embrey
Wednesday	23rd	7.00pm	Elders' Meeting Online
Sunday	27th	10.30pm	Worship led by Revd Jacky Embrey

December

Sunday	4th	10.30am	Communion Service led by Revd Jim Hollyman
Sunday	11th	10.30am	Worship led by the Revd Tony Burnham
Tuesday	13th	10.00am	Link Editorial meeting Online
Sunday	18th	10.30am	Carol Service
Christmas Day	25th	10.30am	Joint Service at Victoria Hall

Ideas for the next issue of "The Link" covering the months of December 2022 & January 2023 should be given to the editors to be presented at the Editorial Meeting on Tuesday 11th October 2022. Finished articles and other material must reach the editors by Sunday 13th November 2022.

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