

SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Service	10.30 am
Evening Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays of the month)	6.30 pm
Holy Communion	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday morning 2nd Sunday evening

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

<b>Monday</b>	10 00 am- 12 noon	Churches Together in Upton Coffee Morning at the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane
	6.15 pm - 8.00 pm	Girls' Brigade
<b>Tuesday</b>	2.30 pm (1st & 3rd weeks)	Friendship Group
	10.00 am (every 2 weeks)	NTG (New Tuesday Group)
<b>Wednesday</b>	9.45 am (1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday)	Upton Amblers Midweek Walk
	6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
<b>Thursday</b>	10.00 am	WD 40's (Women's Discussion Group)
	3.30 pm - 5.30 pm	Messy Church
	(2nd Thursday of the month)	
	7.30 pm (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> weeks)	Thursday Home Group
	1.00 pm (last Thursday of the month)	Food 'n' Fun
<b>Saturday</b>	10.00 am - 12 noon	Church open for coffee
	10.00 am	Upton Amblers (dates vary)

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Saturdays	10.15 am	Church Meeting (dates vary)
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# Upton United Reformed Church

GOD'S LOVE IS FOR ALL

OUR MISSION IS TO SHOW IT, SHARE IT, LIVE IT

Heath Road, Upton, Chester, CH2 1HX

Tele: 01244 373854

Merry Christmas!



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NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2017

JANUARY 2018



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

visit our website at:  
[www.uptonurc.org.uk](http://www.uptonurc.org.uk)

email:

[info@uptonurc.org.uk](mailto:info@uptonurc.org.uk)

## **Message from the Manse**

### **What does Christmas mean to you?**

I don't know about you but sometimes I feel a bit like Ebenezer Scrooge in the lead up to Christmas. I find myself muttering "Bah-humbug".

I love Christmas but am disturbed that Chocolate Filled Advent Calendars and mince pies have been filling the shelves in our supermarkets and shops since the beginning of September!

It's not that I don't like them, because I do - probably a little too much at times! I don't like it because I am concerned about where the messages of peace, hope, joy and love are. What has happened to the goodwill toward men (and women). Has our festive season been completely overtaken by consumer culture? I hope and pray that it hasn't.

Take a few moments to think about someone who may be struggling this year. It might be a neighbour, a relative or someone you have never even spoken to but have seen around the area.

How about this year giving an extra present for someone who you will never even meet?

This year I am not buying the usual Fair Trade chocolate filled advent calendar, instead I am making a "reverse

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## CHURCH ROTAS

### FLOWERS

December	3	Ivison Family
	10	Festival of Angels
	17	Festival of Angels
	24	Flower Box
	31	Flower Box
January	7	Eleanor & Stan Hornsby
	14	Rose Harrison
	21	Brenda Bentley
	28	Dorothy Davies

### CAR FERRY

December	3	Phil Mason
	10	Keith Reading
	17	Niall Ormerod
	24	John Hainsworth
	31	Phil Mason
January	7	Keith Reading
	14	Niall Ormerod
	21	John Hainsworth
	28	Phil Mason

### SUNDAY MORNING TEA / COFFEE

December	3	Brian Stephenson
	10	Debbie & Phil Mason
	17	beryl & Jim Frost
	24	Violet Brickland & Robin Hodgkins
	31	Lesley & Noel Parry

advent calendar" to donate to the Foodbank.

Instead of opening a window and eating a chocolate, I will instead each day put an item of food in a box to donate to our local food bank. As food banks need supplies well before Christmas, I'll actually start our reverse advent calendar in November. This means I can hand everything over in mid-December. My box will include not simply the staples of pasta, baked beans and soup but also some chocolate, seasonal items and toiletries.

Megan and I are incredibly lucky to have food, home and friends around us but there have been times, in the past, when we have struggled but due to the generosity of others we have never had to go without. Perhaps in some tiny way we can, pay this goodness forward and help make Christmas a time of happiness and love for others.

Being generous doesn't have to break the bank, it just needs a heart big enough to want to share and spread love.

Jesus Christ came into the world to show us all how God wants us to live - in peace, in community, supporting and loving our neighbours. If we share, particularly compassion, just think how much brighter Christmas and the future could be for everyone.

Wishing you all a blessed, peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year.

### **Can you help? Newsletter distribution from April 2018**

In discussion with Elders and the Pastoral Care Team it has been agreed that from April, Elders will no longer be required to personally deliver church Newsletters. This change is to allow Elders to focus on individuals on their pastoral list who have greater pastoral needs.

If you don't need a home visit, you may like to consider seeing your Elder at church or receive a phone call. Some Elders may decide to continue delivering personally but this is a decision only they can make. Your Elder will discuss this directly with you in the near future.

Also, if you regularly attend church and are able to collect your own Newsletter I would encourage you to do so. I would also like to ask that, when possible, you take Newsletters for anyone who lives close to you, or you are seeing in the next week that isn't at church when the Newsletter is ready for collect.

I appreciate this is a very different way of doing things but we are facing ever increasing calls on our time but believe that if we can work together in getting the Newsletter distributed, the Elders will be freed up to focus on issues that really do require their attention.

Ruth

Sun	21	For our Local Church Leaders.
Mon	22	For the Hospice of the Good Shepherd.
Tues	23	For the homeless.
Wed	24	Give thanks for the things that give you joy.
Thurs	25	For those struggling in the aftermath of natural disasters.
Fri	26	For those who maintain our church buildings and grounds.
Sat	27	Jesus says, "Come to me and I will give you rest."
Sun	28	Pray for yourself, that your faith will grow.
Mon	29	For families separated by conflict.
Tues	30	For those training guide dogs and Dogs for the disabled.
Wed	31	Give thanks for answers to prayer.

We pray for the church family on Carole Mellor's Pastoral List:

John Bebbington  
Christine Beeston  
Jane Morris  
Debbie & Niall Ormerod  
Rachel Quick  
Hazel & Dave Roberts

## PRAYER DIARY – JANUARY 2018



Mon	1	God's Love is for all, Let's show it, Share it, Live it.
Tues	2	For those starting the New year with little hope.
Wed	3	Thank you Lord for families and friendships.
Thurs	4	For the opportunity to be a blessing to someone today
Fri	5	For Street Pastors and their ministry on the streets of Chester.
Sat	6	For those who provide pastoral support in our congregation.
Sun	7	make me a channel of your peace.
Mon	8	For our local schools.
Tues	9	For those who commit their lives to serving others.
Wed	10	For the Food Bank.
Thurs	11	For those trapped in slavery.
Fri	12	For those seeking employment.
Sat	13	For the Church Meeting this morning.
Sun	14	Thank you Lord for the privilege of being able to worship freely.
Mon	15	For Macmillan nurses.
Tues	16	For farmers and fishermen.
Wed	17	For those who have lost their faith.
Thurs	18	For those struggling with addiction.
Fri	19	For new opportunities to strengthen the church's relationship with the local community.
Sat	20	For the congregation at Vicars Cross URC

## PEOPLE NEWS

- It is with sadness that we have to record the death of Cynthia Bergstrand Monday, 6 November. We send our prayers and sympathy to Clive, Gillian and Colin at this sad time.
- We also record with great sadness the death of Bob Astley on Thursday, 9 November and we send our love and prayers to all his family. Bob's funeral will be on Monday, 4 December, 1.20pm at the Crematorium for family only followed by a Service of Thanksgiving here in church at 2.00 pm to which all are welcome.
- Many congratulations to Violet Brickland who celebrates an 'O' birthday on 15 December.
- Please pray for anyone you know who is not well at the moment, or awaiting hospital results

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the lovely church flowers I received and thank you especially, for all your love and prayers, which I feel sure have added greatly to my medical care. I am feeling so much better now, more like my "old self", so hope we will soon be contributing to

**CHURCH DIARY for DECEMBER 2017**

<b><u>DAY</u></b>	<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TIME</u></b>	<b><u>SERVICE / MEETING</u></b>
Sat	2	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
<b>SUN</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>CHURCH ANNIVERSARY COMMUNION SERVICE led by Revd Kevin Watson (Joint Moderator of the General Assembly) followed by a Faith Lunch in the Church Hall</b>
		<b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>SUNDAY AT SIX at Vicars Cross URC with representatives from Christian Aid</b>
Mon	4	10.00 am	CTU Coffee Morning at the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane
		6.15 pm	Girls' Brigade
Tues	5	2.30 pm	Friendship Group Christmas Party
Wed	6	9.45 am	Upton Amblers Midweek Walk - Leader Celia Jones at Frodsham
		6.45 pm	Ecumenical Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
Thurs	7	12 noon	WD 40's Christmas Lunch
		7.30 pm	Thursday Home Group
Sat	9	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
<b>SUN</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS GIFT SERVICE led by Ms Sheila Dunbar. Your gifts this year will be going to Save the Family</b>
		<b>6.30 pm</b>	<b>EVENING COMMUNION SERVICE led by Revd Ruth Wilson</b>
Mon	11	10.00 am	CTU Coffee Morning at the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane
		6.15 pm	Girls' Brigade
Tues	12	10.00 am	NTG - Christmas Love Feast- Communion

<b><u>DAY</u></b>	<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TIME</u></b>	<b><u>SERVICE / MEETING</u></b>
		<b>6.30 pm</b>	<b>EVENING SERVICE in Room 3 led by Revd Ruth Wilson</b>
Mon	15	10.00 am	CTU Coffee Morning at the Pavilion
		6.15 pm	Girls' Brigade
Tues	16	2.30 pm	Friendship Group New Year Tea & Chat
Wed	17	6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
Thurs	18	10.00 am	WD 40's
		7.30 pm	Thursday Home Group
Sat	20	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
<b>SUN</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>MORNING SERVICE led by Revd Ruth Wilson</b>
		<b>6.30 pm</b>	<b>EVENING SERVICE at Caldly Valley</b>
Mon	22	10.00 am	CTU Coffee Morning at the Pavilion
		6.15 pm	Girls' Brigade
Tues	23	10.00 am	NTG
Wed	24	6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
		7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting
Thurs	25	10.00 am	WD 40's
		7.30 pm	Thursday Home Group
Sat	27	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
<b>SUN</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>MORNING SERVICE led by Revd Ruth Wilson</b>
		<b>6.30 pm</b>	<b>EVENING SERVICE at Caldly Valley</b>

## CHURCH DIARY for JANUARY 2018

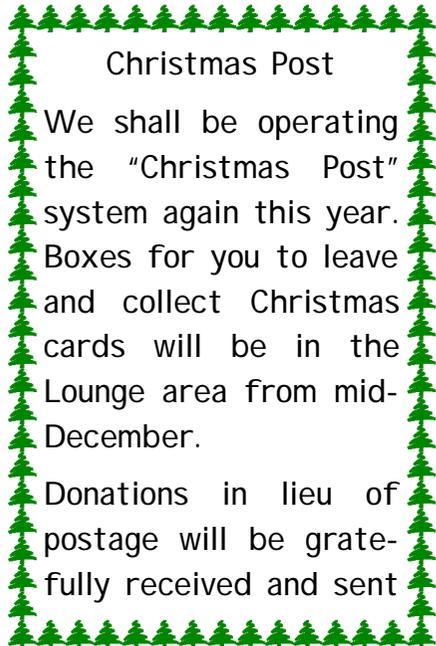
<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>SERVICE / MEETING</u>
Wed	3	9.45 am	Upton Amblers Midweek Walk
		6.45 pm	Ecumenical Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
Thurs	4	10.00 am	WD 40's Planning Meeting
Sat	6	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
		7.30 pm	Upton Amblers New Year Party
<b>SUN</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>MORNING COMMUNION SERVICE</b> <b>led by Revd Ruth Wilson</b>
		<b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>SUNDAY at SIX at Vicars Cross URC</b>
Mon	8	10.00 am	CTU Coffee Morning at the Pavilion
		6.15 pm	Girls' Brigade
Tues	9	10.00 am	NTG
Wed	10	6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
		7.30 pm	Churches Together in Upton Committee Meeting
Thurs	11	10.00 am	WD 40's
		3.30 pm	Messy Church
Sat	13	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
		10.00 am	Upton Amblers - Linear route along the River Dee (Leaders Joan & George Coward)
		10.15 am	Church Meeting
<b>SUN</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>MORNING SERVICE led by</b> <b>Mr Ken Peters</b>

		6.30 pm	Celebration of Food & Stories
		7.45 pm	Carol Singing at Wealstone Nursing Home
			Carol Singing at Mallard Court
<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>SERVICE / MEETING</u>
Wed	13	2.15 pm	Carol Singing at Orchard Manor
		6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
Thurs	14	10.00 am	WD 40's - Christmas Music
		3.30 pm	Messy Church - 'A Babe is Born'
Sat	16	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
		10.00 am	Upton Amblers - Whitegate Way Leader - Phil Jones
<b>SUN</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>MORNING SERVICE led by Revd</b> <b>Ruth Wilson</b>
		<b>6.30 pm</b>	<b>EVENING SERVICE at Caldly Valley</b>
Mon	18	10.00 am	CTU Coffee and Carol Singing at the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane
Tues	19	2.30 pm	Friendship Group Carol Service
Wed	20	6.45 pm	Prayer & Praise in the Vestry
Sat	23	10.00 am	Church open for coffee
		4.00 pm -	Café Style Communion Service with meal and carols around the Christmas Tree
<b>SUN</b>		<b>24 10.30 am</b>	<b>SERVICE</b> <b>FOR CHRISTMAS EVE</b>
<b>Ken</b>			<b>led by Mr</b> <b>Peters</b>
		<b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>CAROLS BY</b> <b>CANDLELIGHT</b> <b>at Vicars Cross URC</b>
			<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>

Our Christmas Gift Service  
is on

Sunday, 10 December  
when we will be collecting  
gifts for Save the Family.

If you wrap your present,  
please indicate who it is  
suitable for as this really



### Christmas Post

We shall be operating  
the "Christmas Post"  
system again this year.

Boxes for you to leave  
and collect Christmas  
cards will be in the  
Lounge area from mid-  
December.

Donations in lieu of  
postage will be grate-  
fully received and sent

### CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING

in aid of The Hospice of  
the Good Shepherd Upton  
Support Group

Saturday, 2 December  
10.00 - 11.30 am

Upton Community Hall,  
Demage Lane.

Various stalls including  
chocolate tombola and  
raffle

admission £2.00  
including tea/coffee and  
mince pie

### CHURCHES TOGETHER IN UPTON

#### **New Year's Eve Service**

Holy Ascension Church

Sunday, 31 December

at 4.30 pm

Coffee, mince pies and  
biscuits will be served after  
the service

contributor and always worth tuning in for. This interview  
leaves us knowing him better and respecting him more deeply  
as a fellow Christian speaking in Christ's name.

'Discipleship, the Good Question' (P21), a topic this month  
gives us, as usual, four considered views and leads into the  
now URC campaign called 'Walking the Way - living the life of  
Jesus today' which you will have heard of from Rev Ruth in  
the November Newsletter.



### Churches Together in Upton

Wealstone Nursing Home  
6.30 pm Tuesday, 12 December

Mallard Court  
7.45 pm Tuesday, 12 December

Orchard Manor  
2.15 pm Wednesday, 13 December

Pavilion, Wealstone Lane

## Reflections on 'Reform' (October)

### Parable or Editorial?

Stephen Tomkins, the Editor, has the journalist's knack of hitting the bullseye in a few works. His tale from the Greenbelt Festival about the inclusive about the inclusive welcome extended to a, probably autistic, young guitarist by a visiting big name music group, reminds us that it's fine to welcome people like us, but much more significant to welcome those who might pose us a challenge! (Page 4).

In 'News', we learn of a campaign to persuade Parliament to move to end 'holiday hunger', a recurrent crisis for poorer families when free school meals dry up in the holidays. This is one the Holiday Fun Days organised by Terri and Ruth have targeted in Upton - and is an ongoing concern. (P5).

Charlottesville and while supremacist problems (P9), peace, protests at the September Arms Fair (P7) and extreme flooding (P5) all involved Christian responses.

John Bell of the Iona Community, is subject of the 'Reform Interview'. He has led us here and may be familiar on a 'Thought for the day' (Radio 4 at 7.45 am daily). A regular

## **A BROADER VISION ?**

Church Meeting in September expressed concern that the Newsletter contains very little from or about the wider Church. I have since found that only eight people from Upton subscribe to 'Reform' our main URC source for wider church news.

I have subscribed for many years, occasionally written for 'Reform' and served on the Editorial Committee some years' ago. I'm also aware that this church has thrived best when we have been involved with the wider church - for example, Saving to Share grew out of our response to a national youth challenge to live more simply and share the savings. Also, our millennium buildings modernisation leaned heavily on help from the wider URC and, of course, our ministry is entirely underpinned nationally.

'Reform' is very good value despite falling subscription numbers and some churches find its content good for discussion group stimulation. The October issue offers at least eight items of direct interest to this church and prompts me to offer 'Reflections on Reform' which I hope will broaden our newsletter each month.

'Reflections' will succeed if it prompts response from you in your faith, in the Newsletter or in your subscribing to 'Reform'. I would be glad of your comments or any enquiries about 'Reform'.

**PRAYER DIARY – DECEMBER 2017**



- Fri 1 Help us Lord to prepare ourselves for your son's birth.
- Sat 2 Give thanks for all who are preparing for our 'Festival of Angels' weekend.
- SUN 3 On our Church Anniversary we give thanks for the lives of all who have gone before us.**
- Mon 4 For Churches Together in Upton and there work by the committee on behalf of the 3 churches.
- Tues 5 For Animal Rescue Centres.
- Wed 6 The those facing redundancy.
- Thurs 7 The people still trying to rebuild their lives after the recent hurricanes.
- Fri 8 Anyone living with depression.
- Sat 9 For the work of Wateraid.
- Sun 10 For our Gift Service and the work of Save the Family
- Mon 11 The Emergency services.
- Tues 12 For the carol singing at Wealstone, Mallard Court and Orchard Manor.
- Wed 13 For the congregations of the three churches who make up Churches Together in Upton.
- Thurs 14 For our Messy Church.
- Fri 15 Those worried about debt.
- Sat 16 For those suffering from dementia and their families.
- Sun 17 For Ruth as she leads our service this morning and our friends at Caldly Valley.
- Mon 18 For the bereaved.
- Tues 19 For the work of Christian Aid.



**MESSY CHURCH**

Our next Messy Church is on

Thursday, 14 December  
3.30 pm - 5.30 pm

The theme this month is

'An Angel Appeared'

How about volunteering to be a helper? If you are interested please have a word with Terri, Christine or Marilyn or you could even come along one afternoon, have a look at what we do and then decide.

Our first Messy Church in 2018 is on Thursday, 11 January

**CHURCH MEETINGS**

At a recent Church Meeting it was agreed that in future the meetings will take place on Saturday mornings at 10.15 am. Here are the dates for 2018:

- January 13
- March 17
- May 12
- July 14 **AGM**
- September 8
- November 3

## Church Anniversary

3 DECEMBER 2017

### BRING AND SHARE LUNCH

Following the morning service

Bring along a plate of food – savoury or sweet to share as part of a buffet lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

EVERYONE WELCOME

St Columba's Plas Newton Lane CH2 1SA

### READINGS FOR ADVENT 2017

A series of short talks and discussions led by David Savage on the Advent Sunday readings for the year of Mark

A warm welcome is extended to all interested friends and parishioners

Tues 28 <sup>nd</sup> November	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday: Stay Awake!
Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> December	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday: Make his paths straight!
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> December	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday: There stands among you
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> December	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday: Listen, you are to ...

7.30 p.m.

IONA CHAPEL  
ALL WELCOME

Bring a Bible and/or Sunday Missal  
More information from David Savage 01244 380626

Wed	20	Pray for all who are along this Christmas.
Thurs	21	People travelling to see family and friends - grant them a safe journey.
Fri	22	As we prepare for our Christmas services, pray that everyone will know the real meaning of Christmas.
Sat	23	For our Café Style Community Holiday Club.
Sun	24	'How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given'
Mon	25	'Lo, Lord we greet Him, born this happy morning'
Tues	26	Thank you, God, for our family and friends.
Wed	27	For the organisations who use our premises.
Thurs	28	For Terri, our Children & Family Worker.
Fri	29	For the Marie Curie nurses.
Sat	30	For peace in the world.
Sun	31	For all that has been and what is to come, we thank you Lord.

We pray for the church family on Christine Beeston's  
Pastoral List:

Beryl & Jim Frost  
Marjorie Kemp

Catherine Hinchcliffe  
Brenda Leece



COME LET US ADORE HIM

### **Cynthia Bergstrand**

Cynthia was a member of our church for many years. Our Savings to Share group was started by Walter and Cynthia and she was Chair for many years. She was very involved with the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, in fact a member of their Support Group and, at her funeral, donations in her memory went to go to the Hospice.

She and Walter lived in Cross Green before moving to Mallard Court but as her health deteriorated, a decision was taken for her to move into a care home.

Illness prevented her from attending church regularly but it was lovely to see her when she was able to come.

So rest in peace Cynthia, reunited forever with Walter.

had many helpers during her time as leader, and it is impossible to name them all, but very many thanks are due to every one of them.

However, special thanks are due to Pat Griffiths, Brenda Bentley and Anne Sykes, who have tried their hardest to help Lesley keep the group going.

Sadly, partly because of lack of volunteers, but mainly because circumstances have changed so much, and there are so many activities available now, they have recently decided that the numbers attending do not justify continuing. We should all

### UPTON AMBLERS

#### Wednesday Midweek Walks

Meet in the church car park at 9.45 am

2017

December 6th - Leader Celia Jones (Frodsham)

2018

January 3rd

Saturday, 6th January - New Year Party at 7.30 pm

#### Saturday Walks

Meet in the church car park at 10.00 am

2017

December 16th - Leader Phil Jones (Whitegate Way)

## TODDLERS GROUP

In early 1976, when Philip, David and I had only just moved to Upton, I asked at the Baby Clinic (held in Weston Grove in those days) how I could meet other mums and babies as I literally only knew one other family in Upton. I was directed to the Mother and Toddler Group at Upton URC, as being the best place by far. At that time it was run by Ruth Thornton and I soon felt very welcome. Of course, very quickly I had a home visit from Stephen Thornton, and was roped in to church life before I could blink.

In that era children did not start Playgroup until they were 3 and those early years could be quite lonely and isolated for many young families, so the Mother and Toddler group was a lifeline, and provided a very valuable resource for the community. I don't know when it was actually started, but until the recent closure, it has consistently provided this outreach for over 40 years.

When the Thorntons moved to the Lakes, Ann Gardner and I took over, and it continued to flourish. Later Vicky Oldershaw and Sandra Buttery gave me great support and brought with them many new ideas. We had 40 plus families very frequently and organised Xmas parties and outings, including on one memorable occasion taking a full coach load for a day out at Tatton Park.

However the most important event at this time was the Parry family moving to Upton, and ever since then Lesley has been THE welcoming, caring face of Upton URC for many, many families in our community. She has very rarely missed being there on a Wednesday afternoon, and is one of the main reasons that the group has continued so long. Of course she has

## EVENING SERVICES

For several years we have held evening services on the 2nd and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month, the service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month including communion. On the 1st Sunday of each month we have joined Vicars Cross for their Sunday at 6.00 pm service and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month we have joined with Caldly Valley (United Methodist and URC). When there has been a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in each month we have held a joint service with Holy Ascension and St.Columba's in rotation at our different places of worship.

This has worked well, but sadly the numbers attending our evening services has gradually declined, the numbers attending on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday regularly falling below a dozen and sometimes down towards half a dozen, some of whom will have already attended in the morning, but are on duty to enable the service to take place. As Pulpit Supply Secretary I have the duty to arrange preachers for the services and it is becoming increasingly problematic to invite anyone, particularly from another church, to prepare a service which means devoting a considerable time which could be used in other service within the church.

Our November Church Meeting agreed that from January 2018 we should discontinue our evening service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. On our calendar we will list the 6.30pm evening service at Caldly Valley which I think is the only regular evening service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month within the URC or Chester Methodist churches. If you would like transport to Caldly Valley (or to Vicars Cross) please contact me.

We also agreed that on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month the service would include communion on alternate months (February, April, etc). On the other months the service would usually take place in Room 3 and could take different forms according to whoever is leading the service. It is important that we are willing to try different patterns of worship and ones perhaps more suitable to smaller numbers (if the numbers grow, we can always move into the sanctuary). Please give this a try. Let us have suggestions and feedback. The services are for you.

Our joint services with St.Columba's and Holy Ascension will continue on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month. The numbers are holding up and it is encouraging for us to meet together to share worship, not just for our own members, but as a witness to our community that our denominational labels are not the most important thing. We are one body in Christ.

## Wacky Wednesday Holiday Club



Jeremiah 29:7 says.....

“Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you will prosper.”

Just as bridges and towns go together, churches and communities are linked. God’s people are connected to the town and the city, the community and the world.

In recent months our church has reached out and made a big contribution to the local community by organising an exciting holiday club called ‘Wacky Wednesday.’ It’s the brainchild of our ‘Children and Family Worker’ Terri Ann Dudley and our minister Ruth. The holiday club was held on a Wednesday between noon and 3pm during school holiday time. We also had the additional support of a team of volunteers from our church and other churches in Chester. It provided entertainment and a meal in a safe environment giving the church an ideal opportunity to welcome families to participate in a creative experience, have fun and learn new skills, as well as make new friends. And also demonstrate just what a church community can be about. So, if our church is to try and achieve its aim of community outreach then the ‘Holiday Club’ is a positive step forward.

One of Terri’s aims in her work is, and I quote “...for people to realise that as a church we are an ‘open book,’ ready to welcome those around us and support our community at every opportunity. I want families to feel welcomed as they come through the door of God’s house and be the person He intended them to be.”

Bob .....

Bob was happy and well cared for in Wealstone. His activity had been reducing with failing eye sight, but a constant stream of visitors kept him in touch with the family, church and music. He was his usual bright, cheerful self when I left him for a birding trip to Cumbria. A week later he had passed on after a brief stay in the Countess of Chester Hospital.

The Astley family was a mainstay of the church for many years especially in music and drama. The children grew up and moved on and granny, a widely loved character, passed away approaching 100 years in age.

Bob survived Edna, playing the organ here until failing eye sight intervened and he moved to Wealstone.

We give thanks for a good life well lived and we will miss him greatly.

God Bless Old Friend.

Brian Rose