

“Methodist and United Reformed Church News in Darwen”

Working together to learn, live, love and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

August and September 2025

CENTRAL

BRIGHT STREET

SPRING VALE

TRINITY

TOCKHOLES

METHODIST MINISTER

URC MINISTER

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URC Churches – Central URC, Tockholes URC and Trinity URC/Methodist
For baptisms, marriages and funerals and other enquiries please contact the appropriate church secretary.

Central Website: www.centralurcdarwen.org.uk

Methodist Website: www.darwenmethodists.co.uk

Our magazine is now produced in this format for email and printing purposes. If anyone does not receive a copy or knows of someone who hasn't received a copy, please contact Liz Rutherford 07505 052133 or email lizrutherford@live.co.uk

Dear friends,

As summer moves on and we begin to look toward autumn, I want to take a moment to give thanks for all that has been happening across our churches in East Lancashire Missional Partnership, and to share a word of encouragement as we look ahead.

Firstly, we rejoice in the wonderful news that we have collectively welcomed a new minister: Reverend Nomaqhawe Marambi to work alongside us. This is a genuine answer to prayer and a sign that God continues to lead and provide. We look forward to all that this new chapter will bring for our shared ministry.

At the same time, we continue as a missional partnership to brainstorm and explore the possibility of recruiting for the role of Family Worker, someone who can help us nurture and support the children and families in our communities. Please keep this in your prayers.

Most of our churches have been busy and faithful in ministry. Whether through Messy Church, Eco Church, Warm Hubs, or countless acts of kindness and hospitality, the love of Christ is being made visible in beautiful and practical ways. Thank you to everyone who is giving their time, energy, and hearts to these ministries.

In July, I had the privilege of attending the URC 2025 General Assembly. It was uplifting to witness churches being recognised for the impact they are making in their communities. We were also introduced to the 2025-2026 General Assembly Moderator, Catriona Wheeler who was inducted into office. Another high point of the General Assembly was the election of the Revd Neil Thorogood as GA Moderator for 2026–2027, a reminder of the strength and hope that runs through our wider church family.

As we head into August and September, whether you are taking time to rest or beginning to plan for the autumn, I encourage you to remain hopeful and prayerful. God is at work, often in quiet ways, but always faithfully. God is extremely interested in what we see through our “spiritual eyes.” If we have a vision for victory in our lives, we can rise to a new level. But if our gaze is on the ground instead of on the possibilities, we risk moving in the wrong direction and missing all the wonderful things God wants to do in and through us. Let us focus our minds for success. May we continually think positive thoughts of victory, of abundance, of favour, of hope. Let us choose to live with an attitude that expects good things to happen to us. Start your day with favour and set your mind in the right direction, then go out expecting the favour of God. With God you have good things coming. May the Holy Spirit refill you and show you all the good things God has in store for you. Sow seeds of love, truth, and service, trusting that in God’s time, they will bear fruit.

With every blessing,

Your friend and Minister, Revd Gilbert

CENTRAL (Janet Goodship)

In June, we had the pleasure of welcoming Lorraine Breeze to our pulpit for the first time. Lorraine gave us all paper 'feathers' on which to write our wishes for the church, something which made us all think about the future direction of Central. Barbara had the really difficult task of preaching about the Holy Trinity, such a difficult subject for anyone, but she, as always, had interesting and thought-provoking words to say about it.

Lisa and Stephen Norcross from Kairos took part in a service led by John East. This was in refugee week, in June. Lisa explained how Kairos had begun, which was to address the housing needs of those whose asylum seeker applications were pending or had been turned down, which left them with literally nowhere to go. It was a fascinating talk; thank you Lisa and John. Unfortunately the video which Lisa provided failed to work during the service, but if anyone wants to watch it at home the link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cD8ga8cxZO8&t=1s>.

On Sunday 29th June our church was full as we welcomed Rev Noma Marambi who had come to preach 'with a view' to joining our Missional Partnership. It was so lovely to welcome friends from the other Blackburn and Darwen churches; judging by the volume of chatter both before and after the service many people were taking advantage of the opportunity to greet old friends and to make new ones. The singing nearly raised the roof! After the service the members of all churches were asked to vote on whether to invite Rev Noma to the partnership. Happily, a large proportion of church members voted in favour and the Rev Noma accepted. We look forward to welcoming her in the near future.

John, Liz, Alizon, Margaret B, Janet and Rev Gilbert had the pleasure of welcoming Year Four children from St Barnabas CE school to the church midweek. The pupils had come as part of their RE lessons. John explained what the URC is and pointed out various religious artefacts to the children. Rev Gilbert told the children where he had come from and how his name is pronounced differently in other countries. Alizon demonstrated the organ for them and they sang hymns and then had the chance to explore the church. The children were without exception very well behaved and a pleasure to welcome to our church.

Last month we heard of the tragic death of Patrick Park, a former member of our church who worshipped with us for many years. Our hearts go out to his family and friends.

Everyone at church was greatly saddened to learn of the death of David Yates, husband to Jean and brother of Alizon. David had been involved with Duckworth Street/Central for most of his life and had always played a big part in it, whether as a strong choir member, building committee member, gardener, and so many other roles. He was such a lovely person – on a personal level I have known him since I was twelve years old and can never recall seeing him as anything but cheerful, pleasant and helpful. He is missed so much. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and everyone who knew him.

Janet Goodship

Central Church AGM Wednesday 17th September 7 pm

Please send annual reports and items for agenda to Liz by 3rd September
lizrutherford@live.co.uk

Birthday Celebrations: Alizon, Kathleen, Michael (90), Janice, Josh, Harry, Debbie, Dorothy, Liz, Eileen, Ann Halliwell, Siavash, Heather's husband's birthday.

Wedding Anniversaries: Dorothy and Terry, Doris and Raymond (67 years), Nancy and John, Janice and Trevor, Kathryn and Dave.

Prayers - Each week in church we continue to mention people by name in need of our prayers.

Congratulations Jo-Anna graduated at Manchester University and is now a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf at Master's level, a Postgraduate Diploma.

Beryl Shaw's granddaughter Zoe graduated with a 1st Class Honours in Theology and Religion, also at Manchester.

Coffee Bar Rota

August 3rd	Janice Cowell, Elsa Peacock
August 10th	Dorothy Yates, Margaret Burns
August 17th	Margaret East, Liz Staffa
August 24th	Beryl Shaw, Pauleen Henson
August 31st	Barbara Duxbury, Liz Rutherford
September 7th	Janice Cowell, Elsa Peacock
September 14th	Dorothy Yates, Margaret Burns
September 21st	Margaret East, Liz Staffa
September 28th	Barbara Duxbury, Liz Rutherford

Central Fellowship – resumes in October

Bible Study 10 am – 11th September

Flower Rota

August 3rd	'In Memory of Mum and Dad ' Karen Narramore
August 10th	'In Memory of Diana (Wignall)' Janice Cowell
August 17th	'In Memory' Kathleen Knowles
August 24th	Goodship family memories
August 31st	'In Memory of Mary Hughes and Bill Mellish' Joyce and family
Sept 7th	Dorothy and Kevin Yates
Sept 14th	'In Memory of loved ones' Beryl Slater
Sept 21st	Flower Fund
Sept 28th	'Memories of Belgrave' Ken Pickering

Margaret Oldham

Communion Rota

August - Ade or Adebola (bread), Janet Goodship
September – Pauline Henson (bread), Margaret Oldham

Vestry Duty – August – Ade, September - Adebola

The DARE Global Tea Extravaganza kicked off to a wonderful start with songs from Mick, Paul, Patrick and some Year 4 pupils from St Barnabas Primary School, Darwen, who had come as part of a visit. Everyone enjoyed the different teas and delicious snacks from 13 different countries. So much work had gone into making it a success as part of the lineup of activities across the asylum/refugee communities in Blackburn & Darwen to celebrate Refugee Week: Community as a Superpower. A big thank you to everyone.



31 Y4 children attended from St Barnabas C of E School on Wednesday 9th July as part of the schools interfaith curriculum. Children toured the church, sang hymns with the help of Alizon and Janet, prayed with our minister Gilbert and learnt about our church. We had a mock baptism and marriage and demonstrated the meaning of communion.



TRINITY FELLOWSHIP NEWS (Judith Atkinson)

It has been a quiet time at Trinity as we approach the summer holidays. We have been praying over the past few weeks for Mary, who has been in hospital after falling in her garden. While she is now back at home, she is finding things difficult at the moment. We hope things get easier for her as she gets used to being back home. Also in our prayers at this time is Helen, who has recently had two procedures on her eye. We hope she is back to full fitness again soon! In our prayers we have also remembered Frank's next door neighbour, and Helen's friend Linda, whose partner has passed away. As usual, we continue to pray for Sheila, Lilian and Malcolm, and Colin and Terry.

We wished Frank a happy birthday at the beginning of July, but otherwise it has been a quiet time for birthdays.

TOCKHOLES URC (Ann Treadwell)

Yet again we have been blessed with sunny weather, fascinating sermons and delightful music over the months of June and July.

At the beginning of June, David Foster preached on unity, saying that God, the heavenly form, is in unity with Jesus, the human form. Also, that unity should be shown in our relationships with other Christians. We also prayed for the unity of churches throughout the world.

At Pentecost, with Barbara Duxbury, we were urged to move towards a feeling of love, sharing each other's joys and problems, just as the wind and tongues of fire moved those present at Pentecost to do so. Barbara was also in sympathy with how hard it is to talk to others about the wonderful news of Christianity even though we are asked to do this in the epistle.

Next week, the atmosphere was positively electric when Natalia Litnevski invited us to share in the discussion on electricity and most of us learned a few fascinating facts. Natalia then related the analogy of electricity to our way of thinking about the Old and New Testaments saying that Jesus is like the insulation around electric cables as he has paid for our sins on the cross himself whereas sometimes the God of the Old Testament could seem harsh and judgmental in his punishment of the Israeli people. Natalia brightened up the church with her conviction and enthusiasm.

Everyone I spoke to agreed that the 'Apples of Gold' service and concert was one of the most spiritually refreshing and musically beautiful events of our year so far. Our church was full of visitors and villagers, making this a truly wonderful event.

The Chapel Anniversary (363 years old) was conducted by John East. I was told it was splendid with a good turnout. Terry Donnelly charmed everybody with his rich singing, accompanied by Sarah on the organ. John's sermon subject was 'Free to be Kind' because Jesus gives us this freedom. I was unable to attend because of our son's wedding in Sweden where I felt the blessings of the Chapel flying over with me, especially when I read Corinthians 13 as part of the ceremony. Because of this, Tansy showed me excellent photos of this event.

The following week, John preached on 'Growing Community' which linked well with this theme. Mal Breeze led the next service, which included Holy Communion, which, I am told, was another fascinating sermon and it was also lovely to have his wife in Chapel.

We look forward to August and September which includes the popular Harvest Festival, which promises to be a joyous and well-attended service.

Date	Preacher	Flowers
3 rd August.	Rev Gilbert Esambe	Vacant
10 th August	David Foster	Christine Smith
17 th August	Barbara Duxbury	Mr and Mrs Woolford
24 th August	John East.	Vacant
31 st August	John East	Family of Joyce and Vernon Rothwell
7 th September	Danny Wilson	Harvest
14 th September	Mr Neville Hartley	Mr G Swanton
21 st September	Doreen Goodship	Rev. and Mrs Terry Young
28 th September	Rev Terry Young	Mr and Mrs A Gillett



SPRING VALE METHODIST CHURCH (David Foster)

We have had a busy 2 months at Spring Vale. We had a baptism with over 60 people in our congregation. The numbers attending services on a Sunday morning continue to be regularly over 30. Our Sunday School/Junior Church is a particular strength and thanks to Mary and Rachel for all their hard work with on average 10 children attending.

A strong contingent from Spring Vale was at the farewell service of our minister Rev Elizabeth Kirova held at Bright St. Members from across the Circuit were present and enjoyed a buffet lunch organised by the people at Bright St.

Our Bible Study group continues to meet on a Thursday evening for a meal and study; we have been following a Bible Study Course on Paul's letter to the Romans.

We are looking forward to welcoming our new minister, Rev Joseph Suray. There is a welcome service on 31 August at Lammack Methodist Church and he will be conducting his first service at Spring Vale on 7 September at 9:30. We hope to be welcoming 6 people into membership of the church at that service.

In September our services will be starting at the earlier time of 9:30.

During the summer we will be refurbishing our vestry to bring it up to date and make it a more welcoming and useful space.

We have a couple of events in September.

On Saturday 6 September we have a family Beetle Drive and on Friday 26 September we will be taking part in the Big Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief.

NEWS FROM BRIGHT STREET METHODIST CHURCH (Karen Rowley)

Greetings from all at Bright Street. Holiday time is well and truly here and many of you will be going to hotter and sunnier climes, holidaying in this country, or simply taking a break from normal activities. Whatever you have planned, have fun, and take time out to be refreshed and renewed.

Right now, is a time of change for us here at Bright Street. A time of rejoicing and thankfulness for the blessed times we had with Rev Elizabeth, but of sadness too, that she has now come to the end of her time with us and is moving on to pastures new. What a fantastic send off she had. Members of the West Pennine Moors Circuit descended on us on the 6th July for a farewell service. It was standing room only with 140+ adults and around 18 children. We had a great worship band and we raised the roof, and, of course, it wouldn't be a Methodist 'do' without food. We had a fabulous buffet prepared and served by the Pepperpot Catering company. Can highly recommend them if anyone is planning a big event.

We are looking forward to Rev Joseph joining us in September, but in the meantime we'll just get on with making sure that we still have fellowship and a time of worship each Sunday. Do we like change? Well some are apprehensive and some embrace it and find it exciting, wondering what our future will look like. Whatever lies in store, we know that God is with us and in Him we trust to lead our way. "For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future," Jeremiah 29:11.

Our Stay and Play toddler group is taking a summer break and will be back in September. When we return we are moving to Thursday mornings, usual time of 9.30-12 noon, first session 4th September. On our last session we held a summer party when we had special visitors. We had a brilliant morning and our thanks must go to our local firefighters who took time out to come and entertain the little ones. After a little chat and a bit of fun indoors, we ventured out onto the lawn where the little ones all got a turn at operating the firehouse. Needless to say it was a time of great hilarity for the little ones when the fireman continually sprayed water up in the air and we were all soaked to the skin. Of course, they all got a turn at sitting in the fire engine too and then it was time for things to quieten down whilst they enjoyed sandwiches, pizza, cake and ice lollies. Phew! I think I need a rest after all that.

A date for your diaries

We will be holding an afternoon tea for 'Breast Cancer Now', on August bank holiday (25th August) from 2-4 pm. If you're at a loose end and don't feel like sitting in traffic queues that day, please come along and support this great cause. If you are planning on joining us it would be great and much appreciated if you could let me know prior to the event as this would help with the catering. Telephone or text 07941 881833. There will also be a pink themed bring and buy stall and other activities. (Look out for further details).

God bless you all
Karen

Time Wellbeing Group

On Friday 18th July, the final week of the group's summer term, 35 of us went on our annual trip to the seaside, to St. Annes. Although it rained on the journey there, luckily the weather changed to be really hot and sunny.

We had five hours there and we all did our own thing, shopping, walking on the pier and beach, sitting in the sunshine on the prom and in the park.

Plenty of fish and chips, bacon butties and ice cream were enjoyed. We arrived back in Darwen at 5 o'clock after a tiring day, everyone had really enjoyed themselves. We are now looking forward to next term's trip to Blackpool Illuminations.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me through the term to make each week's activities possible; I couldn't have done without you all (we make a brilliant team).

Elizabeth

DEADLINE DATES FOR MAGAZINE 2025

October/November	Sunday 21 st September
December 2025/January 2026	Sunday 23 rd November

URC CHURCH SERVICES AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2025

Date	Central	Trinity
3 rd August	Doreen Goodship	Barbara Duxbury
10 th August	Danny Wilson	Kath Hodgkinson
17 th August	Barbara Duxbury	Danny Wilson
24 th August	Rev Gilbert Esambe	Barbara Duxbury
31 st August	Doreen Goodship	Danny Wilson
7 th September	Kath Hodgkinson	George Grime
14 th September	Danny Wilson	Doreen Goodship
21 st September	Danny Wilson - Harvest	Barbara Duxbury
28 th September	Rev Daleen ten Cate	George Grime - Harvest

TOCKHOLES URC CHURCH



3 rd August	Rev Gilbert Esambe
10 th August	David Foster
17 th August	Barbara Duxbury
24 th August	John East
31 st August	John East
7 th September	Danny Wilson
14 th September	Mr Neville Hartley - Harvest
21 st September	Doreen Goodship
28 th September	Rev Terry Young

CHURCH GROUPS

CENTRAL URC

Day	Time	Name of Group and Room
Monday	9:30-Noon	DARE (Hall and Lounge)
	6.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Ballroom/sequence dancing (Hall)
Tuesday	10am to 11:00 am	Yoga (Hall)
	11.30 am to 12.30 pm	Dance Fit Exercise Group (Hall)
	6.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Ballroom/sequence Dancing (Hall)
Wednesday	10.00 am to 1 pm	DARE (Hall and Lounge)
	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm	Ashleigh Singers (Hall)
	5.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Line Dancing (7pm-8pm) Ballroom (Hall) 8 – 9 pm
Thursday	9.00 am to 12.00 noon	P.R.O.B.U.S. alternate weeks (Hall and Lounge)
	10.00 am to 11.30 am	Bible Study once a month (Lounge)
	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm	Church Fellowship once a month (Hall/Lounge)
	7 pm to 9 pm	Beginners Line Dancing/Ballroom
Friday	8.00 am to 10.00 am	Slimming World (Hall)
	11.00 am to 12 noon	Yoga (Hall)
Sunday	1.00 pm to 3.00 pm	Lighthouse of Glory Church Darwen

TIME WELLBEING GROUP - AUTUMN TERM - 1-3 pm at Bright Street

5 th September	Speaker: Norman Pearson
12 th September	Quiz Day
19 th September	To be confirmed
26 th September	Play your Cards Right and Blankety Blank
3 rd October	Speaker: Gary Stacey
10 th October	Games Day
17 th October	Lancashire Day
24 th October	To be confirmed
31 st October	Speaker: Blackburn Rotary Club
7 th November	Poppy making
14 th November	Speaker: Ben Fish – My running journey
21 st November	Trip to Blackpool Illuminations
28 th November	Speaker: Elizabeth – The Norwegian Fjords
5 th December	Christmas Decorations
12 th December	Ashleigh Choir – Songs for Christmas
19 th December	Christmas Party

Any questions ring Elizabeth 01254 776294

DARWEN METHODIST CHURCH AT BRIGHT STREET

Sunday	10.30 am	Sunday service – multi-media Contact Karen Rowley 07941 881833 Karenliz1947@gmail.com
Monday	11.30 am – 12.15 pm	Pilates
	7 to 8.45 pm	Fellowship Group
Tuesday	10.30 to 11.30 am	Tai Chi
	6 to 7 pm	Fit n Funky
Wednesday	11am to 12 noon	Strength & Balance
	1 pm to 2 pm	Strength & Balance
	6 to 7 pm	Yoga (for menopausal women)
	7.30 to 9 pm	Trefoil Guild (1st Wednesday of every month)
Thursday	9.30 to 12 noon	Stay & Play Toddler Group
	10 am to 12 noon	Beading Group
	1 pm to 2 pm	Making Memories
Friday	1 to 3pm	“Time” wellbeing Group
Saturday	9-10 am	WW

SPRING VALE

Sunday	10.30 am	Sunday Service & Junior Church
Monday	5 pm	Drama Group
Tuesday	10.30 am to 12.00 noon	Stay and Play Toddler Group
Tuesday	2 pm to 4 pm	Craft Group
Tuesday	5.45 pm to 7.00 pm	Rainbows
Wednesday	5 pm	Drama Group
Wednesday	6.00 pm to 7.30 pm	Brownies
Wednesday	7.30 pm to 9.00 pm	Guides
Thursday	10 am	Lullaby Baby Group
Thursday	6.30 to 9 pm	Bible Study
Friday	7pm	Karate

Ripple Effect (formerly Send a Cow) recently put on their website an interview they did with our daughter Rachel. Darwen people have been very supportive of the charity's work so I thought this may be of interest. Thanks. Alizon (Elliott)



More than a rainbow: why I volunteer for Ripple Effect

By Dr Rachel Lyons, Ripple Effect Ambassador

I still remember so clearly painting that wall.

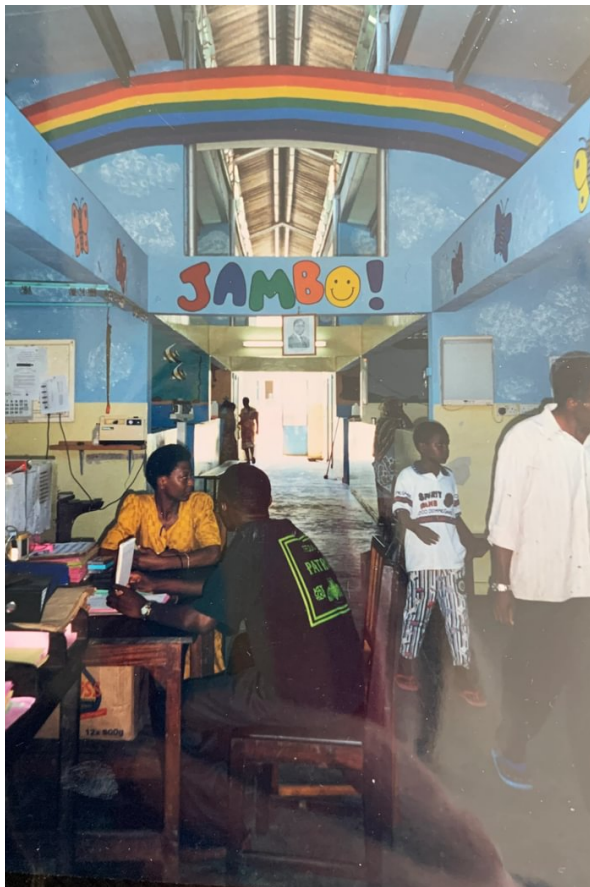
Sky blue, with fluffy clouds and a huge rainbow arching across it. Fifty-four butterflies (hamsini na nne - which is Swahili for butterfly) in every colour you could imagine. Some were grinning, some were sticking their tongues out, and a few were just peacefully smiling. The children on the ward would chatter together happily pointing at the pictures as they recovered from their illness or injury. That wall became more than just decoration - it became joy, comfort, and, in a small way, hope.

This is the story of how I went from a fourth-year medical student painting rainbows on a hospital ward in Kenya, to a doctor in A&E and mother of three in Northumberland. And why for over two decades I've volunteered as an Ambassador for Ripple Effect (formerly Send a Cow).

The beginning: where curiosity met compassion

As a child of the 70s and 80s, there wasn't endless media to scroll through, but something about Africa always captured my imagination – the landscapes, the people, the music, the culture, the animals. And I always used to rush to choose the Kenya milk cartons in infant school! When I reached medical school, I jumped at the chance to do an overseas elective. A rummage through old reports in the medical school office led me to Kilifi, a coastal town in Kenya where malaria research was being carried out by global teams. It sounded fascinating - and important.

I spent the second half of my Elective in Zambia at a mission hospital. Two very different experiences, both deeply formative. I had arrived thinking I might offer something useful clinically, but what I actually did was listen, learn, and witness the deep, daily courage of local medical teams and families. And something I wasn't expecting!



Paint, butterflies, and a little girl in a pink dress

At Kilifi, I found myself in the library reading a World Health Organisation paper on managing childhood malnutrition. One section jumped out: "The austerity of a traditional hospital has no place in the treatment of malnourished children. Rooms should be brightly coloured, with decorations that interest children...The atmosphere in the ward should be relaxed, cheerful and welcoming."

I pictured Ward One. The ward was clean but stark, and children shared beds, their parents sleeping next to them or on the floor beside them. Could we brighten the space?

I asked, and the hospital said yes. With permission from Dr Peshu, I painted the entrance area sky blue and sponged fluffy white clouds. The rainbow came next, the central section sawn out of plywood by me and fitted in place high in the air by Katisho, the hospital handyman, and Mr. Chome the ward Phlebotomist. Then came the butterflies! The local folk would point at me as I walked through the town saying, "It's the Butterfly Girl!"

One day, a little girl walked in through the doors of the ward wearing a frilly pink dress. She and her parents all looked terrified. Her father later

thanked me warmly, telling me how she relaxed and smiled the moment she saw the rainbow.

That moment stayed with me. Because a wall can't cure malaria—but it can make healing easier.

From temporary fixes to long-term change

When I returned to the UK and began working, the memory of those children in the Malnutrition bay stuck with me. We slowly nourished them back to health, often over a period of weeks - but then they returned home to the same situation that caused them to get sick in the first place. Nothing had changed long-term. That realisation hit hard.

I took 2 weeks' annual leave a few months into my first medical job and went back to finish painting. 1 foyer, 3 side rooms, a treatment room, 4 ward bays, all the corridor doors and the Paediatric Intensive Care ward. Mr. Men, flowers, goats, a giraffe, chickens, an aeroplane, Dhow boats, children playing. And lots more!

The staff gave me a cutting from the hospital newsletter with an editorial written after my first visit: *"Rachel is a young doctor who realises that there is more to hospitals than just needles. She has literally transformed the two cold bunker-like structures into some beautifully painted children's wards. Even the staff agree that it now feels better working in these wards. Thank you Rachel for your money, time and skills; a butterfly a day keeps a doctor away!"*

A few weeks later, at Christmas 1999, I saw an appeal page in the Telegraph listing five charities. I can remember it was in the bottom-left corner: "Send a Cow." It immediately made sense. A charity that helps people grow their own food, pass on animals and knowledge, and become self-reliant. A ripple effect. That was the kind of change that lasts and exactly what those families in the malnutrition bay needed in their communities. I could see that my money would really make a difference, and the effect would continue to grow over time.

I immediately set up a regular donation. I avidly read every update they sent me and started buying gifts for friends and family from the catalogue - goats, training, tools. Simple things that can make a big difference in transforming lives.

The turning point: becoming an Ambassador

I remembered seeing something in Send a Cow literature about becoming an Ambassador. The application had a tiny box asking, "Why do you want to do this?" I wrote two pages, front and back, stapled them on, and hoped for the best. Thankfully, I was accepted and trained up. That was 2005. I've been part of the Ripple Effect family ever since.

Life happens - and volunteering flexes with it



One of the things I love most about Ripple Effect is that they understand life changes. I've gone from being a young doctor able to structure my work schedules so I could book talks 18 months in advance, to a Mum of three children working more than full-time. My volunteering has changed with me.

Before children, I was on the Women's Institute speaker list, actively seeking out U3A (University of the Third Age) and Rotary talks, and taking annual leave to take stalls to 3-day events. These days, I still do talks but I also look for opportunities that crop up in everyday life - through school and Scouting networks, local groups, or simply chatting with someone at a

community event. I keep gift catalogues in my bag, ready to hand out when conversations turn toward farming, women's empowerment, or climate change. Because Ripple Effect is relevant to all of it. It's a cause that fits into your life - not the other way around.

From cake sales to keyhole gardens

Over the years, I've done it all. I've painted faces at Christmas fairs, taken a puppet cow into schools (yes, it produces milk, wees and poos chocolate Ready Brek!), and built a keyhole garden in the middle of a city green festival. I've had some of the best teas of my life after WI talks and spoken in settings ranging all the way from Nursery classes to Care Homes. I've been sponsored for doing the Great North Run and raised over £1,000 doing a whole month with no sugar!

One of my favourite memories is watching a Ugandan staff member experience snow for the first time - in my own garden in Northumberland. That's what this community is like. Warm, inspiring, and full of heart.

Seeing the work first-hand

Before giving a talk, I used to rewatch Ripple Effect videos to get me focussed and inspired. But visiting Rwanda in 2006 changed everything. Suddenly, I wasn't just quoting from brochures - I'd been there. I'd drunk tea with farmers. I'd laughed with their families. I'd walked through their gardens, heard their stories, and felt their pride.

I couldn't help feeling that everything I had read and heard sounded too good to be true. I wanted to see the truth and find out the nitty gritty. But it was even better in real life! Yes, there were challenges. In Rwanda, all the chickens placed in one project had died because of Newcastle Disease. But the farmers weren't floundering. They were thriving because of what they'd learned: composting, water conservation, organic gardening. They even found new uses for the chicken coops - it turns out, rabbits do just fine in them!

Why I keep going

It's simple: I believe in it.

I've watched Ripple Effect evolve over two decades - growing wiser, more collaborative, more focused on sustainability and cultural sensitivity. The projects are led by people from within the communities. This isn't about imposing solutions; it's about nurturing potential that already exists.

So many times, over the years I have found myself noticing the world starting to talk about something: carbon capture, climate change, regenerative farming, tree planting, water conservation, composting and the importance of good soil. And I've thought "But Ripple Effect have been saying and doing that

for years!”. They have always struck me as ahead of the curve and they really get to know the communities and areas they are working in, ensuring that the projects are just right for each community they work with.

And I’ve never once felt pressured to do more than I could. There are no hard targets, no guilt. Just gentle encouragement, flexibility, and shared belief in the mission.

Every hour I’ve given has felt worth it. Every cake baked, every school assembly, every talk. All of it matters.

A ripple you can join

If you’re thinking about volunteering with Ripple Effect - just do it. Whether you have an hour a month or time every week, there’s a role for you.

This charity is warm, wise, and deeply effective. You’ll meet wonderful people, learn new things, and become part of a movement that creates lasting, tangible change.

Because that’s what this is. Not just a rainbow on a wall, but a ripple of transformation - spreading from one family, one field, one small act of kindness at a time.

So...if you’ve read this far I’m sure you can imagine I was overjoyed when I learned that Ripple Effect was launching the Sustainable Futures for Kenya’s Women and Youth project in the Kilifi area, 25 years after I first went there. The children on the ward, now hopefully parents themselves, would get help to lift their families and their communities from poverty. My Kilifi circle felt complete!

Ready to create a ripple?

If Rachel’s story has inspired you, we’d love to welcome you to the Ripple Effect family.

Whether you want to fundraise, give talks, or just start with sharing our story in your community, there’s a place for you here.

Visit rippleeffect.org/get-involved to learn how you can be part of a lasting change.

Together, we’re not just helping people survive. We’re helping them thrive - with dignity, resilience, and joy.

RIPPLE EFFECT (formerly Send a Cow) CAKE FUNDRAISERS



Sunday, 31st August 2025

Cake stall after church at Central

**2.30pm onwards tea and cake at Alizon and Dave’s
Oakleigh, Craven’s Brow, Bolton Road, Blackburn, BB2 4LA**

Wordsearch – 1 – 2 Chronicles

A J M A H A R B A B Y L O N S
D B E H A I A C I M Z N D H O
E E I S M O A B I T E S C A L
B U A J S J A C O B D R O I O
O A P M A E E Z E R E P V K M
N G H A M H N H C H K E E L O
O J E A S O H N O A I R N I N
E O S N R S N B A A A S A H I
M S S J E H O I A C H I N E M
I E A O Z A I V T I H A T Z A
S P N S M P L R E E S E Z E J
R H A I E H L O A R S A R K N
A N M A H A U E G M B Z I I E
E A R H S T A S S Y R I A A B
L E V I T E S T S E I R P H H

Abijah, Abraham, Ammonites, Assyria, Babylon, Benjamin, Covenant, Genealogy, Hezekiah, Hilkiah, Hiram, Isaiah, Israel, Jacob, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, Jehoshaphat, Jesse, Joseph, Josiah, Levites, Manasseh, Micaiah, Moabites, Obed, Passover, Perez, Persia, Priests, Rahab, Rehoboam, Saul, Sennacherib, Shem, Simeon, Solomon, Zedekiah

Answer to last Wordsearch - Reverence

BIBLE READINGS

AUGUST 2025

1 st	Acts 19:1-20, Psalm 19
2 nd	Acts 20:17-38, Psalm 20
3 rd	Luke 12:13-21, Psalm 49:1-12
4 th	Habakkuk 1:12-2:4, Psalm 21:1-7
5 th	Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13, Psalm 22:1-18
6 th	Luke 9:28-36, Psalm 47
7 th	Zephaniah 3:14-20, Psalm 22:19-31
8 th	Haggai 1:1-8, Psalm 23
9 th	Haggai 1:15b-2:9, Psalm 24
10 th	Luke 12:32-40, Psalm 33:12-22
11 th	Micah 2:1-13, Psalm 25:1-10
12 th	Micah 3:5-12, Psalm 25:11-22
13 th	Micah 4:1-8, Psalm 26
14 th	Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 27
15 th	Galatians 4:4-7, Psalm 45
16 th	Micah 7:1-20, Psalm 29
17 th	Luke 12:49-56, Psalm 82
18 th	Ephesians 1:1-14, Psalm 30
19 th	Ephesians 1:15-23, Psalm 31:1-8
20 th	Ephesians 2:1-10, Psalm 31:9-18
21 st	Ephesians 2:11-22, Psalm 31:19-24
22 nd	Ephesians 3:1-13, Psalm 32:1-11
23 rd	Ephesians 3:14-21, Psalm 35:1-3, 9-18
24 th	Luke 13:10-17, Psalm 103:1-8
25 th	Luke 22:24-30, Psalm 145
26 th	Ephesians 4:1-16, Psalm 34:1-10
27 th	Ephesians 4:32-5:9, Psalm 34:11-22
28 th	Ephesians 5:21-33, Psalm 39
29 th	Matthew 14:1-12, Psalm 126
30 th	Ephesians 6:1-20, Psalm 40:1-10
31 st	Luke 14:1, 7-14, Psalm 112

SEPTEMBER 2025

1 st	Revelation 1:4-28, Psalm 36:5-20
2 nd	Revelation 2:1-11, Psalm 37:1-11
3 rd	Revelation 2:12-27, Psalm 37:22-29
4 th	Revelation 3:1-6, Psalm 37:30-40
5 th	Revelation 3:7-13, Psalm 38:1-8
6 th	Revelation 3:14-22, Psalm 38:9-22
7 th	Luke 14,25-33, Psalm 1
8 th	Micah 5:1-4, Psalm 45
9 th	Revelation 4:1-11, Psalm 41
10 th	Revelation 5:11-14, Psalm 42
11 th	Revelation 7:9-17, Psalm 43
12 th	Revelation 18:6-10, Psalm 44:1-8
13 th	Revelation 21:1-7, 22:1-5, Psalm 46
14 th	Luke 15:1-10, Psalm 52:1-10
15 th	Philippians 2:6-11, Psalm 22
16 th	2 Kings 2:1-15, Psalm 47
17 th	2 Kings 4:1-37, Psalm 48
18 th	2 Kings 4:42-44, Psalm 23
19 th	2 Kings 5:1-14, Psalm 53
20 th	2 Kings 6:25-23, Psalm 56
21 st	Luke 16:1-13, Psalm 113
22 nd	Matthew 9:9-13, Psalm 119:65-72
23 rd	Proverbs 20:5-12, Psalm 57:1-3, 7-11
24 th	Proverbs 22:1-9, Psalm 61
25 th	Proverbs 25:11-22, Psalm 63:1-8
26 th	Proverbs 26:12-27, Psalm 65
27 th	Proverbs 26:18-23, Psalm 66:1-12

No further readings available for September – apologies.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

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FORMAL YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Spring Vale: Guides, Brownies, Rainbows;

Methodist at Bright Street: Brownies, Rainbows

PARENT AND TODDLER GROUPS

Weekday Groups at Spring Vale, Trinity and Bright Street

ENQUIRIES:

URC Churches – Central URC, Tockholes URC and Trinity URC/Methodist

For baptisms, marriages and funerals and any other enquires please contact the appropriate church secretary.

Methodist Churches—please contact the Minister or Stewards.