

THE

September – November 2025

ELBOW

The Magazine of Formby Methodist Church

A close-up photograph of a hedgehog in its natural habitat, surrounded by fallen autumn leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and brown. The hedgehog's spines are a mix of brown and grey, and its face is dark with a small black eye.

Space
for all

From the Editor

September already! And you know what's just round the corner! I always think this is one of the busiest times in the life of the Church - and it's probably my favourite time. Let me draw your attention to a number of events which will be happening during the next three months.

First, we welcome a new Superintendent Minister, Rev Christopher Humble (see p5). Then comes Harvest - we used to celebrate it in October, but as the farming cycle changes and crops ripen earlier each year, more and more churches have their Harvest Services in September. This year we are delighted to welcome Andrew Lovelady to lead our service - his connection with Elbow Lane goes back a long way and he used to be a regular preacher while we were in the Crosby Circuit.

October means 'Shoebboxes' (see back cover). I know Andrew & Maureen have been busy throughout the year planning for the big day. But they still require a lot of assistance on the day - so please do help if you can.

And so to November and the Christmas Fair (see pp8,20). Margaret would very much appreciate any help you can give, in whatever form.

November is, of course, a time of remembrance. I would draw your attention to a talk which I will be giving to Formby Civic Society in the Maple Leaf Room on Thursday 6th November about Richard Heywood, a former Steward here at Elbow Lane (see p15). His story is a fascinating one but until now largely unknown. This will be an open meeting so everyone - including non FCS members - will be welcome. So in view of Heywood's connection with Elbow Lane, I would be delighted if our church was well represented. And on the 16th, our '*Blue Christmas Service*' will offer an opportunity to remember and reflect (see p21).

Our Christmas services and events will, of course, be listed in the next '*Elbow*', available from 30th November. However, I would like to give advance notice of an event to be held in church on Thursday 4th December, again in conjunction with Formby Civic Society - this will be '*A Celtic Christmas*' (see p21) Several of our church members will be involved in this event, so again, please do attend if you possibly can.

But enough of looking too far ahead. I very much hope you enjoy this 34th issue of the '*Elbow*'. My thanks to all those who have contributed to the magazine - and as always, but no less sincerely, a special thank you to Graham Watts and Helen for their invaluable help.

Enjoy the sun while it lasts!

Next '*Elbow*' Copy Deadline - 9 November

SERVICES AT ELBOW LANE

7 Sept, 10.30	Holy Communion, Pastoral Visitors Dedication	Rev Sheila Prest
7 Sept, 6.30	Welcome to New Superintendent Minister*	St Philip & St Paul with Wesley, Southport
14 Sept, 10.30	Morning Service	Mr Colin Fyles
21 Sept, 10.30	Harvest Festival	Mr Andrew Lovelady
21 Sept, 6.30	Evening Service	Rev Christopher Humble
28 Sept, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Martin Abrams
5 Oct, 10.30	Holy Communion	Rev Sheila Prest
12 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Phil Gough
19 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Mrs Shirley Potts
19 Oct, 6.30	Evening Service	Rev Patrick Evans
26 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Brian Trudgian
2 Nov, 10.30	Holy Communion	Rev Sheila Prest
9 Nov, 10.30	Remembrance Sunday	Mr John Venables
16 Nov, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Derek Bowker
16 Nov, 3.00	Blue Christmas Service**	Rev Sheila Prest
23 Nov, 11.00	Circuit Service	Leyland Road, Southport
30 Nov, 10.30	Morning Service	Mr Rodney Hoyle

* See p5 ** See p21

My thanks to all who requested a hymn for our 'Songs of Praise' Service on 24th August, and especially to those who spoke about their choice during the Service. The feedback has been really positive. Apologies to those whose choice I could not include - but there may well be a repeat soon!

Alastair

Minister's Letter

Well here we are at the beginning of a new year in the Church.

1st September marks the beginning of the Methodist Connexional year. September marks the beginning of the school year when thousands of children and adults go back to school after a long summer vacation.

That for many is a fearful experience. Maybe you can remember your first day at school primary or secondary. I well remember feeling proud but uncomfortable in my new school uniform which didn't quite fit. The stiff shirt collar rubbing into your neck and you know the blazer which Mum said you'd grow into! And the pristine new shoes which rubbed at the heel!

It marked a new start - you had a clean sheet and you were respected as individuals. Yet there was that feeling of corporate-ness. Your name was called out on a long list and you were told which teacher was to be your form tutor. You were bundled together in groups of 20 to 30 and led off to a classroom you'd never seen before. You were bound to one another as Mr. So and So's group or Miss So and So's group for instance.

A sense of uncertainty. Everything is new, and it evokes a sense of excitement and opportunity along with a fear of the unknown.

Here we are looking forward as a new year is upon us. We can look back and reflect on what we have done in the past and look forward with eager anticipation as to what is held in store for us - new speakers, old speakers with different stories, a sense of excitement and a sense of community and oneness, a meeting of old friends and maybe forging new friendships; such opportunities.

This is also the beginning of our Connexional Year in the Methodist Church. A time for girding our loins perhaps for what that will mean for us a church in the Southport circuit.

God is ready to enfold us in His generous love, not depending on our deserving. Our response, also in love, springs with penitent joy from thankful recognition of God's grace. It is not just a one-to-one transaction between individuals and God, but the act of the whole faith community. A unity with all humanity.

We're all in this together. A new start; a new beginning can also be about making promises. That promise to God that we will endeavour to serve Him

in all that we do. It's an opportunity to rededicate our lives It is a commitment and shows loyalty as the overriding concept.

In my ordination service I made promises. Yes, there was the laying on of hands, yes there were many people present including my family and friends, so it was a public affirmation of vows but most of all it was a personal promise between God and myself to serve as I am called, to be God's representative in the world. I have to say that something as big as that and as meaningful as that, and the enormity of it filled and continues to fill me with fear as well as excitement with a sense of honour and privilege as well as a sense of awe and wonder at God's grace.

However, we do not travel alone. Jesus is here among us in the 21st century and promises to be present in all that we do if we just ask him.

Love and peace
Sheila

Our New Superintendent Minister



We welcome the appointment of a new Superintendent Minister of the Southport Circuit from September 2025, Rev Chris Humble. Chris has been Superintendent Minister in the West Durham Circuit since 2017 having previously served for ten years in York, and ten years in Grimsby & Cleethorpes, and prior to that in Amersham and Leeds. He will be joined in Southport by his wife Judith.

A Service of Welcome for Chris will be held at St Philip & St Paul

with Wesley on Sunday 7th September at 6.30.

Chris will also be leading our evening service at Elbow Lane on Sunday 21st September at 6.30.

FLOWER ROTA

7 Sept	Trish Slinger	Vicky
14 Sept	Tristan Payne	Margaret
21 Sept	Ann Gorman	Margaret
28 Sept	Hazel & James May	Trish
5 Oct	Barbara & Dave Blake	Trish
12 Oct	Steve Gerrard	Vicky
19 Oct	Vicky Jenions	Vicky
26 Oct	Liz Morris	Margaret
2 Nov	Alan Sullivan	Margaret
9 Nov	Ann Webb	Trish
16 Nov	Eve Cant	Trish
23 Nov	Maureen & Trevor Simpson	Vicky
30 Nov	Judith Makinson	Vicky
7 Dec	Jean Horne	Margaret

Please put your donation in the envelope provided, sign it and whether you can gift aid your donation, and then give it to the flower arranger as listed above.
Thank you. Vicky (873317)

Christmas Craft Fair

After a lovely hot summer, a reminder to all that Christmas is just round the corner! Shop displays are ready and waiting, in fact many shop counters are already full of Christmas cards.

Our Christmas Fair will be on Saturday 29th November (see also p20) We will have various stalls, including books, up-market bric-a-brac and cakes. A group of artisan crafts people will have stalls, while the Church Craft Group are busy making a lovely assortment of gifts and decorations. There will also be a raffle and tombola (subject to donations!)

So this is a reminder to put the date in your calendar. And of course, any help would be appreciated.

Thanks, Margaret Nicholas

Abiding in Jesus

This is the time of year for many churches to hold their Harvest Festival services. No doubt, there will be displays of food, some bought with others grown in gardens and allotments. While gardeners can have pleasure growing fruit and vegetables it can be hard work tending to them and dealing with pests.

Jesus knew about the care given to vines. In John 15:1-8 Jesus compared Himself to a vine and referred to God as the gardener. These verses are both challenging and reassuring. In this parable, God is responsible for pruning the vine. He sees what parts are useful and what parts are useless. The unproductive parts are cut away, so that growth is encouraged. Jesus is telling us that God will prune our lives, not to harm us, but to encourage our spiritual growth.

God's pruning cuts away wrong attitudes and wasteful behaviour, all of which serve no useful purpose in our lives. This pruning is required so that we become more fruitful. And the fruit God wants is love, joy, patience etc. (see Galatians 5:22-23) These holy qualities are intended to influence the world to change it from the bad to all that is good.

To encourage its growth, a vine has to be regularly cut back. The effect looks drastic, but essential. When God cuts away the dead wood in our lives He does it because He knows how our lives can grow. The pruning knives are in the hands of our Father God who only desires the best for us. This pruning process can be painful, but Jesus says that it is vital if the Holy Spirit is to flow through us to produce the fruit that God wants.

Also in this parable, Jesus said that He was the vine, and we are the branches. We have no existence apart from Jesus. We can do nothing for God on our own and must be joined to Jesus. In the same way a vine utilises the life-giving sap to flow into the branches, so we need the Holy Spirit to flow His life into us. It is only by remaining in Jesus can He give us the inner resources for an effective fruit-producing life.

Jesus said '*Abide in Me*' (John 15:4 KJV). Abiding speaks of sustenance, being upheld and supported, enduring and withstanding. So, if we are to reap a harvest of holiness, may we be prepared for God's pruning, and continue to abide in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

(from the Parish Pump)

The brave Desmond Doss of Hacksaw Ridge

80 years ago, on 12th October 1945, US Army combat medic Desmond Doss became the first conscientious objector in US history to receive a Medal of Honour for heroic actions. He saved the lives of 75 men during the Battle of Okinawa. The film *Hacksaw Ridge* told his story.

Doss was born in Virginia in 1919, and became a strong believer in the Bible. As a conscientious objector, he determined to join the Army after Pearl Harbour – his goal being to save as many lives as possible, and to kill no-one. He enlisted as a medic and refused to carry a rifle, despite receiving abuse from his fellow soldiers and officers. This diminished when it became clear that he bore no grudges and was the first to help if anyone got into difficulty.

He served in combat on several islands, including Okinawa where, remarkably, the fighting took place on the top of a sheer 400ft cliff with booby traps and hidden machine gun nests. Doss refused to retreat with his battalion and kept lowering injured comrades down the cliff (Hacksaw Ridge). He thought he saved 50 men. praying aloud, “*Lord, please help me get one more*”. His comrades thought he had saved 100: the official report split the difference.

He was one of only 431 to receive the Congressional Medal of Honour. Before leaving the Army Doss had contracted tuberculosis, and eventually had a lung and five ribs removed. He lived to the age of 87. (from the Parish Pump)



Following the photograph in the last *Elbow*, this one was taken outside our house in Essex on VJ Day. In front of the tall man holding his son is a small lady holding a little girl. That is my mum and me! *Vicky (see also p39 for a close-up)*

Ladies Fellowship

Our AGM was held on Thursday 7th August. 23 members attended, and the average weekly attendance during the year was 29. Irene Watts reminded the Meeting, what a very special group we are, especially in the care and support we give to one another. Margaret Nicholas was thanked for her leadership, Judith Makinson and Sue Berry were appreciated for serving our refreshments every week, and Brenda Domville and her helpers Angela and Enid take care of our finances. Judith is also our Card Secretary. We have a wonderful Pianist now who plays beautifully at the start of our meeting which enhances our time of worship. THANK YOU SO MUCH ALI! A very big thank you to Derek, Bill and Alan who set up the room for us, and Alan and Dave who help at the end of our Meetings. Once again Janet Bowker has been our awesome Programme Planner, and we are grateful to her for this. We decided to increase our Church donation to £700, and a gift of £300 to go to the Charity – ‘Blood Bikes’ who do brilliant work in saving lives. A few of our members have been ill recently, and we look forward to welcoming them back in September.

Programme

September

- 4th Anona Kelly - Sefton Children's Trust
- 11th Andrew Lovelady - *'My Life in Numbers'*
- 18th - Bridge Inn Community Farm
- 25th - Colin & Eileen Fyles - *'Trip to Egypt'*

October

- 2nd - Members' Afternoon
- 9th - Linda Howard - *'My Sweet Retreat'*
- 16th - Janice Hatfield - *'The Secret Life of the Tesco Receipt'*
- 23rd - Maggy & Mandy Entertain
- 30th - Mark Underhill (retired Colonel, Altcar)

November

- 6th - Carole Codd - *'Anecdotes of a Liverpool Registrar'*
- 13th - Clatterbridge Hospital
- 20th - Rev Peter Lyth - *'The Parables'*
- 27th - Alan & Edwina Williams *'Photographs of the Himalayas'*

We meet every Thursday in the Maple Leaf Room, 2.00-3.30pm
Irene Watts (876219)

Eco News from Jenny

Adventurers - Ivy and I enjoyed our time with the Adventurers in June. We took a closer look at the small creatures like tadpoles, butterflies, spiders and ladybirds. Each one beautifully and intricately designed by God.



We thanked God for all the different creatures he has created and made bug hotels for the insects in our gardens.

Climate Sunday - In our service we were reminded that people in developing countries often face the harshest impacts of climate change. Earless Jessop, a speaker from Christian Aid, shared the story of Justin and Truphena, subsistence farmers in Kenya. As the climate changed, the weather systems became more unpredictable so that the rain didn't come when it was expected, expensive seed and fertiliser were wasted and they found it hard to grow enough for their family. Christian Aid's partner in Kenya has helped them. An expert interprets the meteorological data and then text messages specific to the different areas of Kenya are sent out to all the farmers, telling them when it will rain. Eirlys also told us about Huin Nwon from Ethiopia who had to walk further and further as water sources dried up. She ended up spending 8 hours a day, every day, fetching water and could never carry enough water home for her family. Her life was changed when Christian Aid helped to install a tap in her village. Now the water comes to her, life is less hard and she thanks God for 'the love that brought the tap'. We also thank God for the work of Christian Aid and other aid workers who seek to make a difference in areas of our world affected by war, conflict and the worst effects of climate change. Eirlys reminded us that we can show our love for others in many different ways and that small actions when added together make a difference. Clara kindly produced a leaflet that gives some ideas of little actions that can help to care for our world. Her ideas are shown below.



PLANET IN PERIL, HELP NOW! HERE'S HOW

Repair and reuse - fixing things can be fun, you also save money by doing so and you can learn new skills. Did you know around 85% of a **smartphone's** carbon pollution comes from its manufacture not from using it.*

Eating seasonal - Check labels on food for country of origin and buy food produce from the UK. This helps reduce carbon emitted by planes to fly it.

Consuming more plants: Did you know that cows burp and fart a lot! They belch methane (a greenhouse gas) which contributes to Climate change. They make up 35% of animal biomass on the planet and are, overwhelmingly, the livestock species that produces the most greenhouse gas emissions.**



Avoid buying fast fashion. This is because it can take up to 2,720 litres of water to produce one cotton T- shirt*. That's about the amount of water an average person drinks over 3 years!

Cut down on food waste. We waste about a third of all our food produced for human consumption.***

Walk + cycle more. This cuts your carbon pollution, reduces air pollution and probably makes you healthier and happier, too.* In some countries more than 40% of car journeys are less than four km long and during those first five minutes cars emit twice as much pollution.*

Greta Thunberg is first person we think of when someone says climate change. Also, the main person who wants to make a change.

Sir David Attenborough, the famous British broadcaster, biologist, natural historian and writer, is another important figure because he represents **hope**.

There is hope, but time is running out. We need to act now.

Thank you for reading this information.

Please try to do as much of this as you can.

“Every penny counts” - Every small action counts.

* from National Geographic ** from UCL news *** from Friends of the Earth

***Christmas Card display.** Just a reminder that if you want to reduce the number of cards that you give at Christmas and send a single card to ‘all your friends at church’ we will be displaying these in the church porch in December.

Artisan Market Bric-a-Brac Stall (14 June). Finally, a big thank you to all who contributed to it and especially to those who helped on the day. We raised £121-17 for church funds. The next Artisan Market will be on 8 Nov (see p20)

Being a Pastor in the Ukraine

Pastors in the Ukraine are continuing to minister to their beleaguered congregations, bringing comfort and hope into the most frightening and desperate war-torn situations. So says Transform Europe Network, a Christian ministry which serves alongside indigenous Christians in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Transform Europe Network (TEN) has released the following update from one of their partners on the ground in Ukraine on one of these courageous pastors. They also ask Christians in the UK to:

pray for pastors and their teams, exhausted by serving many on the frontline.

pray for those who are confused, discouraged and angry, even with each other. Pray for healing and comfort from the Holy Spirit. Churches in Ukraine do all they can to reconcile local people, but it is getting harder.

pray for mothers who are afraid their sons will be conscripted, as is increasingly happening. This also causes men to run away from home and so many families are fractured and stressed as the war grinds on.

“Pastor Evgeniy serves in the war-torn Kherson region of southeastern Ukraine. Since 2022, he and a small group of volunteers have brought food, comfort, and hope to people living amid the destruction.

Evgeniy and his team recently came to a village that had been shelled. One family’s home was reduced to rubble, and their vital documents were buried. The team arrived in bright, civilian clothing, deliberately chosen to identify them as volunteers, not military. As they began to pull back the rubble, they remained calm, focussing on their priority to help the family escape.

40 minutes later, the volunteers heard and saw a reconnaissance drone circling above them. They couldn’t tell who it belonged to, but its presence was ominous. Then came a different sound — sharper, lower, and closer. A small military drone was heading straight for them. In a moment that could only be described as divine intervention, the drone clipped a tree branch and crashed to the ground next to the team’s car.

The team cautiously approached the drone, still twitching and sparking. Minutes later, a second drone appeared. It aimed for the fallen drone, possibly to trigger an explosion by striking the first. But it too missed its target—crashing about six metres from the car, hitting a nearby concrete wall rather than the group. No one was injured.

But the volunteers knew then that they were under attack. They gathered their tools, helped the family into the vehicle, and drove away. Just seconds after they left, a third drone struck — right where their car had been parked moments before. The resulting explosion could have easily taken their lives. But once again, by what they all believe was God’s hand, they were spared.

Reflecting on the events, Pastor Evgeniy was asked if he ever felt hatred or the desire for revenge. His answer was quiet, but unshakable:

“No. I just understand. I understand the pain. I understand the fear. But if we don’t bring light into this darkness, who will?”

For Evgeniy, war is not a reason to harden the heart - it’s a call to deeper compassion. Even as drones fly overhead and homes crumble, he continues his ministry, bringing food, prayer, and humanity into places from which others flee.

This is what faith looks like in the ruins. It looks like a small group in bright vests, carrying hope into danger. It looks like a pastor who chooses grace over vengeance. And it looks like a God who protects, even when the bombs fall close.

Since the talks involving the US and a possible ceasefire, the local leaders testify that instead of de-escalation, they've experienced a significant rise in attacks and shelling.”

(from the Parish Pump)

Major Richard Percival Heywood MC Formby’s Unknown Hero

On Thursday 6th November, at 7.30, just before Remembrance Sunday, I will be giving an illustrated talk to Formby Civic Society in the Maple Leaf Room on Major Richard Percival Heywood. This, however, will be an open meeting - you do not have to be a FCS member to attend - so I would be delighted if as many members as possible from Elbow Lane were able to attend.

Richard Heywood was a fascinating character - during World War 1, he was promoted from Private to Major and won the Military Cross with 2 Bars. Both amazing achievements. And he was an outstanding rugby player - not only did he captain Waterloo but also Lancashire, and had it not been for the outbreak of War in 1914, he would almost certainly have been capped for England.



AND - not only did he live in Formby, but he was a member and Steward here at Elbow Lane!

Yet few people have even heard of him! So do come along and hear more about this amazing man!

Alastair

Dr Herbert McGonigle, now retired, was Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester

A Prayer from the Depth of Despair

(See Jonah 2: 2-9)

Twice in the Bible there is a record of prayers prayed in hell. In Jesus' parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the former prayed for both release from his torment and that a warning would be sent to his family (Luke 16: 24-31). And here in the book of Jonah this chapter opens with the words, '*Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God*' (v1) The prophet prayed from what he described as '*the belly of hell*' (KJV), or '*from the depth of Sheol*' (v2).

The first chapter of the book tells how Jonah was commissioned by God to go and preach in Nineveh, the capital city of the great Assyrian Empire. Instead, Jonah ran away from his home country, from (as he thought) the presence of God and from hearing God's command. The Assyrians had long been the all-conquering enemies of Israel and Jonah was either afraid to go to Nineveh, or he did not want them to hear God's word – or both.

So he ran away and took ship for Tarshish (Spain). During a violent storm he confessed to the sailors that he had disobeyed God and reluctantly they threw him overboard (1:12-14). The Lord had '*appointed a great fish*' which swallowed Jonah and from deep inside its belly, he prayed to the Lord. God heard his prayer, the fish spewed him out and his life was spared (2:10).

Jonah's prayer, prayed when he was sure he was about to die, has much to teach us about praying. *First*, even in our disobedience, God hears us when we pray humbly and sincerely. Jonah's terrible calamity was directly the result of his running away from God. It wasn't because of circumstances, it wasn't inevitable, it wasn't fate or just '*one of those things*;' it was his disobedience that brought about the disaster. How gracious God is! Even in our running away from Him, He still loves us and hears our prayers.

Second, we can pray anywhere. If Jonah could cry to the Lord when he was '*in the heart of the seas*,' when '*all the waves and billows*' passed over him (v3), how many places may we not find to come before the Lord in prayer? There is the quiet time at the day's beginning, a moment of reflection in a busy schedule, between meetings, as we drive the car or travel in the bus, or plane or ship – so many places where we can '*lift up our hearts*' to the Lord.

Third, no situation is too difficult for God - He who 'hurled a great wind upon the sea' (1: 4), who 'appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah' (1: 17), who prepared 'a plant' and 'a worm' to bring about His purposes (4: 6,7), is the Sovereign Lord of earth and heaven. He can hear and help us in our deepest distress, when life seems to be tumbling in all round us.

Fourth, the Lord can deliver! Jonah's prayer from the depth of hell ends with the ringing assurance, 'Deliverance belongs to the Lord' (2: 9). We all need to hear that! Today, whatever our need, our pain, our disappointment, our fear, our weakness, our besetting sin - with the Lord there is deliverance.

Give Him a call!

The phone was a great invention. How easy, to press a few numbers on our small devices and speak to someone the other side of the world. Once a phone was a luxury item; now we take it for granted that this gadget in our pocket allows us to contact anyone, any time, any place.

But how often have you made a call, only to hear a recorded message giving a variety of options? Then you wait in a queue for ages before your call is answered. A voice informs you that 'your call is important to us' ... but you are still left waiting, listening to endless music.

Yes, phones may be useful in all kinds of ways, but they can also be very frustrating! So, it's good to know that God can be contacted immediately we need Him. There is no celestial call centre where our messages are delayed. With prayer we can call on God directly. This service is free. He hears our every call, and will answer us in ways which are only for our good.

'When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond.'
(Isaiah 58:9) (from the Parish Pump)

There was a Minister who was an avid golfer. One Sunday was a picture-perfect day for golf, and he could not resist the temptation. He rang his assistant and told him he was too ill to preach. Then he packed up the car, drove 30 miles to a golf course, and began to play. But an angel watching the Minister was quite perturbed. He went to God and said, "Look at the Minister. He should be punished for what he's doing."

God nodded in agreement. The Minister teed up on the 10th hole, swung, the ball sailed through the air and landed right in the cup, 350 yards away! A perfect hole-in-one! The Minister was thrilled. The angel said to God: "I thought You were going to punish him." God smiled. "Think about it; who can he tell?"

Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen

If you want to make the most of every minute of your life, and to use your various talents to the utmost, then Hildegard is the saint for you.

Born as the tenth child into a nobleman's family in the Nahe valley of the Rhineland during the High Middle Ages, Hildegard stood out from others by the time she was eight. That was when she began to receive supernatural visions from God.

Understandably, her family felt that this sort of thing was beyond them, and so they entrusted her to Jutta, a female recluse with close ties to the Benedictine monastery at Diessenberg. Seven years later, Hildegard became a nun of the community around Jutta, and when she died in 1136, Hildegard became the abbess.

But Hildegard was never going to be one of your quiet nuns tucked away somewhere. Instead, she was always 'out there', and bursting with vitality and energy. She wrote on a wide variety of subjects from theology to medicine, to nature. She composed hymns, chants and songs. And she corresponded with many people, including royalty.

Hildegard was a strong, outspoken woman who saw herself as standing in the Biblical prophetic tradition, and as such she was fearless in castigating and reprimanding people whom she saw as needing to repent.

Her supernatural visions of God continued from 1141 to 1151, and with the approval of the Archbishop of Mainz, she recorded many of them. This collection was called *Scivias*, and it dealt with the nature of man of the Last Judgement. When the Pope also approved her visions and writings, Hildegard's fame spread.

In time, Hildegard's community grew so large that it moved to Rupertsberg near Bingen, from where she travelled throughout the Rhineland, speaking and teaching. Above all, Hildegard had a firm focus to her life: Jesus Christ and His redemptive death on the Cross. She was devoted to Him.

(from the Parish Pump)



An early English tapestry depicting Hildegard, now in Frankfurt

The following poem was inspired by a lady called Phil Bevan who responded to God's call to take aid to Myanmar after floods there, many years ago.....

God's Whisper to Me

**by
Mollie Sharpe**

*God whispered in my ear one day
And said how it would be
I shrugged and turned away and said
"No way, You can't mean me!"*

*Next time it wasn't a whisper
He spoke quite loud and clear
He had a job for me to do
He said "have faith, don't fear".*

*So I took the challenge offered
But how should I begin?
This task was much too big for me
I had to trust in Him.*

*When the problems overwhelmed me
And I couldn't see my way
I'd put my faith and hope in Him
Fall to my knees and pray.*

*And my God, He never failed me
Through good days and through bad
He filled me with a courage
I never knew I had.*

*So if you feel God calling you
Don't doubt and answer "no"
He knows the plans He has for you
Step out in faith...and go!*

(from the Parish Pump)

Observations on our Christian pilgrimage.....

Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil - it has no point (Billy Graham)

Don't give up on yourself. God doesn't. Even Moses was once a basket case (Anon)

We play the game; God keeps the score (Erwin W Lutzer)

Formby Artisan Market

Food

Crafts

Cafe

Gifts

Dogs welcome

8th November

10.00 - 3.00

Formby Methodist Church Hall
Elbow Lane L37 4AF

Formby Methodist Church
Elbow Lane L37 7AF

Christmas Craft Fair

Saturday
29



November

10.00-3.00



Your Christmas
presents sorted!

Tombolas, White
Elephant, Craft stalls,
Cakes, Christmas cards,
local history display,
Raffle and much more

Refreshments available
FREE ADMISSION!

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

A TIME FOR HEALING

A reflective service creating space for grief and loss, and offering hope in the midst of Advent's longest night.

Join us for a special service designed for those who find the holidays difficult. Whether you're grieving, feeling isolated, or simply need a moment of peace, this service offers gentle comfort, hope and healing.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

Date: Sunday 16th November 2025

Time: 3pm

Location: Formby Methodist Church

All are welcome.



Formby Civic Society
&
Formby Methodist Church



present

A Celtic Christmas

Thursday 4 December 2025

7.30

Formby Methodist Church
Elbow Lane L37 4AF

Sing carols



Listen to poems and tales



Find out about Celtic Christmas traditions



Admission by donation at the door

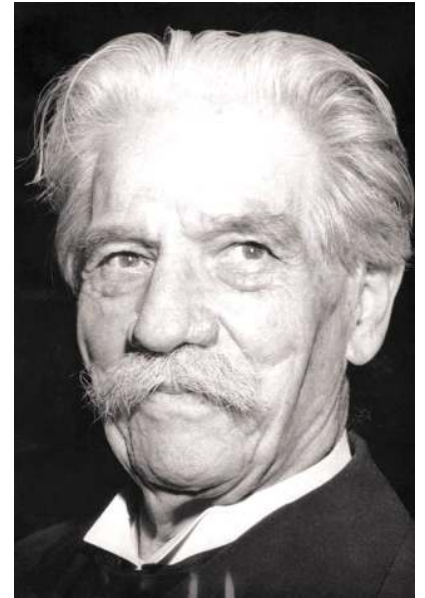
Remembering Albert Schweitzer

He did not preach and did not warn and did not dream that his example would be an ideal and comfort to innumerable people. He simply acted out of inner necessity.

– Albert Einstein, friend

60 years ago, on 4th September 1965, Albert Schweitzer - theologian, philosopher, organist, physician and missionary doctor - died.

Schweitzer was a devout Christian. His key philosophy was 'reverence for life' - no-one should harm or destroy life unless absolutely necessary. This philosophy gained him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952, and led him in later life to campaign against nuclear weapons.



He had been born in 1875 in the Alsace (then in Germany but now in France), where his father was a Lutheran pastor, and he made an impression first in the world of music. He was playing the organ in his father's church at the age of nine and despite all his other interests and commitments, he continued to perform as a church organist throughout his life.

In 1893 he enrolled at the university of Strasbourg, and duly received a doctorate in philosophy six years later; this was followed a year later by a degree in theology. In 1903 he became Principal of the Theological College of St Thomas, from which he had graduated. In 1906 he published his key work, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

At the same time, he was determined to go to Africa, and particularly the French colony of Gabon. And so it was that in 1912, having gained a further degree - in tropical medicine and surgery - he offered to



work at his own expense as a physician in the Paris Missionary Society's mission at Lambaréné in Gabon. He was eventually accepted, raising his own funding partly through concerts. By 1913, he had built a hospital there, with his wife, Helene, as anaesthetist for surgical operations.

However, he was soon subjected to considerable criticism - World War I had just broken out and, as a German citizen, was considered an enemy of France. And so, he and Helene were interned as prisoners of war.

On being released, the couple returned to Europe, where Albert wrote several books on the history of Christianity. He eventually returned to Lambarene in 1924, though alone, as Helene was unable to travel, having contracted tuberculosis during a previous stay.

Schweitzer did not suffer fools gladly - indeed, he was notorious for his quick temper, and often seemed aloof. But he was also profoundly caring with an indefatigable concern for all life, human and animal.

Some of his arrangements were criticised, such as the lack of modern methods of practising medicine and the animals allowed to roam free on the hospital grounds. Nevertheless, when he won the Nobel Peace, he typically used the substantial prize money to fund the addition of a new leprosy wing in his hospital.



Schweitzer died at Lambaréné in 1965, aged 90. His simple grave in the hospital grounds there is marked by a self-designed cross. He was fond of saying “*my life is my argument*”. And his legacy is the founding of hospitals and orphanages, not just in Africa but also

as far away as Haiti, France and South America.

Alastair

A Hymn with a View!

Whilst on holiday near Dartmouth Graham and I met up with friends in a headland hotel on the edge of Brixham. The view across Torbay in glorious sunshine was stunning. The house had originally been a military hospital but in 1800 with the defeat of Napoleon, troops were withdrawn and according to the blue plaque beside the entrance had eventually become the home of Rev Henry Francis Lyte and his family.

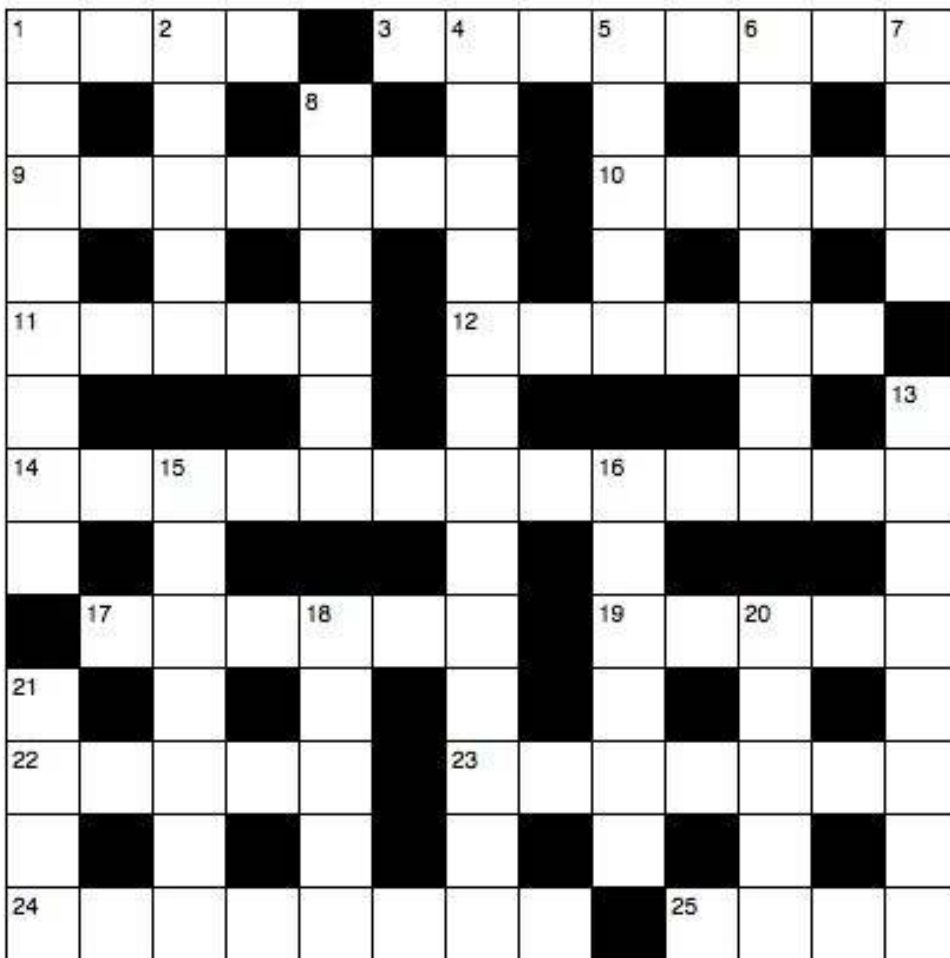
Much impressed by the sweeping view he enjoyed the evening light and golden sunsets from his favourite perch on a rock in his beloved garden, and it was here he was inspired to write the words of the immortal hymn, ‘*Abide with Me*’, on 4th September 1847.



*“Abide with me; Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide!”*

My friend, a fellow Methodist and a teacher of music shared my interest. We found the history of the minister and his famous hymn mounted inside the hotel. What I have always thought of as a rather sombre hymn will now remain reminiscent of that beautiful sea view and a setting that brought the peace of God to Rev Lyte and countless others ever since.

Anne White



Across

- 1 'Later someone else said to Peter, "You – are one of them"' (Luke 22:58) (4)
 3 Giving (1 Peter 2:5) (8)
 9 They came to Jerusalem seeking an infant king (Matthew 2:7) (3,4)
 10 'An athlete... does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the –' (2 Tim. 2:5) (5)
 11 Temperance advocate, open-air preacher, pacifist, leading 20th century Methodist, Donald – (5)
 12 'Come quickly to – –, O Lord' (Psalm 38:22) (4,2)

- 14 'The God of Abraham, – – – , the God of our fathers,' (Acts 3:13) (5,3,5)
 17 Sear by intense heat (Revelation 16:8) (6)
 19 'It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust – – ' (Psalm 118:8) (2,3)
 22 Goods (Nehemiah 13:15) (5)
 23 i.e. train (anag.) (7)
 24 Surrounding area (Luke 24:50) (8)
 25 'Righteousness will be his – and faithfulness the sash round his waist' (Isaiah 11:5) (4)

Down

- 1 Elegant and creative (Exodus 31:4) (8)
 2 'Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all – , but we will all be changed' (1 Corinthians 15:51) (5)
 4 'I... delight to see how orderly you are and firm your ... is' (Colossians 2:5) (5,2,6)
 5 Enlist (2 Samuel 24:2) (5)
 6 Of the Muslim faith (7)
 7 Sharp intake of breath (Job 11:20) (4)
 8 Woven cloth (Ezekiel 16:13) (6)
 13 Plentiful (Romans 5:17) (8)
 15 CIA char (anag.) (7)
 16 Paul and Silas stopped _ committing suicide after an earthquake (Acts 16:27,28) (6)
 18 One of the ingredients in the making of incense for the Lord (Exodus 30:34) (5)
 20 Episcopal headwear (5)
 21 Inhabitant of, say, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia or Bulgaria (4)

(answers on p39)

Wilson Carlile

founder of the 'Church Army'

Wilson Carlile was born in Brixton on 26 September 1847, and did not set out to become an evangelist. Instead, he excelled as a businessman - until a serious illness finished his career, aged only 31. A serious breakdown followed, when Carlile questioned everything in life. This search for a new meaning brought him to faith in Jesus Christ, and turned his world upside down. He later wrote: *"I have seen the crucified and risen Lord as truly as if He had made Himself visible to me by bodily sight. That is for me the conclusive evidence of His existence. He touched my heart and old desires and hope left it. In their place came the new thought that I might serve Him and His poor and suffering brethren."*

Carlile approached two Christians whose passion for ministry was already well known - Moody and Sanky, who were at that time in England. He attended their meetings and supplied music via his harmonium. He learned a lot from them about effective outdoors evangelism.

He then prepared himself for a life of ministry. He was confirmed into the Church of England, and after study, he was ordained in 1880 and became a curate in Kensington. But he wanted more than a comfortable parish life, and soon began outdoor preaching again. He wanted to reach the poor and unchurched.

So he duly left Kensington to work in a slum mission, and by 1882 was busy uniting the local Anglican parish missions into one organisation. Here his organising skills proved invaluable, and soon he had founded the 'Church Army.' He then founded two training colleges. The Church



of England agreed to incorporate the 'Church Army' into its structure, and created the office of Evangelist for the 'Army' captains and sisters.

In the years that followed, the 'Church Army' has done great work in evangelism, as well as in social and moral welfare. It helped support the troops during World War 1. Today it is based in Sheffield.

Wilson Carlile remained honorary chief secretary until his retirement in 1926. He died in 1942.

(from the Parish Pump)

The Story Behind the Hymn

'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind'

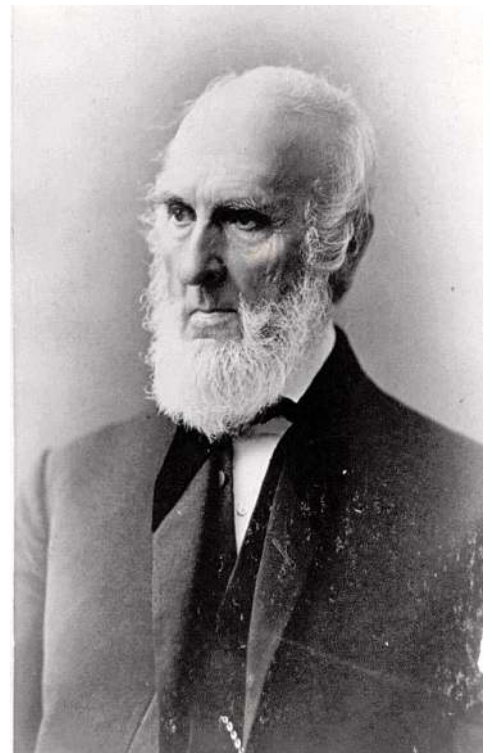
This beautiful hymn was written by John Greenleaf Whittier in 1872, since when there are few hymn books which don't include it.

Whittier was given his distinctive middle name - 'feuillevert' in French - in recognition of his Huguenot ancestors

Whittier was an American Quaker poet. Born in Haverhill, Massachusetts in December 1807, he began life as a farmboy and shoemaker. However, he suffered from poor health, for which he compensated with a burning desire to read as much as possible; the books he read included his father's on Quakerism and these greatly influenced his later life.

From 1828 he edited various journals, including the *'American Manufacturer'*, *'New England Weekly Review'* and *'Pennsylvania Freeman'*.

But he achieved particular fame for his poetry - he was greatly influenced by Robert Burns - and his stand in support of the abolition of slavery. Indeed, as well as the *'Quaker Poet'*, he was also known as the *'Fireside Poet'* and the *'Slave Poet'*. He published an anti-slavery pamphlet *'Justice and Expediency'* which ruined any political ambitions he may have had, as his demand for immediate emancipation alienated Northern businessmen as well as Southern slaveholders. Nevertheless, he was convinced that the cause was both morally correct and socially necessary. For his outspoken views he was frequently attacked and even stoned. In 1840 he attended the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London.



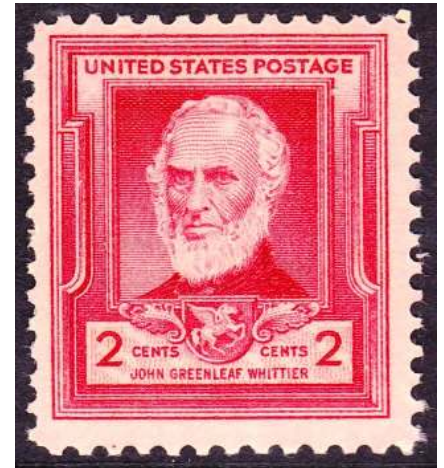
Ill-health, however, began to take its toll, and ended his active participation in the anti-slavery movement. He returned to writing poetry, much of which was anti-slavery. One of his most famous quotes was

*"When faith is lost, when honour dies, the man is dead.
I'll lift you and you lift me, and we'll both ascend together."*

By the time of his death in September 1892, aged 84, he was regarded as one of America's greatest and most loved poets - and he had lived long enough to see slavery, the cause for which he gave so much of his life, eradicated.

Several of his poems were turned into hymns, including probably most famous of all, '*Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*'. The original poem was quite lengthy, and it is only the final verses which we sing today, to the tune '*Repton*', composed by Hubert Parry. Interestingly, however, in the USA, it is sung to a completely different tune.

This hymn is representative of Whittier's description of 'the Quaker Poet' - it is quiet, gentle and reflective, especially verses 3 - 5. Little wonder that it is frequently sung at funerals. Even the final verse, which talks of the earthquake, wind and fire, has a beautiful final line of calm.



*3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity
Interpreted by love!*

*4 With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.*

*5 Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.*

*6 Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.*

Alastair

150 years of the Keswick Convention

An iconic Christian convention is celebrating 150 years this year. From the humble beginnings of a vicar holding a meeting on his vicarage lawn back in 1875, the Keswick Convention now runs a year-round Christian teaching ministry and attracts 15,000 to its annual three-week summer convention.

It was the brainchild of Canon Thomas Harford-Battersby, Vicar of St John's, Keswick. He had attended a Christian conference in Oxford, and found it life changing. *"Christ was revealed to me so powerfully and sweetly as the present Saviour in His all sufficiency."* And later he added: *"I found He was all I wanted: I shall never forget it... How it humbled me and what peace it brought."*

Harford-Battersby wanted to share this joy in Christ with others. So, with the help of a friend, he erected a tent on his vicarage lawn that summer and simply invited local people to come along. Over the week, nearly 400 attended. In the following years, more came - thousands, from many denominations, eager to learn more about the Bible. Within a few years of its starting, Christians all over the world were making an annual pilgrimage to the Lake District town, to hear the very best Bible teachers.

Some of the highlights over the years:

1875 - first convention, in St John's vicarage garden in Keswick

1901 - the first marquee was erected on the Skiddaw Street site

1969 - the second week of convention was started, aimed more at families

1997 - the Rawnsley Hall in Keswick was bought, to extend youth ministry

2001 - the third week of the convention was launched

2015 - the Pencil Mill acquired; it is now an integrated home for the Convention



PART OF THE VAST THROG AT ENGLAND'S GREATEST CAMP-MEETING AT KESWICK

Many missionary societies and theological colleges owe their roots to the Keswick Convention: Hudson Taylor and Amy Carmichael had close ties with it.

Recent speakers have included some of the best-known preachers in the evangelical world: John Stott, Donald English, George Duncan, David Coffey, and Anne Graham Lotz. Many Keswick teaching events are now held around the world: in Africa, Australia, North America, India, Jamaica and Japan.

The Convention's motto has always been (it can be seen in the photograph taken from the *'Christian Herald'* in 1913) and still remains – *'All One in Christ Jesus'*.

(from the Parish Pump)

Premier Christian Radio 30 Years On

Christian broadcasting was not always allowed in this country. As late as the mid-1980s, Christians were petitioning Parliament and the broadcast regulator to allow Christian broadcasting to begin in the UK.

Finally, it happened, and in 1990 the law was changed. Five years later, in the summer of 1995, Premier Christian Radio was launched. The Christian community rallied around the station, with thousands committing to provide regular monthly support, and to make it the success that it is today.

Highlights of the past 30 years include:

1999 - launch of Premier Online, streaming Premier to the world

2006 - launch of Premier.tv, providing Christian Internet TV on demand

2009 - broadcasting nationwide begins on DAB Digital radio

2010 - Premier Gospel begins

2016 - Premier Praise begins

Nowadays, with more than 1,100,000 listeners every week, Premier is the largest Christian Media organisation in the UK, reaching people via its print, digital and radio platforms. It is available online and nationally on DAB and on smart speakers. The App is available to both iPhone and Android users.

(from the Parish Pump)

"If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room." - Anita Roddick

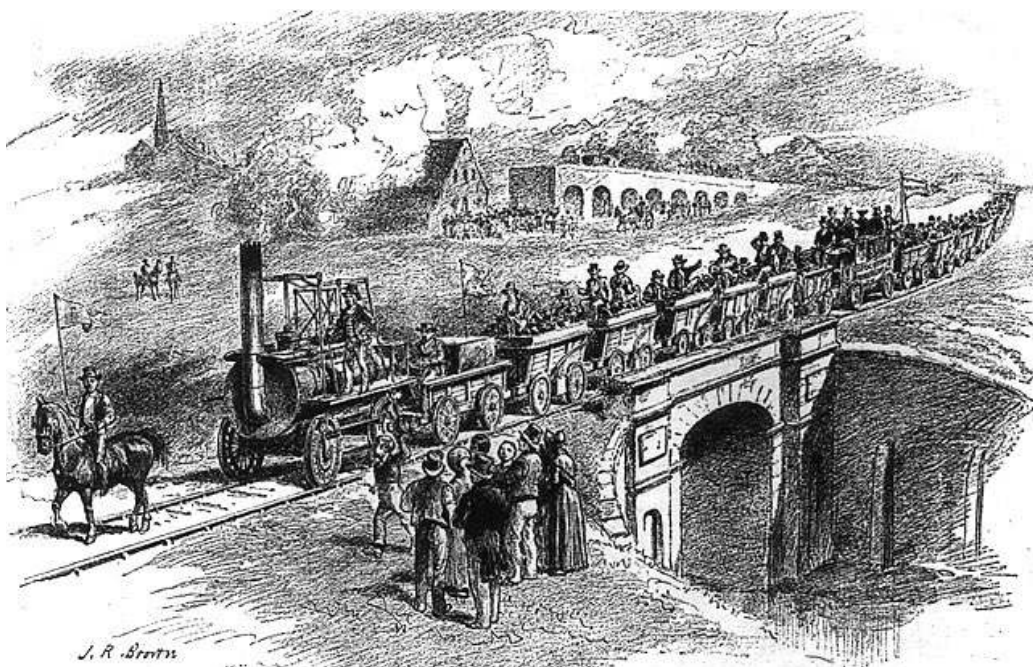
Celebrating 200 years of the public railways

200 years ago, on 27th September 1825, the world's first public railway opened. It was the Stockton and Darlington Railway in north-east England.

Inspired and supported by a prominent Quaker, Edward Pease, and backed financially by many Quakers nationally, it has been described as "*the great theatre of railway operations*", sparking the explosion of railways across the world and boosting the Industrial Revolution. About 20 miles of the original 25 mile stretch still exist, now as part of the Northern Rail line.

The technical expertise behind it all came from George Stephenson, an extraordinary self-taught engineer whose expertise, which originated in the mines, stretched beyond railways. His *Locomotion No 1*, built for the Stockton and Darlington line, was the first steam locomotive to carry passengers on a public rail line. He worked with his 18-year-old son Robert, who is known for creating the more famous *Rocket* four years later.

The first Stockton and Darlington train - which in fact ran from Old Etherley Colliery, some distance north of Darlington - was led by a man on horseback with a flag. The motto of the organising committee was "*at private risk for public service*".



With brakemen stationed between the wagons, the train reached 12 to 15mph and was greeted by an estimated 10,000 people at the Darlington junction, where some passengers left and more boarded.

The average speed was calculated at about 8mph. Six wagons of coal were given to the poor by way of celebration.

As a tribute to his life and achievements, a bronze statue of George Stephenson was unveiled at Chesterfield railway station in 2005. An earlier statue stands in Neville Street, Newcastle.

A nine-month festival in County Durham and the Tees Valley – with artwork, spectacles and community events – is marking the bicentenary of the opening of the railway. (from the Parish Pump)

Brief Encounter

by

Ivy Chapel

Fox!

You startled me!

I didn't expect to see you fox, looking straight at me.
You looked at me with eyes so bright you filled my spirit with delight,
'Cos I didn't expect to see you fox, looking straight at me.

I wonder what you thought of me.

Did you think how can it be
She's looking right into my eyes?

Did I give you a surprise?

We stopped and stood

Looked at each other.

I wanted just to talk to you.

I didn't know just what to say

And suddenly you ran away!

I don't know where you're headed for

What other places you'll explore.

I'm glad you caught me with your gaze.

I'd love to know more of your ways.

I'm glad I came along the street

And I don't suppose again we'll meet.

But I didn't expect to see you fox looking straight at me!

Remembering the Nuremberg Laws

90 years ago, on 15th September 1935, the Nuremberg Laws were passed in Germany. Jews were no longer classed as German citizens, and the Nazi flag was adopted as the national flag of Germany.

They were known as the Nuremberg Laws because they were announced at a Nazi Party rally in that town. They had been enacted because the Nazis wanted to put their spurious ideas about race into law, defining Germans as Aryans, the strongest and most valuable 'race', with Jews inferior to all other races. Together with gypsies and non-whites, they could not be full citizens or marry or have sexual relations with people of German blood.

Ten years later, Nuremberg – which by then had been heavily bombed – was chosen for the trial of Nazi leaders for war crimes and crimes against humanity following the development of these false theories into the deadly facts of the Holocaust.

Many Christians – especially the '*German Christians*' movement – supported the Nazi ideology and the Nuremberg laws, and after the war this silence or 'complicity' had to be tackled by leaders of both Catholic and Protestant churches.

Many individual Christians and groups had, however, opposed the Nuremberg laws. They had tried to protect persecuted Jews, and had spoken against antisemitism. The Confessing Church and the Young Reforming Movement were examples of this more outspoken opposition, which often brought deep trouble to those involved.

Among those who led opposition to Nazi interference in the Church were Martin Niemöller, who founded the Pastors' Emergency League in 1933, and Karl Barth, who was one of the leaders of a revival after the Synod of Barmen the following year. A leading spokesman of the Confessing Church was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed for his alleged involvement in a plot to overthrow Hitler.

(from the Parish Pump)

"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

St Ceolfrith (? - 716)

Baking and Bibles

Ceolfrith may not be the best known of saints, but as his saint's day is 25 September, it is a good time to reflect on his life. He is a good patron saint for anyone who has studied hard, is strong in the face of tragedy, and who can also offer some homely care to others in need.

This well-loved abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow, from a noble family, was ordained at Ripon when he was just 27. He travelled to Canterbury and Icanho (in East Anglia) where he studied ecclesiastical and monastic practices. But back at Ripon the monks soon came to appreciate him for another good reason: He was an outstanding cook! So he was asked, and agreed, to be the monastery's baker.

In time Ceolfrith was moved on to Wearmouth, and then in 682, when the monastery at nearby Jarrow was founded, Ceolfrith became abbot. It was here that disaster struck, when a plague killed all of the monks who could sing or read. Only Ceolfrith and the boy Bede were left alive. It would have been so easy to flee that empty house of death, but instead, Ceolfrith and the young Bede faithfully stayed on, believing that God had called them to be there. Soon Jarrow prospered again, and by 689 Ceolfrith was made abbot of both Wearmouth and Jarrow.

He seems to have been a kindly and energetic leader. During his rule 600 monks joined the monastery, the library was doubled, and endowments increased. But Ceolfrith's biggest legacy came when he commissioned three Pandects (complete Bibles in single volumes) in uncial (early medieval) script. One still survives today, as the Codex Amiatinus, an enormous volume in the Bibiloteca Laurenziana in Florence - the oldest surviving complete Latin Bible in one volume.

And so, a kindly baking abbot who also happened to leave us the earliest complete Latin Bible - not a bad combination of skills!

(from the Parish Pump)

“Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to.” - Mark Twain

God in the Arts

'He gave us eyes to see them'

William Holman Hunt's *'Scapegoat'*

14th September in the Jewish calendar is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. It is a time of fasting and prayer, and its observance is regulated by Leviticus 16.

The Old Testament ritual involved cleansing the priesthood and the people when a scapegoat bearing the sins of the faithful was sent into the wilderness. Much of that ritual has lapsed, but the heart of Yom Kippur is prayer that the relationship of love and service between God and His people would be renewed and restored.



The goat that was sent by relays into the desert had a scarlet cord – a reminder that *'though our sins be scarlet, yet they shall be as white as snow.'*

It is the subject of William Holman Hunt's famous painting that is in the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight. Work on *'The Scapegoat'* began in 1854 and was completed two years later. Holman Hunt went to the Dead Sea to paint the goat in situ, in accordance with the Pre-Raphaelite principles of art embodying exact detail and accuracy in its subject matter. There is a photograph of the artist by his easel, a paintbrush in one hand and a rifle in the other! It was a time of political tension between Syria, Palestine and Turkey, which combined with the

constant danger of hostile local tribesmen.

Undaunted, Holman Hunt sketched by the sea and then finished the details off in his rooms in Jerusalem. He described the scene as a “*beautifully arranged horrible wilderness.*” In the distance are the hills of Edom against the sky, and in the foreground the solitary goat with the scarlet cord over its head. It is a bleak landscape, and on the frame around the picture are the words from Leviticus:

‘The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region, and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.’

At the time critics were not sure what to make of the painting, as there was no recognisable story or moral so beloved of the Victorians. Elegant ladies enquired if the artist was going to put in the rest of the flock, and one critic even said it was an excellent portrait of Lord Stratford!

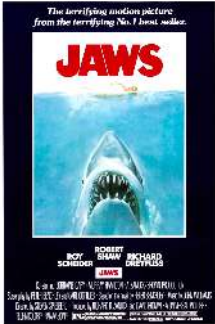
We look at the painting with the eyes of faith and realise the scapegoat was sent over the river Kidron into the wilderness, the very same river our Lord and His disciples crossed to the Garden of Gethsemane before the passion of Jesus. We can see this sad creature, isolated and alone, bearing the sins of God’s ancient people, and think of Isaiah’s words: *‘He was despised and rejected by others.’* A scapegoat in the Old Testament bearing the sins of the people: the Lamb of God in the new covenant who takes away the sin of the world. (from the ‘Parish Pump’)

Olive oil is actually good for you!

It has been found to be able to ward off chronic disease and to boost your brain health. So, when those ancient Greeks praised it as an aid to staying young and healthy, it seems they were right. While the Mediterranean diet can include up to four tablespoons of olive oil per day, a recent study has found that even just half a tablespoon per day helps protect your heart and brain from disease. It may even slash your risk of Parkinson's or Alzheimer's by 29%, and cancer by 17%. It is packed with monounsaturated fats, and even has anti-inflammatory properties, like Ibuprofen. Best to use it as a salad dressing - frying with it can degrade some of its properties. (from the Parish Pump)

JAWS – 50 years on

The shark that came to Amity Island for dinner – most people over 60 remember him as the scariest fish they ever saw! As this summer the famous film celebrates its golden anniversary, here are ten facts about the film which you may not know.....



1. When Jaws was released in 1975, its 28-year-old director, Stephen Spielberg, was very nervous – making the film had been beset with disasters. He worried that he might never work on films again. But Jaws was an instant success – spending 14 consecutive weeks at number one in the USA and eventually grossing \$470 million worldwide.
2. Jaws was shot on the island of Martha's Vineyard, and scared people so badly that eastern US coastline resorts reported a marked downturn in visitors that summer.
3. Jaws is based on the 1974 novel by Peter Benchley, who was inspired by the five (four fatal) Jersey Shore shark attacks of 1916. These had left residents terrified of the water.
4. The three 1.2 ton, 25-ft-long pneumatically powered sharks were given a name on the film set – Bruce. They were named after Spielberg's lawyer, Bruce Ramer.
5. These mechanical sharks were so prone to malfunction that the script was rewritten, so as not even to show the shark until one hour and 21 minutes into the film! But this served as a stroke of genius – for it allowed the tension to build and build.
6. There were endless problems on the set: bad weather, water-logged equipment and even the main boat sinking. The actors were often seasick, and sometimes feuding. The 55-day schedule overran to 159 days, raising the budget from £3.5m to \$9m!
7. George Lucas, who visited his friend Spielberg on the set, got his head stuck in the shark's mouth. They nearly broke the mechanical shark in their frantic efforts to free him.
8. The film's most famous line, 'You're gonna need a bigger boat', uttered by Chief Brody (Roy Scheider) when he first saw the shark, was not in the script, but improvised. The film crew had been constantly saying it in their complaints about the support vessel on set.
9. When Spielberg first heard John Williams' score for the film, the famous tuba 'dun-dun', he thought it was a joke. Later he said it was 50% responsible for making the film a smash hit.
10. Jaws has reportedly led to an increase in killings of sharks, much to Spielberg's regret.

(from the Parish Pump)

“Don’t forget the seafarers”

A Christian mission agency has called for the welfare of nearly two million seafarers to be taken into consideration, as the global shipping fleet cuts costs by adopting new technologies.

The Mission to Seafarers (MtS) runs 121 welfare centres in ports around the world, and its people visit more than 40,000 ships each year. Seafarers face dangerous oceans and seas to transport more than 90% of the world’s goods and fuels – making them essential key workers who often go unrecognised by the general population.

MtS Secretary General Peter Rouch has expressed concern that often ships’ crews are overlooked when investment is being made in new technology. He said: *“Conditions aboard ships should not focus solely on minimising costs but also on ensuring the health and well-being of the crew. Humanly, as well as operationally sustainable crew sizes, shift rotations, and shore leave are essential for maintaining the mental and physical health of seafarers. Overworked crew members are more likely to make costly mistakes, which can harm the shipping industry of course, but the more important aspect is to understand seafarers as much more than a simple resource.”*

Mr Rouch explained that while the shipping industry was embracing digital technology and low-carbon fuels, the needs of seafarers often remained secondary. He had heard a politician from a leading maritime nation name the major issues facing the industry over the next ten years – but failing to address the human aspects of seafarers’ working lives.

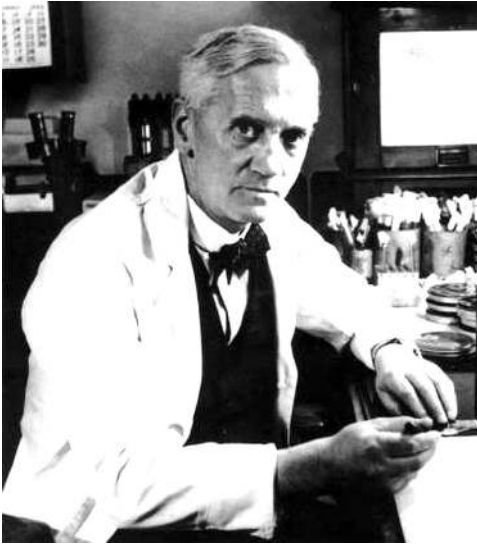
Peter Rouch added: *“At its core, any human activity such as a commercial activity like shipping should serve the flourishing of humanity, and this includes the well-being of seafarers. The Mission to Seafarers, grounded in faith and a vision that values human dignity and human community in and of itself, continues to advocate for seafarers’ well-being and we are glad to partner with others in the shipping industry who share these values.”*

Collectively, there are more than 1.89 million seafarers across the world, made up of many nationalities. They often spend up to nine months at a time far away from their family, friends and loved ones. This can lead to loneliness and serious mental health issues.

(from the Parish Pump)

A tribute to Alexander Fleming

70 years ago, the Scottish bacteriologist Sir Alexander Fleming died. He was joint winner with Ernst Boris Chain and Sir Howard Walter Florey of the 1945 Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine for discovering penicillin.



Fleming was not the tidiest researcher, and his discovery of penicillin came about more or less by accident, as he said himself. He regarded his earlier discovery of lysozyme, a mildly antiseptic enzyme which is present in body fluids, as his best scientific work.

The discovery of penicillin was much more significant in practical terms, but for some years he could not persuade fellow-experts of its importance. In the end Chain and Florey were vital to its success, having discovered a method of turning penicillin into a practical, useful treatment.

Fleming came from a Presbyterian background but was described as “not particularly religious”. He served through World War I in the Royal Army Medical Corps, working in battlefield hospitals in France, where he observed that closed wound treatment often had adverse effects.

He was a member of the rifle club at his medical school, St Mary’s, which led to his joining the research department there.

The discovery of penicillin and its subsequent development as a prescription drug marked the start of modern antibiotics. Fleming was knighted in 1944. In 1999 he was named in *Time Magazine’s* list of the 100 most important people in the 20th century, and three years later as one of the 100 Greatest Britons in a BBC poll. He was also voted third greatest Scot in 2009.

When he heard that penicillin production had been patented in the US in 1944, he was furious that his discovery, given free, should become a profit-making monopoly in another country.

(from the Parish Pump)

**A sign seen on a door in Istanbul reads:
“American dentist. Teeth extracted by a new Methodist”**

Answers to Crossword (see p24)

ACROSS: 1 Also 3 Offering 9 The Magi 10 Rules 11 Soper 12 Help me 14 Isaac
Jacob 17 Scorch 19 In man 22 Loads 23 Inertia 24 Vicinit 25 Belt

DOWN: 1 Artistic 2 Sleep 4 Faith in Christ 5 Enrol 6 Islamic
7 Gasp 8 Fabric 13 Abundant 15 Archaic 16 Jailer 18 Resin
20 Mitre 21 Slav

Finally, some hymns for the not so young:

Precious Lord, Take My Hand, And Help Me Up

Just a Slower Walk with Thee

Nobody Knows the Trouble I Have Seeing

Blessed Insurance

It Is Well With My Soul, But My Knees Hurt



(See p10)

COME AND FILL A CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX FOR A CHILD IN UKRAINE



FREE ADMISSION • FREE REFRESHMENTS & BACON ROLLS ALL DAY

SATURDAY 11th OCTOBER 10am to 4pm

Formby Methodist Church Hall, Elbow Lane

website: www.shooboxexpress.org.uk e-mail: info@shooboxexpress.org.uk

Shoobox Express and its logo are UK Registered Trademarks. All rights reserved. Shoobox Express® is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (1176464).