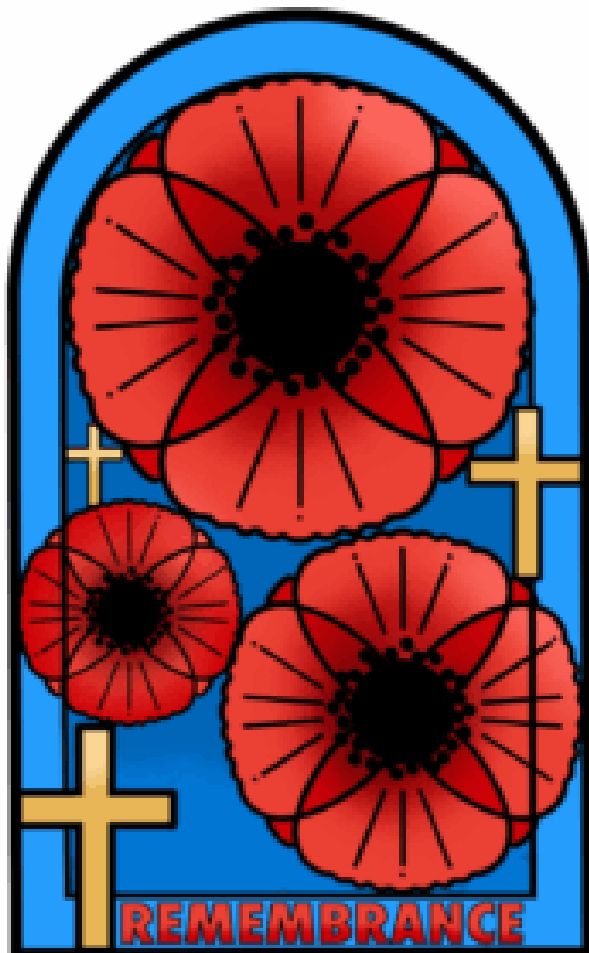

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

News from Whittle & Clayton Brook

PARISH GAZETTE

Please accept this
FREE copy
Donations welcome
**NOVEMBER
2025**

Speak out, Reach out, Gather in for Christ



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Dear Friends

“Remember the Lord your God . . .” (Deuteronomy 8:18)

With Remembrance Sunday just a week away, three brief thoughts from me.

First, I am always grateful for the opportunity to be grateful, once a year, for those who gave their lives for our freedom. We are so very blessed in our country, and in the West generally. I sometimes allow my mind to ponder the question, ‘What if the Nazis had won?’, and the possibilities are unthinkable. How deeply grateful we are, and how appropriate never to forget.

Second, I also have a niggling concern that Remembrance is almost becoming a new religion in its own right. Visiting our eldest and his family in Marlow last week we saw the park railings festooned in many hundred beautifully woven poppies. It was an impressive and moving sight. But as our country has so let go of God, are these rituals growing and growing and, devoid of God’s place in it all, taking what is rightfully his? I may be wrong about this, of course, and you may disagree, but I do wonder.

Third, and in the light of that, as Christians let’s always remember the Lord, ‘who makes wars cease to the ends of the earth’ (Psalm 46:9). As we worked through Lamentations recently we noted the importance of remembering the Lord, his character and his deeds. It is remembering what the Lord has done in the past that gives us the hope we need to move on into the future. In Moses’s great and long sermon recorded in Deuteronomy, he enjoins the Israelites, again and again, to remember the Lord and what he has done; to remember their folly and his forgiveness; to remember their rescue from Egypt; to remember that they have what they have and they are what they are only because of him.

So, remember those who gave their lives with profound gratitude. And remember the Lord who so marvellously delivered us and enabled us to be what we are today.

Your brother in Christ

Philip

Operation Christmas Child 2025



IT'S TIME FOR OUR SHOEBOX APPEAL !

Since 1990, more than 124 million boys and girls in over 150 countries have experienced God's love through the power of simple shoebox gifts from Operation Christmas Child.

A small shoebox can have a big impact on a child, who may never have received a gift before. Be a part of changing children's lives all over the world in Jesus' name through the power of a simple shoebox gift with Operation Christmas Child.

Each year, our two churches support this charity and have donated 100's of boxes to this worthy cause. With your help we are aiming to donate more boxes this year!

Look out for the preprinted shoeboxes (50p) in church in October, or decorate and fill your own empty shoebox.

What goes into the box is fun to pack!

Decide whether you want to pack a box for a boy or a girl, and for which age group (2-4, 5-9 or 10-14 years) and remember to tick or stick a label on the outside of the box indicating your choice. Please include a £5 donation for postage inside the box or pay online at the link below and place the bar code slip in the box. A photo of your family and/or a Christmas card are also nice additions. Then return the box to church by

Sunday 16th November 2025.

For ideas about what to put in a shoebox (and labels) **pick up a leaflet** in church or visit: <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox/>

Please do not include: Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items; war-related items (e.g. toy guns, model soldiers, military vehicles etc.); seeds, gum, chocolate or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, knives, sharp or fragile items. Items packed from this list will be removed from the shoeboxes.

If you can't get to church to collect a pre-printed box or return one, then please either ask a friend who attends church to help you, or let one of us know in person or by email.

If you choose to build a shoebox on line (£25) then please let Gill L or Kathy know so that it can be included in our grand total.

Contacts: Gill Lancaster at St Johns or Kathy Bigio at Clayton Brook



DEADLINE FOR RETURN OF SHOEBOXES TO CHURCH IS

SUNDAY 16th NOVEMBER



LW Storehouse - Chorley Food Bank

7 Oct • 🌐

Thank you for all of your donations today:
 St Johns Church Whittle Le Woods
 St Marys Eccleston (<https://www.ecclest...>...see more



HARVEST FESTIVAL GIVING



LW Storehouse - Chorley Food Bank

10 Oct • 🌐



LW Storehouse - Chorley Food Bank

2d • 🌐

Thank you for your continued generosity, St John's Church in Whittle-le-Woods.

Every bag of food donated to our food bank goes directly to a family in need or to an individual in poverty. Harvest has been crucial to our foodbank and we are so thankful to our local community



CLAYTON BROOK
 COMMUNITY CHURCH
 SHOWING THE JOY OF GIVING

The Suffering Church - Being a Christian - *From David Barlow*

Last month we read about the challenges individuals face for their faith in Jesus on a daily basis. Here are a few more stories of such sisters and brothers. As we put ourselves in their shoes we can remain thankful for the Jesus that sustains us.

Ming* is a Christian living in China.

"I'm on my way to the old place" is a carefully coded message that Ming would send to his contacts after loading his car with Bibles, whilst in a hidden alley somewhere in China. Knowing that the authorities were monitoring phones any wrong word could be costly. One day his worst fears were realised when Ming and his friends were arrested. Miraculously Ming was freed quickly but his arrest put him firmly on the authorities radar. Today they sometimes show up and search his home. In addition, Ming lost his business and his father in law prevents him seeing his wife and daughter.

Despite all this he remains determined to pursue his calling from God "I feel a heavy burden of taking a part in the Great Commission in Matthew 28: 19 – 21, which energises and encourages me to stay committed to the call of sharing the Gospel with my people" says Ming.

In China people are given incentives to inform on their neighbours and it means that many believers don't know whom to trust, adding to their isolation. "I need to make friends cautiously and identify the right people to share things with" says Ming "Since there are so many spies pretending to be Christians even in a Christian community, I must stay vigilant".

Ming asks us all to pray for him and all those taking the Gospel to their communities, especially in dangerous places. **"Please pray for me, thank you for making me feel that I am not alone. Thanks to God for looking after me and making me feel secure"**

Ming live lives very different from us, facing challenges we will probably never experience. The thing that binds them together is their faith in and love of Jesus who encourages them to live their lives for Him. Our lives might be different but it's the same Jesus who wants us to live our lives for Him. In much easier circumstances are we prepared to do that?

Leila * is a Christian in the Southern Philippines

When Leila left Islam to follow Jesus she had to keep it a secret – that was until her father discovered it earlier this year. He was furious, stopping her from attending church and a discipleship programme run by Open Doors partners in the Southern Philippines, where she felt safe. "I could be myself and learn about Jesus without fear" she says. Her father also enrolled her in a madrasah (Islamic school), sometimes threatening to disown her. Leila, now the only Christian in her family following the deaths of her grandmother and a cousin, who both shared her faith. "It hurt because I love my father, but I love Jesus too" she says. Leila continues to read her bible and pray secretly, recalling the discipleship lessons that taught her to trust God even in the dark times. "I know that following Jesus is not easy but I didn't expect it to be this hard. Every day I pray that my father will understand – that one day I won't have to hide my love for Jesus anymore".

Although Leila is unable to attend the discipleship classes anymore local partners are finding ways to support her discreetly. "I may feel alone but knowing that people are praying for me gives me strength " says Leila now, "it reminds me that I am part of a much bigger family in Christ". Jesus warned us that following him could put a barrier between ourselves and our family but knowing that doesn't make it any easier. **Pray for Leila's continued resilience and that her father will encounter Jesus for himself and pray for your own family members who don't know Jesus for themselves yet.**

Amina* and Shamaila* are mothers, both are just about surviving in Gaza today.

We read and hear about the untold suffering for millions of people in Gaza today due to a chronic shortage of food and particularly essential medication. Amina's six-year-old son desperately needed treatment for an acute fever and praise God Amina was able to access a medical clinic run by one of Tearfund's partners and she received the free medicine that her son needed. Amina thanks God for this provision and all those who helped her. "My family and I have endured unimaginable suffering during the war" Shamaila says "Our home reduced to rubble". Shamaila and her family have been forced to leave their "home" several times over the past two years as fighting breaks out near them, again and again. Shamaila's daughter was desperately in need of medicine to treat an acute infection who found help in another clinic run by a Tearfund partner, for which Shamaila is for ever grateful to them and to God. Thousands are suffering like Amina and Shamaila and their families, many from trauma and wounds caused by shrapnel and bullets in addition to more everyday needs. **Pray for Amina and Shamaila, and for all those who are helpless in the midst of this conflict and pray for peace, peace that only Jesus can bring. And pray for all those brave people still bringing hope and help into this desperate situation in spite of the danger to themselves.**

Ming, Leila, Amina and Shamaila face daily challenges we will hopefully never experience. The thing that binds them together with us is their faith in and love of Jesus who calls us into his family wherever we are in the world. A family not restricted by geography or time but one united by His Spirit. It's the same Jesus who wants us to live our lives for Him, are we prepared to do that?

Pray for all these people who follow Jesus in spite of all the challenges, knowing that Jesus is the Truth, the Life and the Way.

Jesus' followers in these countries remain faithful to Him in all circumstances and are helped in so many ways by the three organisations that our church supports, Barnabas Fund, Open Doors and Tearfund. We too can support them, contacting them on their websites www.opendoorsuk.org, www.tearfund.org or www.barnabasfund.org. Your donations will make a real difference to lives of Christians across the world, sometime the difference between life and death.

**MISSION BREAKFAST 8.30am SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER
at CLAYTON BROOK CHURCH**

Croissant breakfast

**.....followed by a talk by Mike Chesterton from SAFE FAMILIES
an organisation that brings together families who are struggling
to cope, with trained volunteers who offer support and advice.**

All Welcome.





Please continue to pray for the re-ordering of St John's church.

Almighty God, we thank you for this church building, a place where your people have gathered for worship, fellowship and service.



We ask for your blessing on the restoration which will take place here.

May your Holy Spirit work through this project to create a space that is holy, welcoming and a beacon of your love to all who enter.

May the lives of people who live in our community be transformed through God's work within the walls of our renewed church.



May our congregation work together in faith to love and support the vision for the renewal of our church building



Warm Welcome at Clayton Brook

Refreshments, Light Lunch and Dessert

Every Monday 11 - 1pm
(sadly we're not open on Bank Holidays)

Donations welcome
Everyone is welcome, children and babies too.
Contact Gill Wright
or just turn up

Please remember the LOVE FUND

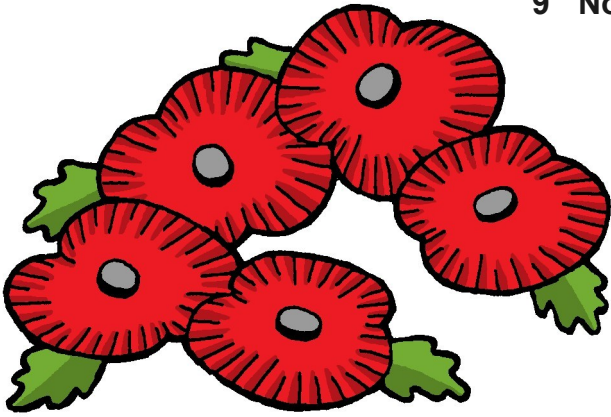
The Love Fund consists of donations of money from members of both our churches. This can be used for anyone in our church or parish who is in need of help. If you are in financial need for whatever purpose:

shopping, bills, essentials etc then get in touch with Philip and he will be

happy to help you. tel: 01257 515141

email: info@stjohnsandclaytonbrook.uk

9th November – The poppies of Remembrance Sunday



In late 1914, WW1 erupted across Northern France and Flanders.

Great swathes of previously green fields and forests were blasted and bombed, leaving them bleak and barren, with seemingly every living thing destroyed.

But then in the Spring of 1915, something beautiful began to come out of all the destruction. Tens of thousands of bright red Flanders poppies began to put out tentative shoots across the endless vistas of mud. These resilient little flowers had actually

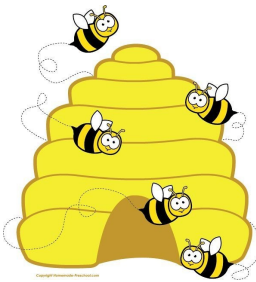
flourished in the middle of so much chaos and destruction, because their seeds grow when exposed to sunlight, through disturbances to soil.

We all know that these endless fields of cheerful poppies, growing in the midst of such misery and destruction, were what inspired the Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, to write the now famous poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

And it was McCrae's poem which inspired an American academic named Moina Michael to adopt the poppy in memory of those who had fallen in the war. She got it adopted as an official symbol of Remembrance across the United States, and worked with others who were trying to do the same in Canada, Australia, and the UK.

A French woman, Anna Guérin who was in the UK in 1921, caught the same vision, and planned to sell the poppies in London. There she met Earl Haig, the founder of the Royal British Legion, who was persuaded to adopt the poppy as its emblem in the UK.

The Royal British Legion, which had been formed in 1921, ordered nine million poppies and sold them on 11 November that year. Ever since then, the red poppy has been a symbol of Remembrance, of support for the Armed Forces community, and also of hope for a peaceful future.



**Beehive Mother and Toddler group meet
on Monday mornings at 10.45 to 12.15
in Whittle le Woods Village Hall
Play, chat, stories, singing
There's room for everyone
See Christine Whiteside**



CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE

Saturday 29th November 2-4pm

St John's Church

Growing in popularity every year

Games and a quiz for children
indoors, live singer, mince pies,
hot chocolate.

Live animals out of doors

Something to Make You Smile (hopefully) and Perhaps Think?

G.

Gambling

There was a priest who liked to bet on the horses in a nearby stables and there was one particular horse that he favoured. When the horse was running he would go down to the stables to bless and pray for the horse. A Baptist friend became aware of this, and that every time the priest prayed for the horse it won. One day the Baptist noticed the priest at the stables blessing the horse with water and praying over it. At once the Baptist went and placed his bet....and the horse finished last. Feeling very angry the Baptist confronted his friend "Every time you pray that horse wins, but after I saw you pray this morning, I placed a bet and the horse came last. His friend replied "Sadly you have misunderstood the sacraments, you really need to know the difference between a blessing and the last rites"

Generosity

In a Christian context, generosity is defined as the virtue of being liberal in giving, often associated with kindness, charity and selflessness, reflecting the character of God and is fundamental to Christian witness. Generosity is seen as a tangible expression of love and compassion towards others, reflecting God's greater generosity to us.

2 Corinthians 9:7 states that "God loves a cheerful giver" suggesting that the spirit in which we give holds just as much value as the gift itself (See also Luke 21: 1 -4, the Widow's Offering). This perspective shifts our understanding of generosity from mere obligation to an opportunity for joy and gratitude.

Giving

The world's strongest man was touring with his show, the finale of which was that he would squeeze an orange, getting all the juice out of it and offer £5,000 to anyone in the audience who could get another drop of juice from it. Time after time people would come forward, squeeze for all they were worth but failed to do it. Then one evening an old man, who didn't appear to have any muscles on him came forward to meet the challenge. The strongman smiled and the crowd laughed at the idea that he would get more juice out of the orange than the strongman. The old man calmly took the orange put it between his palms, and to the crowd's amazement out came a single drop of orange juice. Handing over the £5,000 the stunned strongman couldn't resist asking the old man what he did for a living. "I'm an accountant" he said "and also the treasurer at my local Anglican church"

After church one morning the mother commented "The music group were off key this morning" and the father added "Yes and the sermon and prayers were too long" Their eight year old daughter added "But you've got to admit it was a pretty good show for 50p!"

God

"I believe in God like I believe in the sunrise; not because I can see it but because I can see all that He touches" C.S.Lewis

"God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today, have you used one to say thank you?" William A Ward

God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us" Mother Teresa

"There are two kinds of people, those who say to God "Thy will be done" and those to whom God says "OK then, have it your own way" C.S.Lewis again

His mercies are new every morning because our messes are new every day.

God's favourite department: Lost and Found!

If God had a wallet your picture would be in it.

God could live anywhere in the Universe and He chose your heart.

Gossip

A gossip is a person with a keen sense of rumour!

Not everyone repeats gossip, some people improve it!

Grandchildren

When the grandmother returned from the supermarket, her small grandson pulled out the box of animal biscuits she had brought and then he spread all the animal shaped biscuits over the kitchen table. "What are you doing?" his grandmother asked. "The box says that you can't eat them until the seal is broken" the boy explained "I'm looking for the seal!"

Grace

What is the grace of God? Simply put it is God's favour and kindness toward us. God rains down grace on all mankind. He gave us the beauty and wonders of nature that we see each and every day. He gives us near misses when accidents are heading our way. He often brings us the right thing just in time. And He also gave us an innate conscience to know right from wrong. All these things are common graces, and everyone born on the earth has the benefit of them because God so loved the world.

Is Grace the most underrated gift that God gives to His children?

God will never lead you where His grace cannot keep you.

We experienced grace when God purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave all our sins. This immeasurable gift was given to us when we believed. We certainly didn't work for it and we didn't even deserve it.

Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more – no amount of spiritual practices or renunciations, no amount of knowledge gained from Bible Studies or sermons, no amount of crusading on behalf of good causes. No amount of theological arrogance. Grace means that there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. Grace simply means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love? **Philip Yancey**

Gratitude

"In everything give thanks" **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

A mechanic who worked from his home garage had a dog named Mace, who unfortunately had the habit of eating all the grass on the lawn. Mace was therefore kept indoors and the grass on the lawn grew to knee height. One day whilst working on a car the mechanic dropped his wrench, losing it in the tall grass. In spite of all his searching he failed to find it and as dusk was drawing in he stopped work for the day. That night Mace escaped from the house and ate all the grass on the lawn and the next day when the mechanic started work he saw his wrench glinting in the sunlight.

Realising what had happened the mechanic smiled to himself and said "A grazing Mace, how sweet the hound that saved a wrench for me!"

Growth

God loves us so much that He accepts us just the way we are – but He loves us too much to leave us that way!

From David Barlow

With thanks to J. John and Mark Stibbe Monarch Press



Proverbs 22:9 The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Living Waters food bank is low on everything at the moment. There is a food collection box in Clayton Brook church and in St John's. If you are in Chorley you can drop off donations at Living Waters church in Bolton Street, Tues and Fridays 10-12noon.

Or give a money donation on their website: www.facebook.com/LWStorehouse, And most supermarkets have food bank trolleys.

Words the Lord Jesus Himself said:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20v35

The Real Advent Calendar (not available in supermarkets)

The Real Advent Calendar is the only one with Fairtrade chocolate, a copy of the Christmas story and which supports charitable projects.

The Real Advent Calendar is a fun way for parents, grandparents and Godparents to share the Christmas story. The new design calendar comes with a free 24-page Christmas story activity book designed to be used every day in Advent. This year, the book is illustrated by award winning artist, Martina Peluso.

Meaningful Features

- 24-page Christmas story activity book
- Behind each of the 25 windows there is a line from the Christmas story with colourful matching picture
- £300 children's prize competition
- Foiled for freshness
- 25 Festive chocolates made from a quality Fairtrade blend-30% cocoa
- Palm oil free
- Charitable donation
- Recyclable box and tray
- Packed in hygienic wrap
- Made, designed and produced in the UK



**Christmas choir are
now beginning
rehearsals
See Christine if you
would like to join**

EMERGENCY PRAYER CHAIN

The prayer chain has now moved to WhatsApp. It is always available for anyone who would like urgent, emergency prayer for themselves or their family or friends.

If you know someone who is a member of the prayer chain,
please ask them to put in your prayer request.

Or telephone Gill Wright or Cath Orr

Our prayer chain takes many calls. Do not be anxious, concerned or troubled.....

'The Lord is near to all who call on Him' (Psalm 145v18)'

Cast all your anxiety onto Him, because He cares for you' (1Peter 5v7)

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**Thank you to everyone who has
contributed to this month's Gazette.
Please send in your articles & comments
for the DECEMBER edition
before the end of NOVEMBER**

To the Editor

*The editor would welcome comments on
any article in this gazette*

.....
*If you would like to contact anyone in the
gazette, please use the contact page on this
website*