

Good News

Lancashire West Methodist Circuit

Prayers of the
Day
from
Methodist.org.uk

Loving God, thank you that in your love, forgiveness and compassion you did not abandon all that you have made but came amongst us in your Son, Jesus Christ, to heal, guide and transform. May your life and love truly inform and shape all our hearts and minds for the challenges and the opportunities that lie before us.

For those who struggle, may there be comfort and release; for those who would bring relief, may there be wisdom and strength; and for those who lead, and for us all, may eyes and minds, hearts and hands be open to see, love and respond, as you see, love and respond, for the sake and love of all. Amen.

James Tebbutt,
Cumbria District Chair



To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 8 31-32

LORD, please keep us close to You today. Strengthen us with Your word and guide us in Your truth.

Easter Tops Christmas Every Time!

Many none church goers probably think the highest point of the year for Christians is Christmas. They couldn't be more wrong – it's Easter!

Over the many centuries, the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas has been totally hijacked by frivolity and fun (nothing wrong with these as such), and more importantly commercialism.

The tradition of swapping presents at this festive season has now become a multi-million pound business or billion pound business if you take in the spending all over the world. Christmas presents and parties are publicised months ahead of the season and many families end up in debt afterwards as children's presents become more sophisticated and expensive.

The trouble with Christmas today is that most of the population of the country has forgotten the reason for the season a long time ago. As for Easter, that probably remains a complete mystery to most people.

So for none Christians, it's all about chocolate eggs and bunnies. For followers of Jesus, Easter has the most important significance and meaning. In Paul's letter to the people of the church

at Corinth he puts it as plainly as he could when he wrote that without the resurrection of Jesus, the true celebration of Easter, then our faith is completely meaningless.

If the death of Jesus on a cross had been the final event in his life, there would simply be no Christian church at all today. People claiming to be the saviour or the Messiah had been killed and their followers scattered and that was the end of their movement. But the followers of Jesus had run away when Jesus was made a prisoner and cruelly put to death. However, a number had witnessed his crucifixion and had been heartbroken.

But Jesus had always promised his followers that he would rise again after being killed by the authorities and that is exactly what happened three days after his crucifixion. The first people to witness the resurrection of Jesus when he came to life again were some of his women followers and it was they who rushed to tell the male disciples what had happened.

Right at the core of the Christian faith is the belief that Jesus, the Son of God, died his death on the cross to take away



our sins, taking all the punishment and condemnation on himself. By rising from the dead he also proved that not only had he conquered sin and its guilt, but another great burden the fear of death.

We are told that Jesus was the first fruit of the resurrection, which means that for all who believe in him, they too will be resurrected and will move on to have eternal life with God. In this future life there will be no more pain or suffering, but sheer joy in the presence of God.

When Jesus died on the cross, his disciples had lost all hope and perhaps planned to return to their previous lives before they met him. But when they encountered the risen Lord Jesus on a number of occasions, they could not but tell people what they had witnessed and soon the numbers of followers began to increase.

Of course, the followers of Jesus would not have been able to spread the good news of the resurrection of Jesus if they had not been given the help of the Holy Spirit, but that is another story and another great feast of the Church at Pentecost, the birthday of the church.

For the past 2,000 years Christians throughout the world have prepared themselves to mark the death and resurrection of Jesus through the period of Lent with prayers and fasting. And in the very early days of the Church, people were taught all about the faith during Lent and then were baptised on Easter Sunday.

It is wonderful that commercialism has not taken over Easter and for those who believe we can celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus undistracted by the trappings of this material world in which we live.

Wishing everyone a happy Easter.

He is risen! He is risen indeed hallelujah! Amen

Yours in His service,

Rev Stephen

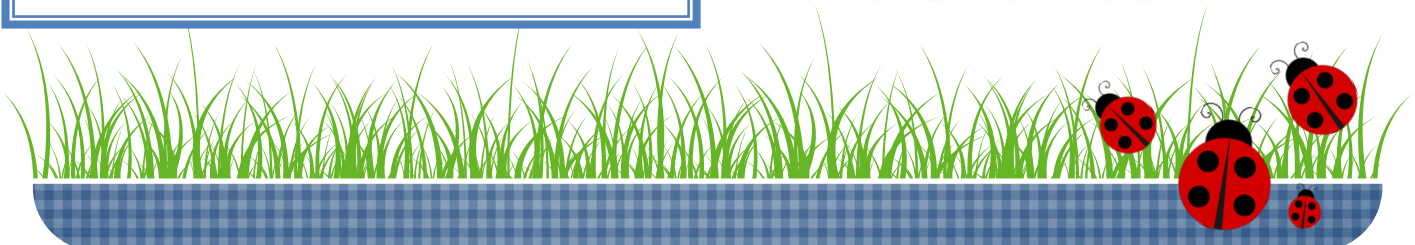
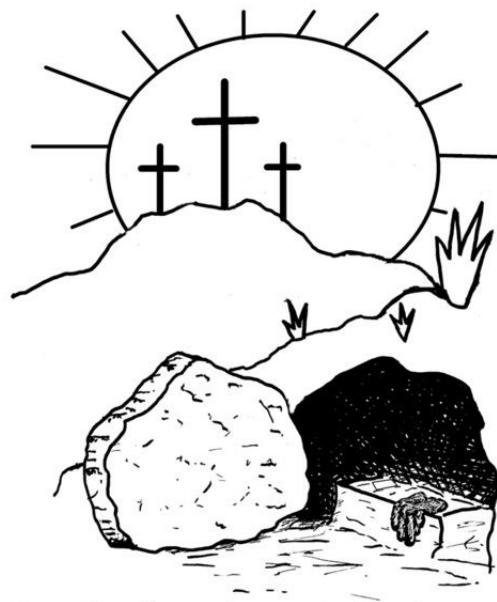
THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

(1 CORINTHIANS 15: 12-14)

But if it is preached that Christ is raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.



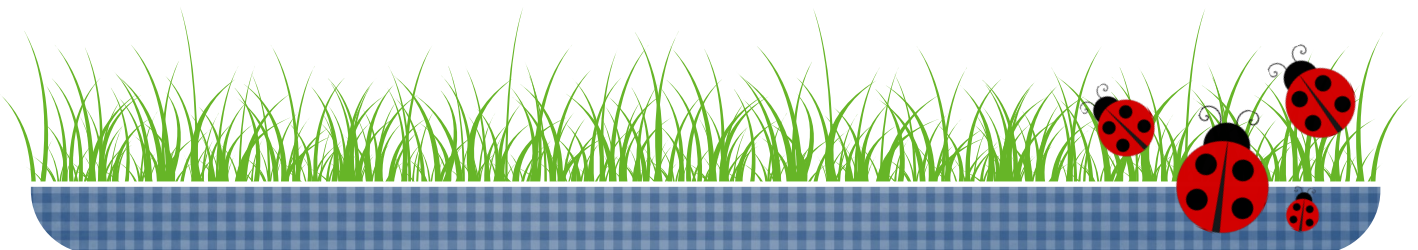
Lent
is for
Loving

be honest
share
smile
tidy up
say thank you
say please
pray for workmate
say grace
offer to help
be thankful
make someone laugh
phone a friend
say grace
offer to help
smile
don't criticise
let someone go first
send a 'thinking of you' text
pray for family
don't criticise
give
count your blessings
pray for a classmate
give
share
send a 'thinking of you' text
don't criticise
let someone go first
tidy up
pray for family
offer to help
say grace
count your blessings

Jesus
says
"I am
with you
always"

Jesus
says
"I am
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Unless you love God and follow his teachings



'Thoughts of Love'

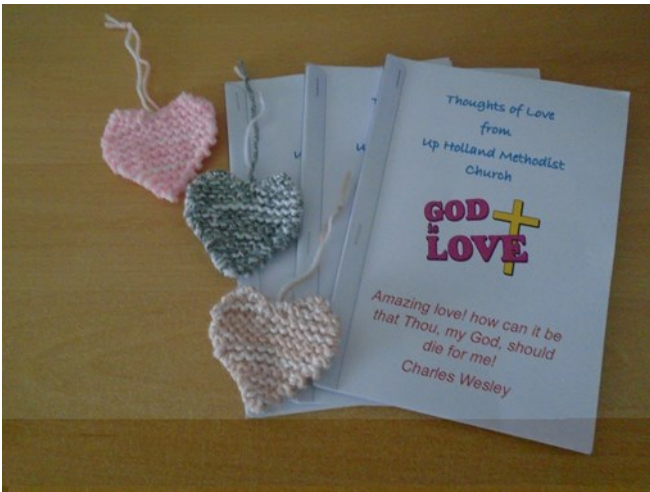
from Up Holland Methodist

In the current lockdown situation, we are unable to meet together and even to see each other.

We are missing our times of worship and fellowship together and many are finding life difficult.

February is considered to be the month of love and 14th February; St Valentine's Day is a special time for many.

I had the idea of asking our congregation for their favourite hymns, poems, readings, quotes etc that we could share with each other to remind us that we are thinking of each other and are all loved by God, and that whatever our situation, we are never alone.



I distributed the booklets over Valentine weekend and included a knitted heart with each one. They have been well received and I've since received orders for more for family & friends.

Linda Wedge

Something For Your Funny Bones

I went out the other day and ate a ploughman's lunch. He wasn't best pleased.

I come from the karate school of cookery.
One chop and I could kill you.

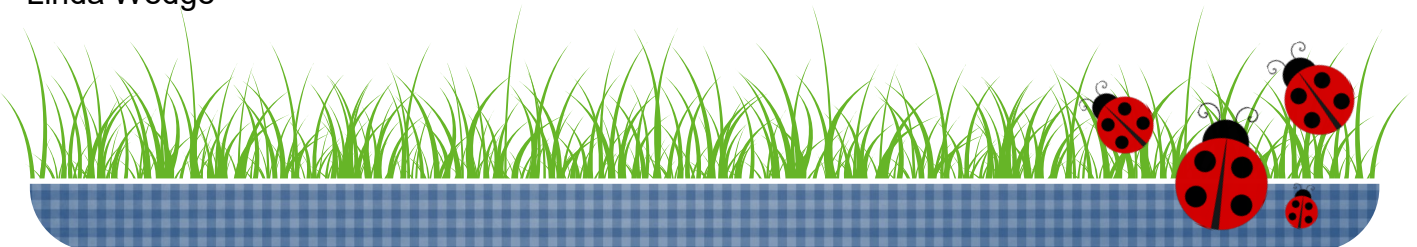
My wife said she wanted something with diamonds for our wedding anniversary, so I bought her a pack of cards.

A set of jump leads go into a pub.
The barman says I will serve you but don't start anything.

A duck goes into the chemists for some lip salve.
The lady says that will be £4.50. The duck says can you put it on my bill.

What do you call a parrot in a raincoat?
Polyunsaturated!

Two cowboys stagger out of the zoo with their clothes ripped in shreds.
One says to the other, "That lion dancing sure ain't as restful as they make out!"



Our buildings may be closed but we are still here for you.

Our ministry team & local preachers continue to produce a weekly Worship At Home Service. The circuit website is currently undergoing a revamp but the worship service can be accessed from either

<https://emmanuelormskirk.org.uk/worship/>

Or

<https://crostonmethodist.org.uk/worship/>

Children & Youth—although we are unable to meet face to face, our activities continue on zoom. Contact Cheryl, our Families & Schools Worker for more details. family.schools@lancashirewest.org.uk

Messy Praise (nursery/primary age)—Every fortnight, on a Sunday morning at 10.00am, we meet for 15 minutes of singing, dancing & story.

Messy Church (nursery/primary age)—Once a month, Saturday afternoons at 4.00pm.

Messy Youth (for youngsters at High School) Every fortnight, on a Sunday evening 6.00pm via zoom.

Bible Study—Several Bible Studies take place across the circuit. Regardless of which church 'hosts' them, everyone is welcome to join. With Zoom, distance isn't a barrier.

Alternate Wednesdays—8.00pm hosted by Croston

Alternate Wednesdays—11.00am and 8.00pm hosted by Croston

Weekly Wednesdays-10.30am-12pm hosted by Burscough

Weekly Thursdays—2pm hosted by Trinity, Skelmersdale

Please contact the circuit office for further details.

NEW FOR 2021!

Messy Vintage

Messy Vintage meets fortnightly via Zoom for over 60's.

The evening group is open to over 50's

Next dates:

**Monday 22nd Mar 2.00pm /
Tues 23rd Mar 7.30pm**

If you wish to join us please contact

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