

**Dear Friends,**

As this plan becomes operational we are about to move into Lent. The first Sunday in Lent is in fact the second Sunday on the plan, so I thought it might be appropriate to share some thoughts on that season in the church's year.

Lent is often seen as a time of fasting, to remind us of the self-denial and self-discipline that is integral to the way of the cross. It's open to question whether it would be more helpful to focus on doing something more positive rather than something seen as negative. But Lent is a time that requires a healthy realism about ourselves so that we can face up to and accept responsibility for our mistakes and shortcomings, and understand the nature and purposes of God.

You may remember the District Prayer Day that we held just over a year ago. There was an event, at Dukinfield church with displays countering an element of fasting with an element of feasting. Some of you may well have one of the bookmarks produced for that day - I picked one up in another church only last week so there are still some around. They reminded us that fasting isn't just giving up something you like, but can embrace many aspects of life.

Whatever way you may choose to mark Lent; be it simply giving something up, engaging in some form of regular prayer or contemplation, or some sort of practical action, don't lose sight of the one we're doing it for. Through the process of self-examination, through repentance, through acceptance of our vulnerability and God's generosity we may attain some sort of inner peace. But it's not really about us, it's about Jesus, the one who ultimately gave up everything for us.

Every Blessing

**Stephen**

Rev Stephen Heath

**We all love a good story, don't we?**

At the very heart of our faith are stories. In the opening chapters of Genesis we find the stories of the origins of creation and then through the scriptures we read the story of God's relationship with humanity. For Jesus the scriptures were always important, the Bible can be divided into stories Jesus read, stories Jesus told and stories told about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. All of these stories are our story, our story to learn, our story to inhabit - to live in and to explore what they mean for us today.

During my sabbatical I spent time studying and reading about **Godly Play**. Sometimes this language might mean we think this is just for children, but some additional language that I also gained through my sabbatical was rather than just looking at these stories as Godly Play stories, also considering them as **Stories for the Soul**.

Throughout our lives no matter our age, we all engage with stories, whether it be stories in the news or the stories of

events in our lives we share, and the richest stories we can ever share are those from the Bible. These truly are stories for our souls that nourish and sustain us in our journeys of discipleship.

**So what happens in a session?**

We are welcomed and asked if we ready. We come and sit in a circle, and when everybody is there the story teller begins to tell the story that has been chosen for that particular session - it is told visually as the picture below shows.



During the session there is a time of wondering, a time for us to share if we so wish or to reflect on our own. We might be asked which bit of the story we liked best, or which bit is the most important. We might be asked where we are in the story. After the story there is a time of response, a time for those gathered to consider what they need to do. It may be some writing, or drawing, or sitting quietly with God, or it might be to use the story yourself to reflect further. This time is for the individual and God to use as they need. Finally there is the feast, a time of gathering back together before going back into the world again.

At Hurst we are well on the way to developing a **Godly Play/ Stories for the Soul Space**. It will be a space to use with people of all ages and one we hope to use as outreach to schools.

On Tuesday evenings during Lent at Hurst, starting on 5th March, from 7:30 - 9:00pm, there will be **Soul Space: Stories for the Soul**

All are welcome so please do come along and share in this as we prepare ourselves for Easter.

3rd Quarter 2018/19	March 3	March 10	March 17	March 24	March 31	April 7	April 14	April 19	April 21	April 28	May 5	May 12	May 19	May 26	
LECTIONARY READINGS	Ex 34:29-35 Psalm 99 2 Cor 3:12-4:2 Lk 9:28-36, (37-43)	Deut 26:1-11 Ps 91:1-2, 9-16 Rom 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13	Lent 2 Gen 15:1-12, 17-18 Psalm 27 Phil 3:17-4:1 Lk 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36	Lent 3 Isaiah 55:1-9 Psalm 63:1-8 1 Cor 10:1-13 Luke 13:1-9	Lent 4 Joshua 5:9-12 Psalm 32 2 Cor 5:16-21 Lk 15:1-3, 11b-32	Lent 5 Is 43:16-21 Psalm 126 Phil 3:4b-14 John 12:1-8	Palm Sunday Is 50:4-9a Ps 31:9-16 Phil 2:5-11 Lk 22:14-23:56 or Lk 23:1-49	Good Friday Is 52:13-53:12 Psalm 22 Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9 Jn 18:1-19:42	Easter Acts 10:34-43 Ps 118:1-2, 14-24 1 Cor 15:19-26 John 20:1-18	Acts 5:27-32 Ps 118:1-2, 14-24 Rev 1:4-8 John 20:19-31	Acts 9:1-6, (7-20) Psalm 30 Rev 5:11-14 John 21:1-19	Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23 Rev 7:9-17 John 10:22-30	Acts 11:1-18 Psalm 148 Rev 21:1-6 Jn 13:31-35	Acts 16:9-15 Psalm 67 Rev 21:10, 22-22:5 Jn 14:23-29 or Jn 5:1-9	
CHURCH	TIME														
DUKINFIELD Wellington Parade Dukinfield	10.45	J Heath	S Heath S	Collins	Hilsden	OA	J Heath	S Heath		Vale S	Pollitt	Sheppard	Buck	J Heath	James
	6.00														
HURST Curzon Road Ashton-u-Lyne	10.00	B Muir A*	Hilsden S	Sheppard	Lawson	Hilsden	Buck A*	Coates	11am at Albion	9:30am Hilsden S	OA	Stretton	10:30am at Rosehill A*	Williams	Hilsden S
	6.00	3pm Stretton Guild	CW					CW	7pm Hilsden				CW		
MOSSLEY Market Place Mossley	10.00			Coates S						5:45am at The Cross				Coates S	
	11.00	Coates S	OA	Coates A*	James	Stretton	Coates A* CC	Neal	10:30am James	Coates S A*	Hilsden	Coates S	Williams	Coates A* GCM	Vale
	6.30							Singalong Praise	6pm Coates						
STALYBRIDGE High Street Stalybridge	9.30	Hilsden S					Hilsden S					Hilsden S			
	10.45	Hilsden	Buck	Loewenthal	Neal S	Hilsden	Hilsden	QA Tues Group	11am at Albion	Hilsden S	James	Hilsden	Collins	Hilsden S	OA
	6.30				Hilsden S						Hilsden S				Vale S
TRINITY Audenshaw Road Audenshaw	10.45	Wright A*	Tarn S	Scott	Pollitt	Tarn	Taylor A*	Tarn	12:30pm Memorial Gdns	S Heath S	Sheppard	OA A*	Tait S	Loewenthal	S Heath
	6.00														
WATERLOO Vale Street Ashton-u-Lyne	10.30	Wynne	Coates S	OA	Coates GCM	10:30am at Albion	S Heath S	Hilsden	11am at Albion	9:30am Coates S	Coates B	Reid	10:30am at Rosehill A*	Sheppard	B Muir
	3.00		Coates JJC					Reid JJC					Coates JJC		
	6.00														
WEST END Stockport Road Ashton-u-Lyne	10.45	S Heath S	J Heath	Reid	Williams	OA	James	Vale S		J Heath	B Muir	Taylor	Kettlety	S Heath S	J Heath
	6.00														



**Hurst Methodist Church**  
 3:00 - 5:00pm 3rd Saturday each month  
**Mossley Methodist Church**  
 Thursday 9th May 3:30 - 5:30pm

**Special Services this quarter**

**Maudy Thursday Services** at Waterloo 6:00pm  
 at Dukinfield 7:00pm

**District Service** at Altrincham Methodist Church  
 Sunday 9th June 6:30pm with  
 the President and Vice President of Conference

**Circuit Easter Offering Service**  
 at Mossley Methodist Church  
 Wednesday 8th May, 7:00pm

**Special Events this quarter**

**FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT**  
 25 FEBRUARY - 10 MARCH



**Bible Month** Preparation Day at Knutsford M C  
 Saturday 9th March 10:00am - 3:00pm

**CRE** CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION at Event City, Manchester  
 Wed 13th - Thurs 14th March

**District Synod** in Manchester Saturday 6th April

**Holiday Club** at Mossley Methodist Church  
 8th - 12th April



**Meetings this quarter**

**LWLP Meeting** at West End Methodist Church  
 Thursday 28th February 2019, 7.45pm

**LWLP Meeting** at Dukinfield Methodist Church  
 Monday 10th June 2019, 7.45pm

**Circuit Meeting** at Stalybridge Methodist Church  
 Thursday 13th June 2019, 7.45pm

**Plan abbreviations**

NB: Letters before preachers names indicate their initials. Letters after preachers names indicate the type of service, see key below.

- A\* All Age Worship
- B Baptism
- CA Church Anniversary
- CC Community Celebration
- CS Circuit Service
- CW Contemporary Worship
- JJC Joseph Jennings Court
- OA Own Arrangement
- S Holy Communion
- US United Service

Services marked with an \* may include children throughout the whole service.

**Prayer Twinning**

- Dukinfield - Hurst
- Mossley - Rosehill
- Stalybridge - Waterloo
- Trinity - West End

This Plan is also available on the Circuit website @ [www.ashtonunderlynemethodist.org.uk/plan.htm](http://www.ashtonunderlynemethodist.org.uk/plan.htm)