

CONNECTING THE CHURCHES OF MACCLESFIELD TEAM MINISTRY

# LINK

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2018

FREE



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THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

# Welcome to Macclesfield Team Ministry

Macclesfield Team Ministry is a family of four churches that are located in the town of Macclesfield and are part of the Church of England. We are four different communities of people seeking to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and trying to bring wholeness and healing to the wider town.



**All Saints**  
Brough Street West  
Macclesfield  
SK11 8EL



**St Barnabas**  
Lyme Avenue  
Macclesfield  
SK11 7RS



**St Peter's**  
Windmill Street  
Macclesfield  
SK11 7HS



**St Michael & All Angels**  
Market Place  
Macclesfield  
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# From the clergy

Whenever I meet up with friends and former work colleagues, they always ask about my life as a Curate here in Macclesfield. They are amused by the funny anecdotes; moved by the sad stories; and uplifted by the affirming 'God-moments' I share. They are amazed and astonished that church-life and our Christian lives under God are really like this. Some colleagues have even asked when they could come to a service. They want to experience this for themselves.

The over-riding theme in all my tales is one of mutual love and fellowship amongst so many gifted and generous people within our four churches. You may not realise it, but you (yes you reading this article) are one of those 'gifted and generous' people. You may not think you have any gifts, but God has truly blessed you with gifts; Psalm 139 tells us that we are each "fearfully and wonderfully made". All the stories I share are real-life, everyday examples of God's gift to each one of us. His gift of abundant and abiding love for each of us – a gift that acts in us and through us in so many wondrous ways. So please, I encourage you to use those gifts so that others may experience God's abundant and abiding love. In the bible, Paul writes:

"We are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us. If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it according to the faith that we have; if it is to serve, we should serve; if it is to teach, we should teach; if it is to encourage others, we should do so. Whoever shares with others should do it generously; whoever has authority should work hard; whoever shows kindness to others should do it cheerfully." (Rom 12.6-8)

One area where we can all use our gifts is in inviting and welcoming others to our churches. Earlier this year, we ran the 'Everybody Welcome' course at St



## St Michael's Walk & Talk

'Walk and Talk' is a new initiative involving walking and talking! It's designed for all ages. At the start of the short walk we are given suggestions for things to talk about connected with our Christian faith.

As we walk along we fall easily into conversation. It's a great way of combining your dog walk with a bit of fellowship and usually lasts about one hour.

If you would like to join us please contact Pam Simpson on 07580272840 for details of the next Walk and Talk.

You don't have to bring a dog!

### **Next Walk:**

Sunday 30th September 4.00pm at Riverside Park SK10 2SL



*Karen Brady*

# Humour - a Healing Balm

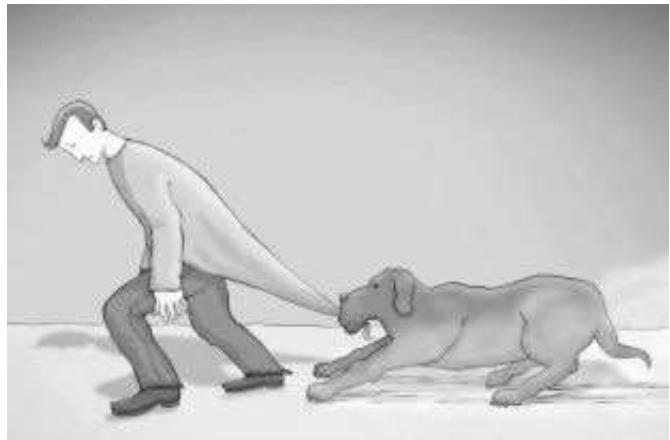
In the most difficult of times a humorous situation can be a healing balm. Laughter is a good medicine, see Proverbs 17.22.

'A cheerful heart is a good medicine but a downcast spirit dries up the bones.'

Anyone who suffers from depression can identify with this verse. We can change around the phrases and say 'a downcast spirit affects our physical health and we have no energy or inclination to do anything, lethargy overtakes us, bones and joints ache, we want to shy away from everybody and everything, listening to the news is almost a suicidal act.'

And then, putting the first phrase in we can say, 'Laughter is a good medicine... a humorous situation can be a healing balm.'

Take a look at the stories in the Acts of the Apostles and remember that this is an account written by people who had seen the amazing miracles of Jesus, who had been in his physical presence, who knew that He had been raised from the dead and even after his ascension into heaven these people had continued to see miracles of healing and had experienced God's saving power. They lived in violent and brutal times, as we do now. Good people who were fighting for justice were arrested and tortured. One of these was Peter – remember him? He was the outspoken hard-nosed fisherman who Jesus called to follow him and who became the rock of the early Church. Peter learnt a very important lesson when he was caught out in denying Jesus at the time of his trial. Yes, that Peter, who, when the cock crowed was ashamed of his faithlessness. Well he went on to become the strong leader of the early Church and it was through his faithfulness and courage that the Church of the good news opened its doors to the Gentiles (you and me, probably!). God chose this Peter to be the one to proclaim the message 'Everybody Welcome'! See the story of Cornelius in Acts 10- 11.



After that, Peter was arrested and Herod Julius Agrippa (yes, the same family as the notorious Herod of the early days) was determined to have Peter killed. The Christians were in despair but praying fervently for Peter in that dark prison cell, expecting a cruel death any moment. Then in the middle of the night, a knock on the door and Rhoda is sent to answer it. It could be anyone...soldiers come to arrest more of them ... but soldiers don't normally knock politely! Rhoda went to the gate and when she hears Peter's voice she is so happy that she rushes back to tell the gathered Church that Peter has been freed. (She's just locked him out!) What is the reaction? What do those strong, courageous, faithful Christians who have seen so many wonderful things say? 'Don't be so ridiculous, we all know Peter is on death row, it must be his ghost.'

Meanwhile, Peter is standing outside knocking again and again until finally they let him in.

This story gives me comfort to know that even those truly amazing early Christians had their down times and despairs but that through comical situations and the support of the family of God they came through rejoicing.

*Tricia Atherton*



# Prayer, the Alexander Technique and bad backs



I teach the Alexander technique, a 100 year old Western self-help method often used for the relief of chronic back pain. I first had lessons myself because of a bad back. Happily, after a few lessons, my bad back got a lot better. I carried on having lessons because I noticed psychological and emotional changes – I seemed to feel calmer, less likely to over-react to situations. I decided to train as a TEACHER of the Alexander technique – a 3 year full time training – partly because of the psychological – and spiritual – depths it seemed to offer. The Alexander technique is undoubtedly a good way of helping people with bad backs! But I think it can also help us in our emotional and spiritual or prayer lives too.

In the West, and in Christianity, we either tend to behave as if the body does not matter at all in spiritual terms or as if it is either a distraction, a problem or at best vaguely worrying. In fact the bible has quite a lot to say about bodies. In the Old Testament, when the people of God ignored God's law it says, 'They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their necks' (Nehemiah 9. 29). The psalmist exhorts 'Do not harden your hearts' (Ps 95) and tells us to 'Stand in awe' (Psalm 4) and 'Lift up your hands in the holy places and praise the Lord' (Psalm 134).

Over the years – and in different traditions - the way we stand or sit or kneel to pray has changed and today I think many people would see the body as actually having nothing to do with prayer. But I think that learning to think about and pay attention to our whole

selves, which includes our bodies, can deepen and enrich our prayer lives and may even help us to be more open to God.

Prayer is sometimes called 'paying attention' (Simone Weil) – paying attention to God, to what is really there. The Alexander technique is one way, there are of course others, of learning to pay attention to our usual patterns of thought, movement and behaviour and to notice what is really happening. The Alexander technique, in particular, teaches a method for learning to press the pause button, of quietening down so that we can choose not to move carelessly, not to react without thought, not to get drawn into endless rumination.

All of these are skills we can use in prayer. In prayer we are choosing to open our eyes rather than to close them, to open or soften our hearts rather than to harden them. We can choose to give ourselves permission to let go – of unwanted thoughts, of unnecessary tension. And we can choose to pay more attention to ourselves and our bodies, which God has created and which God delights in.

Learning the Alexander technique has changed how I pray. While there is no one right way to pray, physically speaking, and we can pray in any position, if you are tense or uncomfortable when you pray it matters. Because YOU matter.

Here are some ideas for deepening your awareness of your body while you pray:

Does your posture suit the kind of prayer you are doing? A bowed head might suit confession, but what about thanks giving? Or praise?

Play with praying in different positions – see what happens!

Pray while moving, walking, bread making, dancing! I pray running in the hills in the morning

Notice tension in your body as you pray and give yourself permission to let it go

Ask God for a soft, open heart. What might that actually feel like physically?

Smile when praying – it lifts the spirits and softens the heart

Try praying with your eyes open so you can enjoy God's creation

Consider how you treat yourself, in body, mind and spirit. Jesus told us to love our neighbour as ourselves. So that means treating our neighbour – AND ourselves, ALL of ourselves – with consideration and respect.

*Jenny is an Alexander Technique Teacher and a member of the Third Order of St Francis. She is part of the lay leadership team at St Peter's. She teaches the Alexander Technique in individual lessons and groups in Macclesfield, Whaley Bridge and Manchester.*

*Jenny will be running a workshop called 'Be still and wait: prayer, the body and the Alexander technique' at St Peter's on December 8. The workshop is open to people of any faith tradition or none.*

**jennyfoxeades@gmail.com**

# What a load of awesome junk food!!! And other blessings...



An 'alternative' experience of Greenbelt Festival...

This year I decided to volunteer (first time) at Greenbelt (Christian Arts) Festival... (Aug 24th-27th) Just a few of the marvellous benefits include:

You get a free festival ticket!

You get free meal vouchers!

You get to join a fun, friendly, awesome team!

You get to make a contribution and give something back – which seemed like a good plan after approximately 18 "Greenbelts" and wandering around in a daze for 3 or 4 days feeling indecisive about what to see, hear, or do!

The Venue I signed up for was the CHRISTIAN AID CAFÉ. Attracted of course by the amazing organisation they are – and also (only ever so slightly) by the delicious cakes and coffee I would be serving.

I hadn't realised that the wonderful Café Team I became part of for the weekend would be joined by an equally wonderful team, from an organisation who have started working in partnership with Christian Aid at Greenbelt... "THE REAL JUNK FOOD PROJECT"...

This incredible team of "FOOD FAIRIES" collect food – from various outlets such as supermarkets, food photographers, and may include fresh produce, tins, dried food – all food that was destined for the bin because of a 'best before' date, a few bruises or surface mould, or maybe just the wrong shape (?) and they create amazing, nutritious and delicious meals out of what they collect.... AT NO CHARGE to the 'customer' – it is all offered freely on a "PAY AS YOU FEEL" basis...

The REAL JUNK FOOD PROJECT started in Leeds in 2013, and now various cafes and fairshare outlets are dotted around the country. They are passionate about food – and campaigning / raising awareness about food. Their motto is 'Feed Bellies not Bins'. They challenge us to ask ourselves: "How much is our food worth to us"? Someone has planted it, grown it, harvested it, packed it, transported it, maybe produced and cooked it. Yet a third of our food is thrown away... For many complex reasons... Yet instead of complaining, piously preaching, or "turning up the guilt" - the RJFP teams instead offer a positive 'alternative' to this trend in this remarkable venture.

While we were buzzing around in the café serving a million lovely people (!) the RJFP team were harmoniously beavering away in the back, 'prepping' – peeling, chopping, stirring, frying, boiling, simmering, baking, – then out would appear... incredible pasta bakes, curries, dhals, soups, Mexican bean chilli's with taco's, baked potatoes, beans, spaghetti hoops, volavonts with chicken and mushroom filling, wraps, couscous, salads, bread of all types...

It was just INSPIRATIONAL!!!! I had the joy and privilege of helping to 'serve' their hot food to the delighted, amazed, slightly confused and bewildered festival goers... "How much is it for this please?" "Where do I pay?" "No charge?! Well how much is the suggested donation then?" "There isn't one Sir. Just 'pay as you feel' (with big smile) If you're skint, don't worry – just enjoy your meal! If you feel it's as good as a top restaurant – pay as you feel!! The proceeds will be split between Christian Aid and The Real Junk Food Project. Thank you very much Sir! Enjoy your meal"...

So much love, energy and passion was poured into making this wonderful food, nourishing body and soul and feeding hundreds of people over the weekend. Yet I was also struck and amazed by the creativity, skill and attention to detail involved. Everything was covered! There were meat dishes, vegetarian, vegan, gluten free. The team clearly knew their stuff about allergies, intolerances and food safety. These wonderful individuals simply believe in what they do and offer their time and skills in a totally genuine, humble and understated way. Most of them are not professional chefs or cooks – they have other lives and jobs.

I came away feeling inspired, in awe, and energised by the experience. And also feeling that maybe we could take this further in some way locally, by opening up the conversations together, sharing thoughts, ideas, skills, resources... by networking and building bridges. So much kindness and goodness and generosity in our town that we could harness and utilize. And families and individuals who would benefit too. Who knows, we could have a lot of fun together along the way and learn from one another!!

*Maz Dean*

# Wise words at a wedding...

May I speak in the name of the living God, source of all love and creator and sustainer of all life. Amen.

The two wonderful readings Annwyn and Andrew have chosen for today, remind us of why we are here.

We are here first and foremost, as friends and family, to celebrate love.

The sort of love that is intoxicating, intriguing, sensual, intensely felt. The sort of love that is celebrated in the joy of creation and Spring, in palm trees, the fertility of nature, and the imagery of paradise. The sort of love that draws us together from the 4 corners of the land, and beyond, to celebrate; to feast and drink; to enjoy the pleasures of knowing and supporting a young couple on the start of a new journey together in life.

Marriage is always a new journey together. However long a couple have known each other, however long they have waited to be together, and however long they have finally been able to live together - it's a new journey that begins today. As the beginning of the marriage service says, marriage isn't just about today, and about Annwyn and Andrew.

Marriage is something special that grows out of the kinds of love we find expressed in our readings.

Marriage is a gift of commitment made by two people to one another that should not only enrich their lives in every way, but should enrich society and strengthen community.

Our presence at Annwyn and Andrew's marriage today is a gift from them, shared with us all. A gift that sets before us something of the experience of how divine love might be expressed in our humanity. A gift that draws us together into new relationships with their families and one another. Annwyn and Andrew's marriage today is a gift that reminds us of the joy and passion of earthly love, in a world that can often seem brutal and dark.

The two readings we have heard today are a great antidote to our doubts about where love can be found outside of this special day, and this time and place. What encourages me about them is that they were written so many hundreds of years apart, so long ago, and yet still speak of love in a way we recognise today. The poem attributed to the great Sufi mystic and teacher, Rumi was written in the mid thirteenth century. His tomb in Konya in Turkey remains a place where I've witnessed the devotion of his modern

day followers. The reading from Song of Songs was probably written in this form fifteen or sixteen hundred years before. But it has even older roots in Ancient Egyptian wedding poetry. Rumi, of course, wrote from an Islamic tradition, the Song of Songs is from the Hebrew Scriptures. Rumi is a man celebrating at the wedding of

Song of Songs refers to love as fire. Not just any fire, but the language used refers to the 'flame of Yahweh'. The flames described as a burning bush in the desert grabbing the attention of Moses; a pillar of fire leading the children of Israel; the fire that preceded the still, small voice



his son where he is said to have recited this poem. The Song of Songs is mainly the words of a woman searching for and desiring her beloved. A forcefully passionate woman, in a traditionally conservative society. In these two readings - separated by centuries, the gender of the speakers, and the faith tradition that inspired them - are two very special messages for us, and Annwyn and Andrew today. Firstly, they both remind us that love is not just confined to the limits of our human expression and understanding. Human love is seen as an expression of divine love. That's why it can be a powerful force for good in our world. And secondly, they both use the language of seals and sealing. An ancient practice continued today. Both readings then, remind us that love is not simply a logical response to another human person.

When we first fall in love and experience that mind blowing intoxication of new love, then we are also experiencing something of the divine. The flashes of fire, the raging flame of the Song of Songs. Rumi, expresses a hope that his son and wife will experience the joys of paradise in their marriage. The spiritual state of knowing, and being known by God.

that calmed and inspired the prophet Elijah; the flames of Pentecost that enlighten and empower frightened individuals to tell of their experience of divine encounter.

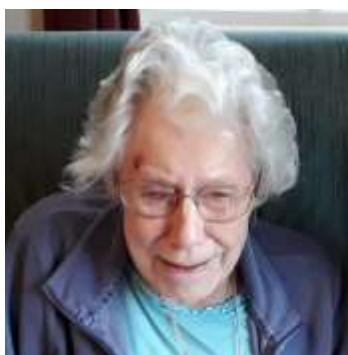
Love, experienced, and celebrated, and nurtured and grown, can offer that encounter with the divine, its source within our hearts. When we share that love with the world, we take part in the divine sharing of love that unites cultures, faith traditions, the past, the present and the future. Love is universal, eternal, to be treasured, celebrated and nurtured where it is found. That brings me back to the language of 'sealing' used in our readings today. Rumi expresses the desire that the marriage celebration itself might be a seal of happiness for now and the hereafter. The Song of Songs says, 'Set ME as a seal upon your heart, a seal upon your arm.' I'm sure that within these hallowed walls there are many people who have studied the meaning of seals in the ancient world. Seals of different sorts have been used to literally 'seal deals', indicate status, or ownership, or as decorative amulets worn upon the body. Seals have been made of precious metals, incised precious stones, and were often worn upon the person because they were an important possession. A

(Continued on page 12)

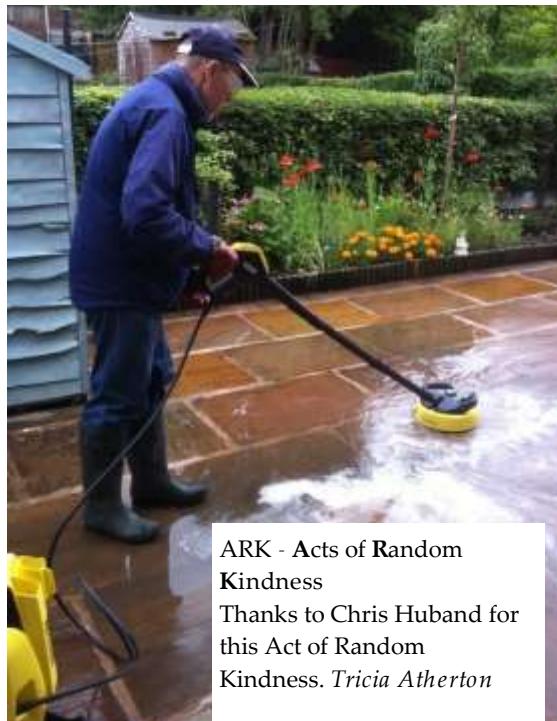
## Birthday Celebrations



Margaret (Hobson), who will be known to many in the Team Parish is seen (centre) celebrating her 97th birthday at The Teggs Nose Café, recently; surrounded by her family. Margaret is in fine form and enjoying life in 'Oak House, Belong Care Home'. Margaret is very grateful for all the care and support given by folk from St Michael's - and is always happy to receive visitors.



And Phyllis Chapman who has just celebrated her 104th birthday. Phyllis receives home communion from members of St Michael's Church and pastoral team And Joyce Millard celebrated her 90th birthday recently too.



**ARK - Acts of Random Kindness**  
Thanks to Chris Huband for this Act of Random Kindness. *Tricia Atherton*

## GO Team Cre8: Macc Half

An outstanding achievement by every one for Team Cre8! 17 runners in the 5K and six in the Half. From first time runners to seasoned pros. So many stories to tell and memories made.



At the special school assembly on 11th July (see July/August LINK), Mike was presented with his farewell gift from the Governors – a ukulele! We hope he is enjoying learning to play this and look forward to a performance in the future. The presentation was made by Roger Brandwood, one of the school's seven appointed Foundation Governors.

# Macclesfield Winter Nightshelter

WHAM (Winter Homeless Assistance in Macclesfield) provides accommodation and refreshment over winter weekends, for men who would otherwise be sleeping rough in our town. **"Night-shelters are to stop people dying; hostels are to prepare people for living on their own".**

Macclesfield churches work together to:

- Provide cover over Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, providing basic evening meals and breakfast.
- The location moves around six or seven town centre churches, who provide shelter for a weekend at a time.
- Provide beds for six – eight adult men. Statutory support should be available for females and young people.
- We work closely with Citizens Advice, Cheshire Police, Street Angels to support guests.

While this is only an initial approach to the problem the Shelter covers the worst of the winter weather and the times when least assistance is readily available elsewhere and therefore the danger of serious illness or death is the greatest. Our ongoing objective is to "Begin the end of the homeless experience."

## We need YOU!!!

Could YOU volunteer? Teams of volunteers cover three shifts each night (7.30-10.30pm, 10.30pm-6.30am; 6.30-8am), each shift under the guidance of a trained and experienced shift leader. Training is offered for all volunteers.

What does it involve? Welcome our guests, help with meals and drinks, and above all, be company and listen to their stories. Depending on the time of your shift you may be helping to set up or clear away.

**This year training for new volunteers will be held on:**

**Friday 2nd November 2018 6.30-8.30pm**

**Saturday 3rd November 2018 10.00-12.00pm**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2019 10.00-12.00pm**

*all sessions at URC (Townley St entrance)*

If you are an experienced volunteer and a member of a HOPE church – have you considered training to be a Shift Leader?

Shift Leader training will be for 1 hour following the above training sessions (please come to the volunteer session in addition to the Shift Leader training)

Please contact Rachel Mayers 01625 420716  
[rachel.mayers@btinternet.com](mailto:rachel.mayers@btinternet.com) for more information. Your name will be passed on to the Volunteer Coordinator, Deborah Bennett.

*And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbour toward the man attacked by the robbers?" The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him." Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same." [Luke 10:36,37]*

*Rachel Mayers*

## Remembering Service



Sunday 7th October  
4.00pm  
**St Michael's Church**

An invitation to those who have been bereaved during the last few years. An occasion to pray for comfort and strength in bereavement and to ask for help with feelings of loss as well as an opportunity for thanksgiving for lost loved ones.

Tuesday 9th October

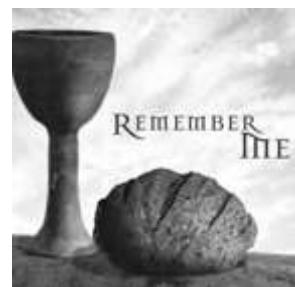
7.30pm

**St Michael's Church**

## Baby Loss Service



An opportunity to light a candle as part of Baby Loss Week's "Wave of Light". Members of Cheshire East SANDS Group will be available to speak after the service.



## Deanery Eucharistic Service

Tuesday 30th October  
7.30pm

# The 5th Mark of Mission



Representatives from several Macclesfield churches showed their commitment to the 5th Mark of Mission by presenting the local MP David Rutley with a petition.

Signed by 650 members of churches working together as Hope in North East Cheshire, the petition called for the Government to bring forward the date by which they plan to have net zero emissions of greenhouse gases.

Bishop William Alaha Pwaisaho, Honorary Assistant Bishop and Rector of Gawsworth, shared with the MP his own experience of the impact of climate change in the Solomon Islands, where several of the islands have had to be abandoned because of rising sea levels and communities and livelihoods destroyed as a result.

The news comes just a couple of months after Bishop William called for greater action to tackle climate change at the 29th annual session of the Crans Montana Forum.

Speaking at the forum in July and addressing Heads of State and Government, ministers, members of parliaments, international organisations and major businesses from more than 100 countries, he said: "Our planet earth is scarred and abused, our air and atmosphere is polluted with poisons and every human being is responsible, sooner or later we will be sorry. Well, it is now more evident where I come from in the South Pacific that small island nations are now suffering as the result of climate change and global warming. It is true today that entire communities have lost their livelihood since the rise of the sea level. Lands to plant food and wells to drink from are no longer useful, the ecology is now suffering."

Care for God's Creation is becoming a bigger part of the mission of many Macclesfield churches: St Barnabas and St Peter's both have community gardens; Cre8 has organised a re-cycling event, and St Peter's Prestbury has met with children from the church school to discuss how the church can reduce its carbon footprint.

St Michael and All Angels' has received the Ecochurch Bronze Award and installed a hive of bees on the church roof.

*See also back page article*



On the 15th of September, fifteen members of the Contemplative Prayer Group were led by the Art Historian Robin Hidden, Hazel's husband, in a day entitled, "The Stone Bible". He began by showing us a picture of the West Front of a French cathedral and analysing its hidden meaning. He continued with studies of four medieval windows. We met in the Quaker Meeting House, a spacious building set in lovely countryside at Frandley. Robin is familiar to most of us but he is an Art Historian with a deep knowledge of the symbolism in medieval art.

He analysed the symbolic messages in the stone and the windows. Most of the symbolism was governed by strict principles that were generally understood at the time and were useful in teaching a population that had no access to written material. However, it has to be said that windows helped the old church to position itself as the only channel to God and this was one of the reasons for the Protestant Revolution. Each lecture was followed by a poem by R. S.



Thomas, read by members of the Group. The Day went very well. On behalf of us all, David Black thanked Robin for his presentation, Paul Spedding for his technical support and Derek Kite for his photographs of stained glass windows in St. Michael's, which were displayed during the breaks. On the same basis I would like to thank David for his work in organising the day.

In northern Europe the invention of printing democratised biblical study and preaching so picture windows were no longer used for teaching. However, in their day they were an essential resource.

Robin's four talks were short but packed from his extensive knowledge. In between them we were free to study the picture, the teaching, material we had brought or just enjoy the scenery and fresh air. It was a very relaxed day. The weather was kind; the scenery is lovely; everyone was friendly and we all had time to get closer to God.

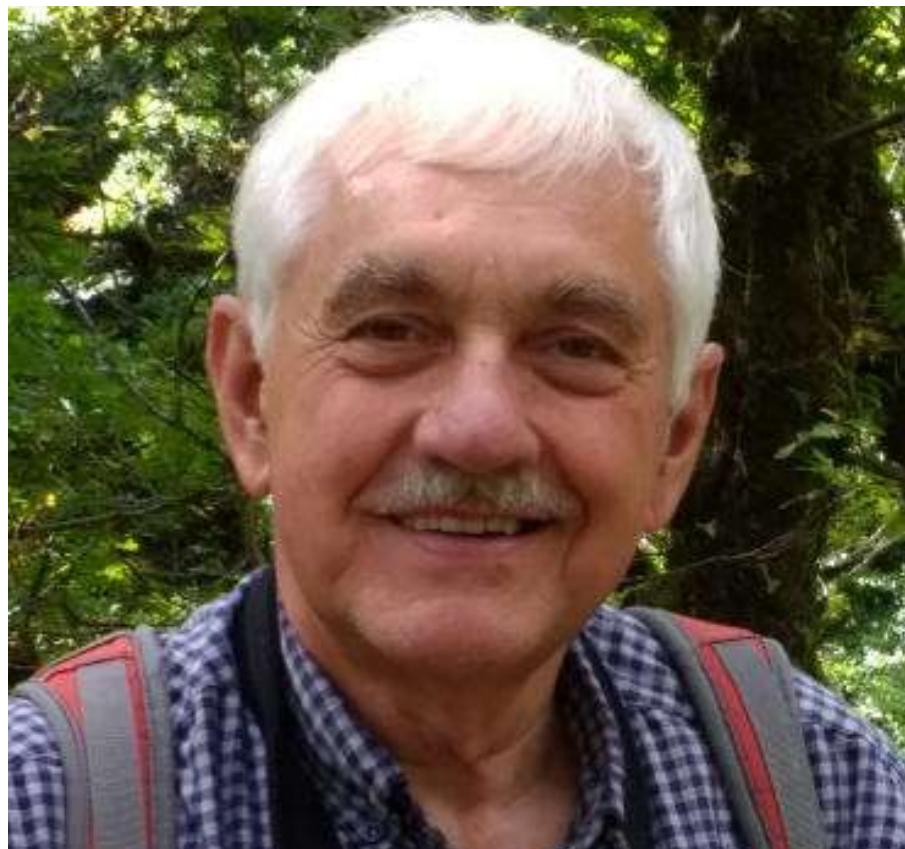
*David Budgett*

# My journey with God (so far)

It seems to me that all of us, knowingly or unknowingly, are 'journeying' with God, since we all possess and are animated by the 'Holy Spirit'. The main issue is whether or not we acknowledge this 'Divine Indwelling' (as it is sometimes described) and the extent to which we seek to unfold it in our lives. The real journey begins with this recognition, I feel.

I was brought up in a formally Christian family. We attended a nonconformist church, and I was encouraged to go to Crusaders. I dropped all of these activities at the first opportunity, went to College on the Kings Road Chelsea in the 'swinging 60's', giving never a thought to anything beyond the challenges that this entailed. There was no sense of a spiritual dimension to life, let alone that anything 'Divine' could dwell within me. Fortunately, though, I also met wife-to-be, Mo. Later, I climbed the ladder in a career which rewarded me well, never thinking that the ladder might be against the wrong wall. I found myself aged mid-30's at my father's funeral, being stopped in my tracks and realising just how far off course I was. A few months afterwards, I had an encounter which can only be described as my first real inkling of a spiritual dimension to life, of crucial importance, which I had totally ignored and neglected.

I had been watching a series of short BBC programmes entitled 'In the Light of Experience', one of which had featured an Indian monk, then living in England. One Sunday afternoon, we passed the Ashrama where he lived, so I called in and met him briefly. A sense of his goodness and peace, and of his deep settlement with life, hit me very strongly. Over the next 10 years, I met and talked with him many times, choosing to stay at the Ashrama when in London. It's clear to me that these meetings were the first steps of recognition that a journey had begun, a journey which embodies the purpose of



our lives.

He made no attempt to indoctrinate me into a different religious system. He encouraged me to stay within the bounds of the Christianity of my upbringing, which I'd rejected as being based on dogmas and creeds which seemed to have no real relevance to my life. (I am in no way criticising those for whom such beliefs are important, just stating my view).

Much later, and often still on a stormy course, I was fortunate enough to become involved with All Saints Church. It was at a time when the outlook and approach there very much suited me. Alongside my exposure to spiritual thinking from other traditions, I came to feel that all of the world's major, sincere religions are but differing pathways which can help us on our journey. The Sermon on the Mount has its parallels in Buddhism and in other faiths. I felt that I could learn more readily from such an eclectic approach, and came to dislike the fundamentalism which claims that 'we are sole possessors of the truth', seen in all religions at their extreme. Meditation is a prominent element in the Eastern traditions, and I had been attempting to practice this for some time. I became involved in the formation of a Contemplative Prayer

group at St Michael's, of which I am still a member. An important aim is to try and quieten our 'flypaper minds'. This is a term which Catholic priest Father Richard Rohr coined to describe our restless seeking for stimulation, and for answers from outside. In the silence, we are trying to become better acquainted with the 'Divine Indwelling', hopefully to manifest it more fully.

Taking air travel as a metaphor for this journey, it seems to me that all of us are on different 'flight paths', as we make our way to our destination, wherever that may be, and wherever we boarded the 'plane. Many flights involve a considerable degree of turbulence at various stages, hopefully with periods of calm. What matters is that we appreciate the importance of being on a journey, have respect for our co-travellers, and help each other however we can. My own flight path is enhanced by engagement with other religions and spiritualities, as well as with Christianity.

So, the skies ahead are clear now? Certainly not. A Danish theologian said, 'life has to be lived forwards but is only understood backwards'. I can identify with that.

*David Black is a member of St Michael's*

# Open the Book - Celebrations

The school year has begun again and this means that the 'Open The Book' teams are out in the schools around Macclesfield. Open the Book is a project which offers primary school children an opportunity to hear the major stories of the Bible, from a team of Christians from local churches, who present the stories during assemblies/acts of Collective Worship.

Twelve years ago, in Macclesfield, a couple of people were inspired by the idea and formed a team to go out to schools on a regular basis. At first there was one team (Team 1) and some of the original members are still involved. The initial exploits in schools were so popular that soon another team was required, so Team 2 was formed. We now have Team 3 which has been going for three years. These teams are made up of people from several churches and denominations in the town and it's a good way of sharing our faith and having fun! We have a grand collection of props, puppets and back cloths stored at All Saints' Church and every now and then we make



*Team 2 had a celebration lunch during the hot days of summer.*

more. We could manage without more props but we love making them! The stories are taken from both the Old and the New Testament and we make them as memorable as possible. If you could see how engrossed the children are during the storytelling you would be delighted. Each presentation takes around 10-15 minutes and can be incorporated into a wider school assembly, or can stand alone. If you know of any schools who might

be interested in having a team to visit, or if you would like to be involved in starting another team, please contact Dot Phillips 01625 260607 or Joy Kewney 01625 426412 from All Saints Church. The scheme is organised by The Bible Society and you can view their website here:  
<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/>

*(Continued from page 7)*

possession that could be used as a stamp of ownership and belonging. A seal was even placed upon the tomb of Jesus after his burial. Seals were highly important in the ancient world. Even today, the Archbishop of Canterbury's seal is attached to the Licence for this ceremony to take place here.

The language of Song of Songs, though, talks not just about sealing letters, tombs or possessions, but of sealing the heart. A seal was often worn on the person as a ring or amulet. To set it upon the heart, the source of all love, and the arm, the source of all action, is a very special request. The woman wants her lover to ensure her that he is placing her at the literal heart of his decision making, and the centre of his actions.

This is very forceful, demanding language from a woman to a man. Even today, it sounds as if it is about power and control. But I think we need to listen to these words in the context of a marriage ceremony for which they were originally composed. The subtlety can be lost in their

forcefulness. The demand to be set as a seal is, I think, a demand for the marriage to be an equal partnership of heart and action between the two lovers. Heart and arm, love and action.

Two ways in which healthy marriage can enrich society and strengthen community. And two ways in which Annwyn and Andrew can grow in their love for each other throughout their lives. If you set your love for one another deep within your heart, and at the heart of your actions, then your marriage will thrive and grow and bless us all. It will thrive and grow and bless your community. And it will thrive and grow and bless your family life.

Finally, I don't have a precious stone to give you to seal your marriage, but today you will yourselves seal it with vows and promises before your friends and families, and before God. We all act as witnesses to your desire and intentions today.

The Archbishop of Canterbury himself has set his seal and blessing on your marriage today..... So, Annwyn and Andrew, may you know

the wonderful joy of paradise on earth in your marriage. The strength of the fire of God with you through life's many experiences. And may you both be blessed in your intention to set each other as a seal upon your love in your new journey together. Amen.

*The above text is the sermon that Beth Leach preached at Annwyn and Andrew's wedding in Cambridge in April. I thought it was a terrific sermon - there were Jews, Christians, Muslims and atheists in the congregation and I felt it was respectful of all of those traditions and positions while firmly rooted in Beth's own Christian faith.*

*Besides the fact that Annwyn married at Girton not St Peter's so local folk couldn't attend easily, Beth lived in Macclesfield for much of her life and will be known to a reasonable number of Link readers.*

*Jenny Fox-Eades*

# BUILDING THE PEACE

1918-2018 | A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

In 1918 countries engaged in the First World War signed an Armistice to cease hostilities. It marked a desire for a lasting peace in Europe. 100 years later we remember the cost of war, whilst looking forward and asking how we, as a community, can build a peaceful future.

Macclesfield Team Ministry have planned a week of musical and artistic events shaped by the peace that is at the heart of our faith. We were inspired by the late David Wightman's vision of bringing the community together to celebrate peace and hope as well as remember the very difficult events of conflict over the last 100 years.

## 3-11 NOVEMBER 2018

Many other churches, faiths and organisations are partnering with us and will also be running events during the week.

### LOOK OUT FOR THE INTERFAITH PEACE CAFÉ AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

For full information, go to:

[www.buildingthepeace.co.uk](http://www.buildingthepeace.co.uk)

## GET INVOLVED



### 'Kites for Peace' Pack

We want to send a message of peace into the skies. Kites can help us to look upwards and forwards with hope and optimism.

Here's a great opportunity for you to set up a kite-making workshop, for yourself or your group, using our simple 'Kites for Peace' pack. We invite you to make your own kite with a personal story and message of hope and peace.

We will display your kites around our town in a declaration of peace and create a special exhibition for Armistice week.

To obtain your 'Kites for Peace' pack, go to:

[www.buildingthepeace.co.uk/kitepack](http://www.buildingthepeace.co.uk/kitepack)

### Services

Come along to the many services of remembrance around the town – details can be found on the website.

#### St Michael's Church

Fauré Requiem, with reflective readings for Remembrance Day  
Sunday 11 Nov / 6.30pm

### Ringing for Peace

Bellringers all around the town will be joining other ringers up and down the UK in the 'Ringing for Peace' event, to ring out a message of peace around the world. See website for details.

[buildingthepeace.co.uk](http://buildingthepeace.co.uk) | [buildingthepeace@gmail.com](mailto:buildingthepeace@gmail.com)



Supported by:



## THE EVENTS

### SAT 3 NOV / 7.30PM

#### 100 Voices: A World of Difference

A community musical event led by KEMS Concert Band, collaborating with Cr8 Macclesfield Youth & Community Programme and local schools.  
St Michael's Church, Market Place, Macclesfield SK10 1DY  
£5 adults / £1 children

Available at [eventbrite.co.uk](http://eventbrite.co.uk) (100 voices) or [www.buildingthepeace.co.uk](http://www.buildingthepeace.co.uk) or phone 01625 421984

### TUES 6 NOV - FRI 9 NOV / 4-9PM

#### Art Exhibition: Ours for the Making

An exhibition of art commemorating and restoration, featuring mixed media installations and 100 peace kites, in collaboration with local schools and groups.

Townley Street Chapel, Townley Street, Macclesfield SK11 6HZ

FREE

### THURS 8 NOV / 7.30PM

#### Reimagining Armistice

An evening with poet and author, Rachel Mann, exploring the significance of conflict and peace to us today.  
St Peter's Church, Windmill Street, Macclesfield SK11 7HS  
FREE

### SAT 10 NOV / 7.30PM

#### KEMS Choir and Orchestra Concert

St Michael's Church, Market Place,  
Macclesfield SK10 1EB

Tickets available from: [www.kems.org.uk](http://www.kems.org.uk)

1918-2018 | A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE CELEBRATING PEACE AND HOPE



# A lesson from knitting!

I enjoy knitting but I can only do simple things, so I usually ask my friends for help when I get stuck.

However, most of the time I do my knitting when I'm watching telly at home and there is no one to ask for help. At the moment I'm knitting a fairly simple little cardigan and I thought I was doing well, until I counted the stitches when I had almost got to the point of shaping the armhole – too many! How did that happen? I re-read that part of the pattern and realised I had missed out a whole row of decreasing stitches way back near the beginning.

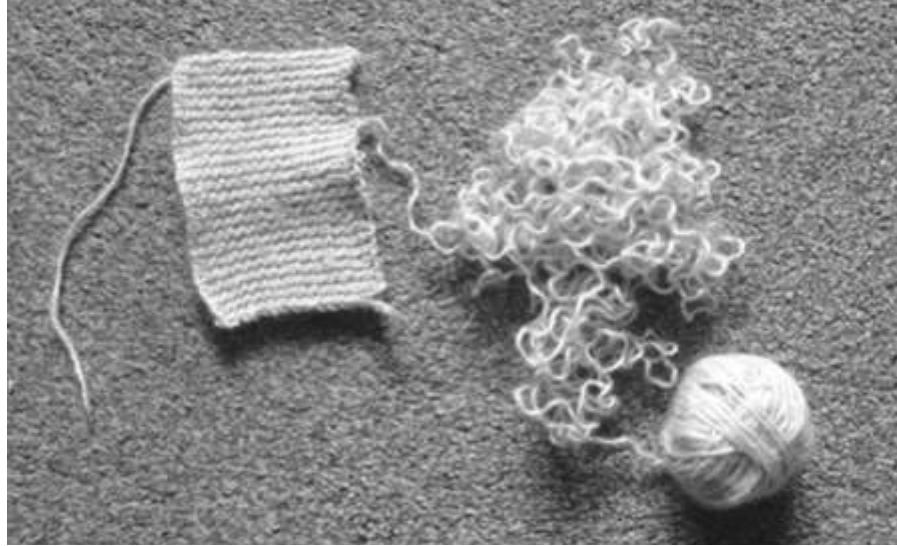
I undo the knitting to that point and pick up from where I went wrong. Ok, so ten inches later I'm back to where I was, now to decrease for the arm-hole... another twenty rows, count the stitches, too few! What went wrong? Re-read the pattern, Oh! I carried out

the instructions for the size below.

I undo the knitting, pick up from where I went wrong, twenty rows later – it still doesn't look right. By this time, I'm beginning to get demoralised... So, I stop, turn off the telly and re-read the pattern from the very beginning including the size of needles, amount of wool etc. Guess what? Light dawns...I've been using completely the wrong equipment by using the wrong sized needles. The only thing to do is undo the whole lot, put away the wrong needles, get out the new correct needles. Try again.

The moral of the tale? Always read the instructions carefully. When things are going wrong, when life is unravelling, go back to the source, don't keep papering over the cracks, save time and go straight to the heart of the problem. Find God and start again – every day if necessary!

*Tricia Atherton*



## Annual Readers' Licensing Service

Saturday 13th October  
Chester Cathedral 4.15pm

Two reasons for a trip to Chester Cathedral:  
Catherine Stephens will be licensed as Pastoral Worker for the Team.  
Come and support Catherine as she starts this ministry.

Chris Gleaves is becoming Reader Emeritus Come and celebrate Chris' years of service in this ministry as Reader.

## BIG CHURCH DAY OUT NORTH CANCELLED

It is with enormous sadness and disappointment that the Big Church Day Out Trustees and Team are announcing that BCDO North will be cancelled in 2019 and beyond.

Having recently met to pray and discuss at length the future viability of continuing with the BCDO North, the Trustees have come to the conclusion this would create such a level of financial uncertainty that it would be irresponsible to put the charity in such a position if we were to move forward with BCDO North. Firstly, we want to say the most enormous thank you to all those in the North West that have shared our vision and journeyed with us over these past two years to help create two amazing events that we know impacted many lives. The commitment and support from those that came was incredible, and we are so grateful to the many that invested both practically and financially into a vision for the church that we had every hope would be around for many years to come.

As many of you know, the Big Church Day Out is a hugely expensive event to put on, and whilst we have never looked at tickets sales to cover all of our costs, we do nonetheless need a certain critical mass to offset the other income streams. The projected numbers that were needed to build the North event longer term were 15,000 attendees in year one and then a healthy increase in year two. Unfortunately, we only achieved 12,000 in year one and then very surprisingly to us and many others, we did, in fact, have a few hundred less in year two, and saw no growth. We are very aware that events the size of BCDO need a few years to grow to a sustainable level, but because of the lower than projected numbers in the first two years, we have sadly not been able to afford the luxury of having enough time to keep building.

Tim Jupp Chair of Trustees BCDO



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# Events & Notices

Church or hall bookings

All Saints

Jim Donaldson 01625 619050  
jacjim@nthworld.com

St Barnabas

Jonathan Aiken 07515 410170  
jonathanstewartaiken@gmail.com

**St Michael's**

Emma Kingdom: 01625 421984  
stmichaelscoordinator@gmail.com

**St Peter's**

Mike Boardman: 01625 428646

## Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal

We are once again a collection point for this appeal.

Leaflets will be available from St Michael's Church for collection soon. Look out for this in weekly sheets and website.

Collection is usually around 19th November.

## Music at Mike's

**Next Concert: Friday 28th September at 1.15pm  
& Friday 16th November at 1.15pm**

A programme of concerts at St Michael's for your entertainment by King's School musicians. Free admission and light refreshments served.

### Link

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Link. If you would like to submit news, an article or photos, please email linkteammagazine@gmail.com or hand in your contribution at the Team Office. The deadline for the Dec/Jan edition is Monday 5th November 2018. The views expressed in this edition of Link do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial team or the PCCs of the churches.

## Our Church Community

Email  
linkteammagazine@gmail.com

## Our Church Baby & Toddler Groups

**WEDNESDAYS — 9.30am to 11.00am**

**St Peter's Church 'Take a Break'**  
Contact the Jenny Fox-Eades 07974 944585

**WEDNESDAYS — 1.30pm to 3.00pm**

**All Saints Church '0-5 Club'**  
Contact Shirley Hill: 01625 426874

**THURSDAYS — 10.00am to 11.30am**

**St Michael's Church**

Contact Church Office: 01625 421984

**FRIDAYS — 10.00am to 12.00pm**

**St Barnabas Church**

Contact Church Office: 01625 503740

## Macclesfield Tree of Light Service

This service organised by Macclesfield Town Council takes place on Thursday 6th December around the Christmas Tree in the Market Place.

**St Michael's is one of the Tree of Light star collection points again.** The stars are available for you to write the name(s) of loved ones that you wish to remember. They will be placed on the Christmas tree in the Market Place.

Stars can be collected from and **returned to St Michael's any time up to Friday 9th November.** Available now.

St Barnabas

Jonathan Aiken 07515 410170  
jonathanstewartaiken@gmail.com

**St Michael's**

Emma Kingdom: 01625 421984  
stmichaelscoordinator@gmail.com

**St Peter's**

Mike Boardman: 01625 428646



**St Michael's is Open** Monday to Saturday 10.30am to 12.30pm. Call in for a look round or refreshments.

# Sunday Services - October/November

Date	All Saints Brough St. West	St Barnabas Lyme Ave.	St. Michael & All Angels In the Market Place	St Peter's Windmill St.
7th Oct	9.30am Informal Service	11.15am Holy Communion	9.30am Storytelling Service 11.00am Holy Communion 4.00pm Remembering Service	9.30am Holy Communion
14th Oct	9.30am Holy Communion	11.15am Morning Prayer	9.30am Storytelling Service 11.00am Morning Prayer w. Baptism 6.30pm Choral Evensong	9.30am Morning Prayer
21st Oct	9.30am Morning Prayer	11.15am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion 11.00am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion
28th Oct	9.30am Holy Communion	11.15am Morning Prayer	10.30am Treacle, All Age Service	9.30am Worship for All
4th Nov	9.30am Informal Service	11.15am Holy Communion	9.30am Storytelling Service 11.00am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion
11th Nov	9.30am Holy Communion	11.15am Morning Prayer	9.30am Storytelling Service <i>10.30am Remembrance Service at Cenotaph</i> 10.45am Morning Prayer 6.30pm Faure Requiem (Remembrance)	9.30am Morning Prayer
18th Nov	9.30am Morning Prayer	11.15am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion 11.00am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion
25th Nov	9.30am Holy Communion	11.15am Morning Prayer	9.30am Storytelling Service 10.30am Treacle, All Age Service	9.30am Worship for All
2nd Dec	9.30am Informal Service	11.15am Holy Communion	9.30am Storytelling Service 11.00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Advent Carol Service	9.30am Holy Communion

We are looking to develop an editorial team for LINK magazine  
which is published six times a year.

**Could this be of interest to you?**

Contact Sue on 01625 421984 or [clergypa@gmail.com](mailto:clergypa@gmail.com)

## Services in October & November

### Hospital Services

**St Luke's Chapel,**  
**Macclesfield Hospital**  
14th October - Barry Langman  
11th November - Fran Hiles  
**11.00am**

*Have you ever thought about helping support patients who come to worship? Can you help out on a weekly or more occasional basis?*

For more information please contact  
Vicky & Gordon Darlington  
01625 428215



**Messy Church**  
**4.00pm - 6.00pm - All Saints Church**

Saturday 6th October  
Saturday 3rd November  
*It's a once a month time of creativity, worship and eating together for families for whom traditional Sunday Services don't work.*

### Midweek Communion

**Thursdays**  
**10.30am**  
**St Michael's Church**

### Healing Service

**St Michael's Church**  
**Service of Prayer for Healing & Wholeness 12.30pm**  
5th October and 2nd November  
*This service will last about half an hour and all are welcome. It contains intercessions for those who are sick or grieving and there will be an opportunity for those who wish to receive prayer with laying on of hands.*



It is 100 years since the end of World War 1 and we are remembering this with music and art to help us reflect on how we can be part of building peace today. In 1918 countries engaged in the First World War signed an Armistice to cease hostilities. It marked a desire for a lasting peace in Europe. 100 years later we remember the cost of war, whilst looking forward and asking how we, as a community, can build a peaceful future.

The Church Team Ministry in Macclesfield have planned a week of musical and artistic events shaped by the peace that is at the heart of our faith. We were inspired by the late David Wightman's vision of bringing the community together to celebrate peace as well as remember events of conflict over the last 100 years.

#### **Kites for peace**

Our week of events are centred on optimism and hope. There are opportunities for quiet remembrance, but also a chance to celebrate how we can make a world of difference by encouraging peace in our own lives. We are using kites as a symbol that lifts the heart, and we will be making kites with different groups in our town.

We have an art exhibition, 'Ours for the Making' which will explore commemoration and restoration, featuring mixed media installations and 100 kites for

peace, created by people in Macclesfield. We are also inviting everyone to make a kite for peace and display these across our town.

#### **100 voices**

There will be two musical events bringing together singers, musicians and poets from our town. On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November '100 Voices' will include music and spoken word from KEMs Concert Band and young people from Cre8. The week ends with a concert of music by KEMS Choir and Orchestra on the evening of 10<sup>th</sup> November.

Look out for other events during the week. There will be an interfaith Peace Café, an exhibition remembering those who refused to take up arms and a debate, 'Reimagining Armistice', hosted by poet and author Rachel Mann.

#### **Join in**

This will be a week of participation so we can all be part of building the peace. We are making kites as a way of symbolising our desire for peace. We can all be involved in making a kite that records our own stories of conflict and resolution, and our desire to build peace. We have a kite pack for you to use at home, in your own group or as part of another event.

All the events can be found at our website: <http://buildingthepeace.co.uk/>

# St Michael's Forever Floral Foam Free

Members from across the team churches joined Anne Kite at a flower workshop on Friday 14th September.

As part of its commitment to being an Eco Church (you may recall we have been awarded bronze level), the St Michael's flower team will no longer be using florist foam (oasis) in its floral arrangements due to its lack of eco credentials.

Anne delivered this workshop to help inspire us to find creative ways to display flowers without foam. The pictures below show a number of ideas Anne gave us. These include

using chicken wire or tape to act as a grid to hold the flowers and foliage in place. Or colourful florist wire in a clear glass vase, or stones/pebbles and glass beads.

It was amazing how effective these all looked and all these methods are far more friendly to our environment. David Mayers who chairs our Eco group is keen for us to move towards silver accreditation and this is certainly helping us to achieve that next level. He also gave a brief overview of why florist foam hasn't got excellent eco credentials and the effect it has on the environment. He

also challenged us about the miles that many of our flowers travel to reach the UK. A lot of roses, for instance, come from Kenya. A number attending the workshop were inspired to think about growing flowers in their garden that can be used in floral arrangements in church including weeds believe it or not. Anne showed us a number of what are termed 'weeds' but which have a great colour and how they can be used effectively in displays. Katy Wardle who has undertaken a floristry course at Reaseheath College gave us a demonstration of a hand tied bouquet of flowers using lots of foliage. Thank you Anne for an imaginative and inspiring floral foam free workshop.

*Sue Reid*

