

Bank Topics

Issue 9



June - August

1 The Rise of the Church & the Fall of Rome



Dear Friends:

While driving a Red Lane elder home from a meeting on a rainy night a week ago; I whined about the weather (as usual) and she asked me if I can remember the response I gave her during my interviews with the churches when she asked me why I had chosen to come to serve in Bolton. Of course I didn't remember....February last year seems like a millennium away. She reminded me that I had said I was attracted to the North by the weather! Oh ... how the things we say in jest come back to haunt us... Jokes aside the weather is absolutely hideous...snow in mid May? What next: Polar bears on winter hill? But, enough about the weather: we did have a decent April and that's good enough...We said farewell to Easter with all its drama and excitement. The sadness of Good Friday, the joy of Easter Sunday and the elation of Ascension Day are all behind us now. This Sunday we celebrate

Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is not as well-known or as popular as Christmas and Easter, though it marks a crucial date in Christian history. For all purposes and intents, Pentecost is the birthday of the church. Not unexpected, there are a wide range of Christian opinions and celebrations of Pentecost and some churches do not recognize the holiday at all. Some churches receive new members on Pentecost Sunday and centuries ago here in Britain; those joining the church wore white for baptism. Thus you may hear Pentecost Sunday being referred to as **White Sunday or Whitsunday**. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon those followers of Jesus who had gathered scared and confused in a room in Jerusalem. What really took place on the first Pentecost continues to happen to Christians in all parts of the world. Granted, it does not happen in such a dramatic manner as it did in that room in Jerusalem but it still does. We don't witness the Holy Spirit descending upon people from heaven as a wind in tongues of fire, but God pours out the Spirit upon all who put their faith in Jesus Christ and become his followers and servants. Upon receiving this gift, we are

able to confess Christ as friend, savior, Lord and brother. The spirit goes to work in the community of friends, we call the church, helping to bind us together as one body of Christ. He also guides us in our daily lives showing us how to pray and interpreting God's will for us here on earth. Without the Spirit, we would and still do stumble around when we try to put faith into action and that's why we need his constant presence in our lives to make sense of our faith.

The season of Pentecost gives us a unique opportunity to weigh how we approach our life each day. Do we trust our own strength and intellect or do we rely on the power of God's Spirit? Do we allow ourselves to be used as conduits for the Spirit gifts and are the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, and so on evident through our discipleship? As mortals we are limited by our fear and fallen nature not to mention the tendency to be sidetracked from God's intended purpose by the many distractions of the secular world we live in. Pentecost is our time of growth empowered by the Spirit as well as an opportunity to cry to the Lord asking him to allow his Spirit to **fall afresh on us again....**
May the spirit be with you all.
Rev G.

Holy Spirit, unpredictable as the wind, unquenchable as fire, yet gentle as a dove: come now and breathe new energy into our lives and new life into our soul, by your gracious power.

Amen



BANK TOP CHURCH - CONTACTS

Church Telephone Number		593393
Minister	Rev George Mwaura	302540
Church Leader	Mr A Guthrie	591185
Secretary/Treasurer	Mrs V Singleton	305401
Organist – contact	Mrs A Smith	693740
Church Hall Hire	Mrs H Guthrie Mrs V Singleton	591185 305401
Pulpit Supply	Mrs J Skidmore	307130
Flower Secretaries	Mrs M Flitcroft and Mrs C Rideout	
Choir Leader	Mrs A Smith	693740
Newsletter Editor	Mrs J Partington	416007
Serving Elders	Mark Bates, Christine Counsell, Andy Guthrie, Jame Keen, Jill Partington, Maureen Roocroft, Joan Seddon, Sue Seddon, Val Singleton, Julie Skidmore, Alison Spence, Maureen Flitcroft	
Sunday Worship	10.30am Morning Service and Sunday School Church Parade fourth Sunday of month in Jan, Sept, Nov and the Sermons. Communion during the morning service on the second Sunday each month	
Guides	Monday at 7.30pm (contact Mrs V Constantine)	593034
Bank Top Brownies	Monday at 5.45pm (contact Miss K Grainger)	593692
The Oaks Brownies	Tuesday at 6.00pm (contact Mrs G Brown)	306867
Rainbows	Thursday at 6.00pm (contact E Robinson)	415113
Bank Top Art Group	Monday at 1.00pm (contact Mrs V Singleton)	305401
Mother & Toddlers	Tuesday from 9.30 – 11.00am (contact Barbara Jepson)	384514
Lace & Craft Group	Wednesday 7.00 – 9.00pm (contact: Jean Greer)	594127

For Baptisms, (which are held during the Morning Service), Weddings, Funerals, Sick Visiting or Home Communion, please contact the Rev George Mwaura.

If you would like to join our Direct Offering scheme, through the Envelope system, please contact Mrs Val Singleton, who is also available to give advice to those who want to take advantage of Gift Aid.

We also have a Church Memorial Fund – contributions to the treasurer, Val Singleton

We are a pastorate together with Egerton URC and Red Lane URC

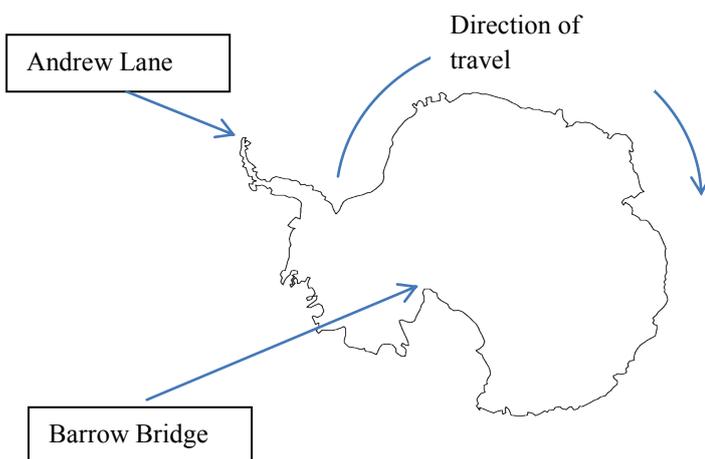
We are a member of Churches Together in Astley Bridge.

**MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR PAST SO IT WON'T
SCREW UP THE PRESENT**



Dear Friends,

Every now and again you have to do something heroic. Not necessarily in the style of Horatio Nelson, Florence Nightingale, the Pankhursts or Douglas Bader, but heroic no less. This last month it was my turn and very appropriately, it was almost 100 years after the Worst Journey in the World, I took up the mantle of Robert Falcon Scott, put on my boots and joined the Bank Top walking group for an expedition to find Barrow Bridge. Without any back-up support we set out **on foot**, under potentially treacherous conditions to make our mark on Great Journeys of Our Time.



You will see from the map that this dangerous journey took us on a circuitous route which is partly explained by the fact that we appeared to have neither map nor compass, but three leaders who each insisted in trying to lead us in different directions. It is also fair to say that the battiest of those leaders (and she knows who she is!) did appear to willingly send us up steep hills for "character building" purposes rather than because they were part of the necessary journey.

The first real crisis happened early on when it was discovered that Val's rucksack was lacking.

Although we suspected she had a mobile defibrillator, bandages, a whistle and flares packed away, what she was lacking was Kendal Mint Cake. This almost compared in seriousness with Scott's catastrophic decision to use ponies rather than dogs, except that we now know you can eat ponies - unlike defibrillators! (Actually it is worth recording at this point that Jill, who had missed her lunch because she was having her nails done, was looking longingly at Val's dog, muttering something about the walk being a dog's dinner - or something similar!)

So, with Ruth out front armed with her Walking Pole (bit like a Sherpa but I think his name was Wojtek) we avoided crevices, and more pertinently, bogs and pot-holes as we continued the great expedition. For posterity and medical purposes I should also report that we had to stop at a number of points so that Jill could take on oxygen, this she did with her neat little electronic vapour device; but then we just pressed on, and on and on....

Anyway, a big thanks to Val because we eventually made it back safely and by the following weekend I'd recovered enough to go on the next Great Trek. (*Competition time from the Great Trek - What was pink and sticky and running down Jill's thighs? Answers with artwork on a postcard please!*)

So, if you fancy a walk (and that's a walk that I'm capable of doing, so it can't be that hard) you should think about joining us on our Saturday afternoon wanderings (meeting at Church at 1:30p.m.) - it really was good fun, with great company.

God bless.

Andy

Bank Top URC Youth Group Charter

What we will do...

- We will be on time for church
- We will be quiet when others are talking
- We will listen and join in with the service
- We will play an active role in church life
- We will stand up and join in singing the hymns

What we will not do...

- We will not play on electronic devices (games and mobile phones) during the service
- We will not be disruptive during the service
- We will not run up and down the aisle during the service

How we will behave...

- We will respect church property and each other
- We will bow our heads when praying
- We will set a good example to the younger children
- We will trust and respect each other

How we won't behave...

- We won't be noisy during the service
- We won't swing on our chairs
- We won't let others persuade us to do something that we know is wrong

Birthday wishes go to:

June

3rd Lewis Sutcliffe
Jessica Collier
13th Matthew Taylor
18th George Worthington-Grime
22nd Alfie Owens



July

5th Matthew Leigh
8th Elizabeth Newton
9th Alexander Leeming

August

1st Liam Sutcliffe
5th Faye McCollin
13th Ella Newton
Katie Johns
21st Jack Owens
23rd Megan Collier



In your prayers please remember

Margaret and Tom Cumberbatch, Judith Kelly, Kath Tyldesley, Howard Thompson and all their families, friends, carers and those worried about loved ones.

Give them faith that you Lord will help them.

CLEANING ROTA

June

7th L Ridyard & G Brown
14th J Dunne & V Constantine
21st P McNulty & J Seddon
28th C Rideout & A Hardman

July

5th A Myers & I Larkin
12th M Bates & J Keen
19th V Singleton
26th M Batty

August

2nd C Catherall & M Flitcroft
9th C Counsell & A Spence
16th Ann & Richard Smith
23rd The Guthries
30th L Ridyard & G Brown





SPACE ACADEMY – HOLIDAY CLUB

**St Paul's Primary School
Monday 22nd – Friday 26th July
10.00am – 12.30 daily**

The holiday club is now in its 7th Year and we are very much looking forward to this year's event. The club is Christian based and is for children from the local area aged from five to eleven. The children take part in craft activities, games and worship and this year's theme is Space Academy and the whole week will be based on the bible book of Daniel.

If you want to register your child please get a form from Val Singleton and return the completed form to her as soon as possible. Places are restricted.

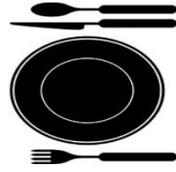
FUN IS STRONGLY GUARANTEED!!!



LOTTERY FUNDED

We are delighted to report that Bank Top Church has been successful in its bid for Lottery Funding for the refurbishment of the kitchen. We have received a grant of £8,385 which we are very grateful for. It means that work can start on the kitchen at the end of July and will hopefully be up and running by the time our brunches and lettings start up again in September.





New Equipment for Church Kitchen

I know we have received some funding from the Lottery, but church still needs to contribute at least £3,000 towards the cost of the kitchen.

One of our church members suggested that we make a gift-wish list (similar to a wedding list) of smaller items which we will need once the refurbishment is complete. Things like: cutlery, crockery, mugs, toaster, kettles, trays, pot towels, hand towels etc. If they wish people can look at the list and donate money to buy something. Please note that we are only asking for contributions for inexpensive items. Let me know if you think this is a good idea. We will then look around and get some ideas on prices.



Village Fair

- We will need lots of volunteers to help on the day; setting up, manning the stalls, helping with games, serving refreshments etc. If you can help then please sign up on the form which you will find on the church noticeboard. We will be very grateful for any help whether it's for one, two or three hours.
- We need volunteers to make sandwiches - please sign up or see me if you can help.
- Bottle Tombola - we need plenty of bottles - any size - any shape - spirits, wine, beer, shampoo, soft drinks etc. If everyone could bring in 2 bottles we would have enough!!!
- Cuddly Toy Tombola - have you got any unwanted cuddly toys that are still in good condition? Then please bring them in for our stall.

PLEASE SUPPORT US IN MAKING THIS YEAR'S VILLAGE FAIR A HUGE SUCCESS



Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

What's been going on in guiding at Bank Top?

Well the guides have been visited by a lady with a guide dog, and they learned a lot about guide dogs and how they make a blind person's life much easier. They were so impressed that they are having a charity stall at the Village Fair and any money they make will go to the Guide Dogs Charity.

The guides have been getting plenty of exercise, with a walk to Darwen Tower (in the mist!) and another walk planned for June when they will be walking around the Jumbles (in the dark!), followed by a sleepover in Church.



Bank Top Brownies have been very busy embarking on a 3-week course at B&Q. Week one was spent discussing Health & Safety with regard to tools and ideas on how they wanted their trinket boxes to look. They will look at painting with brushes, rollers and pads in week two, and in week three they will be building their trinket boxes and will receive their certificates. Well done Brownies!



And finally, our Rainbows have visited Bluebell Potteries on Tonge Moor Road. Bank Top Rainbows are celebrating their 20th Birthday this year and they each painted a piece of pottery in the shape of a chipmunk. The lady who owns the pottery then wrote on '20th Birthday' and then the pots were put in the kiln and fired. The results were truly amazing and the Rainbows were thrilled with them.



Bank Top
United Reformed Church
Village Fair

On the Community Garden, Ashworth Lane



Saturday 6th July
11.30am ~ 3.00pm

BBQ/Sandwiches/Cream Teas/Beer Tent/Stalls
Bouncy Castle/Children's Games
Come along and enjoy the fun

Churches Together In Astley Bridge

Dates For Your Diary

Please find a list of events being held by our Churches Together in Astley Bridge, but also remember that St Peter's, Belmont are part of our group. Please do come along and support the events. We would love to see you!

June 2nd	Astley Bridge Baptist Church Sermons, 4:30 - Afternoon tea 6:00 - Evening service
June 8th	Eagley Bank garden party 12 noon - 5:00p.m.
June 8th	Brass Band concert 7:30p.m. St Paul's Church Tickets £6, children under 14 free
June 15th	St Paul's garden party 1:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.
August 4th	"Praise in the Park", Baptist Church, 4:30pm tea, 6pm hymn singing (outside weather permitting)
August 23rd, 24th, 25th	St Peter's, Belmont A wedding festival of wedding dresses through the ages. Fri & Sat 10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m. , Sun 2:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Admission £3
November 30th	St Peter's, Belmont Christmas Tree Festival/Market Craft Stall Home produce and much, much more Admission free
December 1st	Churches Together Advent Service Astley Bridge Baptist Church 3:00p.m.



Family Bible Readings

June		
2nd	Luke	7:1-10
9th	Luke	7:11-17
16th	Luke	7:36-8:3
23rd	Luke	8:26-39
30th	Luke	9:51-62
July		
7th	Luke	10:1-11, 16-20
14th	Luke	10:25-37
21st	Luke	10:38-42
28th	Luke	11:1-13
August		
4th	Luke	12:13-21
11th	Luke	12:32-40
18th	Luke	12:49-56
25th	Luke	13:10-17



June

2nd	Maureen Flitcroft
9th	Christine Counsell
16th	Vacant
23rd	Maureen Flitcroft
30th	Vacant

July

7th	Mr & Mrs Warburton
14th	Jill Partington
21st	Joyce Jones
28th	The Guthries

August

4th	Arnold & Kate Thornton
11th	Ann, Alex, Carol & Jessica
18th	Joan Seddon
25th	Christine Catherall

FINANCE REPORT



OFFERTORY

February

Cash Collection	166.89
Envelope Collection	418.80
Standing Orders	745.50
TOTAL	1331.19

March

Cash Collection	267.66
Envelope Collection	437.52
Standing Orders	715.50
TOTAL	1420.68

April

Cash Collection	202.96
Envelope Collection	370.25
TOTAL	573.21

BRUNCHES

March	152.70
April	229.45
May	178.50

JARS OF GRACE

Jan - Mar (donated to Water Aid)	122.87
April	9.49

50/50 CLUB

March

J Dunne	50.00	36
A Myers	30.00	30
G Brown	20.00	20

April

V Constantine	50.00	41
J Partington	30.00	33
V Singleton	20.00	44

May

J Rideout	50.00	98
C Rideout	30.00	49
V Constantine	20.00	41

Lent Jars of Change to Water Aid 122.87

**Letter of thanks has been received
from Water Aid**

**Thank you to all those people who continue to
support any or all of the above**

FUTURE EVENTS: JUNE—AUGUST

June			
Sat	1st	12:00 - 1:00	Brunch—The Choir
Sun	2nd	10:30	Morning service, Andy Guthrie
Wed	5th	7:30	Elders' meeting at Andy's
Sun	9th	10:30	Morning Service, Communion, Rev George Mwaura
Sun	9th	2:00	Pastorate Service, Red Lane
Tues	11th	7:45	Housegroup at Val's
Sat	15th	TBA	Llandudno Day Trip
Sun	16th	10:30	Morning Service, Brian Evitts
Sun	23rd	10:30	Morning Service, John Cunliffe
Tues	24th	7:45	Housegroup at Val's
Sun	30th	10:30	Morning Service, Ken Barton
July			
Sat	6th	11:30 - 3:00	Village Fair
Sun	7th	10:30	Morning Service, Andy Guthrie
Tues	9th	7:45	Housegroup at Val's
Sun	14th	10:30	Morning Service, Communion, Rev George Mwaura
Sun	14th	11:30	Church meeting
Sun	21st	10:30	Morning Service, Mark Bates
Sun	28th	10:30	Morning Service, Phil Evans
August			
Sun	4th	10:30	Morning Service, Norman Hindley
Sun	11th	10:30	Morning Service, Communion, Adrian Yapp
Sun	18th	10:30	Morning Service, David Canham
Sun	25th	10:30	Morning, Betty Bamford

