



Stockport Sunday School

September 2021 Newsletter 19



Sunday, September 5th, will be a special day for SSS members, as it will be the first time since March 2019 that we will be able to meet inside Compass Point to join together in worship.

It will be another important step on the way back to normality in our daily lives, and it is right that the theme of our service will be 'Thanksgiving'.

As we look back over the last 18 months, there have been many hardships to endure, and many people to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. Our first thoughts are for those who have worked so hard in the medical services - often putting their own safety at risk.

But the pandemic also highlighted how interdependent modern society is - from those who work in public transport, or the lorry drivers who ensure delivery of goods to the shops, through to the family and friends who we have been unable to meet.



Equally important has been the way in which the majority of the population has accepted restrictions in our daily lives for the benefit of our nation as a whole, highlighted by such basic things as the wearing of face masks in public places. Then there are the many acts of kindness shown by individuals, looking out for their 'neighbours'.

Just a few reasons why we can thank God and hope for a better future.

However, for many people it will be difficult to lift up their hearts at this time; people whose lives have been dramatically changed by Covid:

- the loss of relatives and friends who have died
- people whose long term health has been affected by the disease
- those whose livelihoods have been badly affected, or whose education has been disrupted.

We should not forget them at this time.

If you are one of those people affected, it is possible you may have thought 'why me?'. It is a tough question if you believe in a loving God.



Experience tells us that hard times do not only fall on the 'undeserving', so to speak, and it is hard for us when people we respect, suffer.

But it is not a new problem. I've been reading a series of commentaries on the Psalms, and many of them record the writer's complaints to God about the severe hardships they are experiencing; their difficulties and frustrations in understanding 'why me?'.

Complaining or arguing with God is something we, as Christians, tend to avoid, perhaps feeling such thoughts are disloyal to our professed faith. But were the psalmists more honest in their relationship with God?

On the other hand, when we experience good times, when life is going well - do we then stop and say 'why me?'. Not very often I suspect. We might convince ourselves that our good fortune is due to our own efforts, our own choices. But as individuals, we didn't choose who would be our parents, or where we would live, for example. So much of life can seem subject to chance and circumstances. If nothing else, it should remind us of the virtue of humility.



The simple biblical answer, is that somehow it is the result of a fallen creation. Not much consolation perhaps. But at the core of our faith is our trust in Jesus's teaching and His example. The gospel accounts give many examples of his awareness of life's apparent unfairness.

I wonder, before he started his ministry, did he ask God 'why me?'. Perhaps that's why he went into the wilderness after his baptism by John, to wrestle with what his father wanted him to do.

Or, when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane:

- 'If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me
- Yet not as I will but as you will'

Jesus is the ultimate example that 'bad things' happen to good people.

So, when we are called to live our lives in accord with his example and teaching, we have to be prepared to accept the challenges life throws at us, and walk on with God in faith.



Returning to the theme of our thanksgiving; for the prospect of resuming a more normal life after Covid; may we do so with joy, but also with humility; with an awareness of the hardships still being faced by many people, both in our own country as well as the many nations less fortunate than we are in other parts of our world. And let us pray that all who lead the nations may work together for what is right in God's sight.

With this in mind, I think the prayer Garth used in our last Zoom service is particularly appropriate at this time:

'Almighty God, from whom all thoughts and truth proceed: kindle, we pray Thee, in the hearts of all people the true love of peace, and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward, till the earth be filled with the knowledge of your love: through Jesus Christ, our Lord.'

Amen

We may pray most when we say least, and we may pray least when we say most.

- Augustine

COMING SERVICES

It will be good to be able to meet up and worship together at Compass Point and the Triangle once again.

We hope to arrange a joint service for the two groups once a month with a visiting speaker.

The first of these joint services will be the Harvest on Sunday September 26th at Compass Point at 2.30pm.

Once again we thank Stuart Dean for organising the regular zoom services during lockdown for those of us who were able to access zoom.

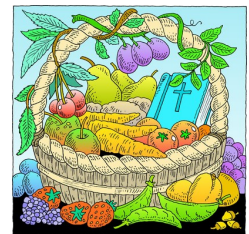


Welcome back



HARVEST

We will be holding our Harvest Service on Sunday 26th November at Compass Point at 2.30pm. We would welcome gifts of tinned, bottled or packet food which will be donated to Wellspring. No fresh food please.



SHOE BOXES

Last year Teams 4 U sent 48,756 shoe boxes out to Romania, Belarus, and Moldova, and they hope that they will be able to increase that number this year.

We hope that some of you will be able to make up shoe boxes again this year for Teams 4 U. There will not be a Shoe Box service this year, but we will fix a date at the beginning of November for members to bring their boxes to a Sunday service at Compass Point. The boxes will be blessed during the service before they begin their journey to a needy child.



THANK YOU

Thank you to all those people who, on Founders' Day, brought Margaret Forster the fronts of Christmas and birthday cards for the shoe boxes.



Margaret also received several packets of used stamps and she was able to send off a packet of these to the Leprosy Mission.

The money raised by the sale of these stamps enables the Mission to run specialist Leprosy Hospitals and provide treatment and drugs to cure the disease.

They are also able to provide prosthetic limbs to people when the progress of the disease has caused the need for amputation. With help from the Mission, people affected by this disease are able to regain mobility and independence.



If you are collecting stamps, please cut them off the envelope leaving about half an inch of paper all round the stamp and put them in the plastic bag pinned on the notice board opposite the kitchen at Compass Point, or give them to Margaret.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank David Young for the gift of a quantity of Sunday School memorabilia collected over the year by the Rev. Bernard Elsdon.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We wish 'Happy Birthday' this month to:-

Cath Brown on 2nd September

Janet Moore on 7th September

Garth Higgins on 17th September

Walter Stead on 3rd October

Elizabeth Keeling on 6th October



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to:

Pam Bowden - 3rd September

Pat Mellor - 9th September



ZOOM SERVICES



ZOOM SERVICE, AUGUST 1ST 2021

Judith Higgins took the service on August 1st. Her first reading was Mark chapter 4 verses 1 -33. Jesus preaches the parable of the sower to a large crowd on the shore of the lake. Later he explains the meaning of the parable to the disciples.

Jesus often spoke to the people in parables based on everyday experiences. This was to help the people understand the meaning of his lesson and yet Mark tells us that he had to explain the meaning to the disciples.

The disciples travelled with Jesus throughout his ministry, heard him speak and witnessed many miracles.

They must have been pleased at his reception into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday but also they were afraid for Jesus' safety as they knew he annoyed many important people by his teaching, the pharisees, Sanhedrin and Roman officials.



After they had received the Holy spirit the disciples continued to travel preaching Jesus message. Eventually they realised that Jesus would not be returning in their life time and that the people who had witnessed what Jesus said and did needed to leave a written record.

In their gospels Matthew and Luke concentrated on the teaching and ministry of Jesus. Matthew records twelve parables, Luke records another eighteen, Mark concentrated on the actions of Jesus and only includes two parables. John mentions none at all.

In all there are thirty two of Jesus' parables on the New Testament. How many can you remember?

THE PARABLE



OF THE SOWER



OR THE PARABLE OF THE FOUR TYPES OF SOIL

ZOOM SERVICE, AUGUST 15TH 2021

Garth took the service on August 15th and began by asking us, "What is your idea of Jesus?" Most of our information comes from the literature of the early church and the gospels. It is believed that Mark was the first gospel to be written starting with the statement, "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ."

John is thought to be the last to write his gospel. He speaks of "In the beginning was the word", referring back to the first book of the Bible Genesis.

The gospels are not just about Jesus' identity but what he did, his healing, his preaching and his suffering.

Some of Jesus' miracles mirror events recorded in the Old Testament. Jesus raised a widow's son in Nain in Galilee. The prophet Elijah also raised the only son of a widow in

Galilee.



Jesus fed the 5000 who had come to hear him preach. Jesus had left the fertile land around Bethesda, crossed the sea of Galilee to the deserted remote area of the Golan Heights. After speaking he orders the crowds to sit in fifties and hundreds before they are fed. This would have reminded the Jews of Moses taking the Israelites across the Red Sea towards the deserted area of the Sinai wilderness and feeding them with quails and manna. In both cases there was plenty left over.

When Jesus asked the disciples who the people thought he was, some said John the Baptist, others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

Jesus is reported to have raised these people from the dead, they went on to live a normal life, dying later but Jesus rose from the dead he passed through death and rose to everlasting life.

AUNTIE ALICE

Just recently, I was sorting through some old family photos and letters when I came across this little verse in Auntie Alice's handwriting copied, I think, from a book of verses, but so appropriate for her. She was a very special lady and, sadly, I don't think that I appreciated her qualities until I was married and a mum.

Auntie Alice, one of four children, had never married and was the daughter left in the family home to lovingly look after my Grandma, who died at 89, and my Grand-dad, who lived to be 102. She had been a trimmer at Christy's Hat Works and was wonderful with her needle, making beautiful dresses for my daughter (her great niece), and trimming and altering costumes for me when I took part in shows and operettas.

She was a member of the Ladies' Class at Heaviley Sunday School, and also a member of the Methodist Guild, attending Hempshaw Lane Mission each Sunday. Auntie Alice always preferred to be in the background, but worked hard quietly and unobtrusively.

Here is her verse:-

Tranquillity

I like to take one hour
Out of the day to call my own.
One hour of sweet tranquillity
Untroubled and alone.

Resting, thinking, reading -
Let the world go by at will
One hour of calm and quiet
While Old Time himself stands still.



Margaret Morris-Jones

Lancashire Hill Sunday School



Recipe

Vegetable Bake

Juice of ½ a lemon

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 red pepper, de-seeded and chopped

1 green pepper, de-seeded and chopped

1 courgette, cut into chunks

2 tomatoes quartered

4 shallots, halved

225g new potatoes

For the topping:

25g breadcrumbs

25g cheddar cheese, grated

2 tablespoons, chopped fresh mixed herbs

Salt and finely ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C Fan/400°F/gas mark 6

In a large bowl, mix together the lemon juice and olive oil. Add the garlic, peppers, courgette, tomatoes, shallots and potatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat with the oil.

Spoon vegetables into a gratin dish and cook for 30 minutes, turning vegetables half way through.

Mix together the breadcrumbs, cheese and herbs and sprinkle over the vegetables. Cook for another 15 minutes or until golden and crisp on the surface.



Some of the following articles are taken from The Parish Pump.

SUCH GOOD NEWS

We older folk are worth a fortune, with silver in our hair, and gold in our teeth, gas in our stomachs, stones in our kidneys and lead in our feet.

Although I've aged a little since we last met, I'm quite a lively old girl, with two men who never leave me alone, there's Arthur Ritus, who with me all the time, and Will Power who gets me out of bed in the morning.



WILSON CARLILE, FOUNDER OF THE CHURCH ARMY

Wilson Carlile was born in Brixton in 1847, and did not set out to become an evangelist. Instead, he was brilliant at both languages and music, and excelled as a businessman. That is, until an economic recession and serious illness brought him crashing down and finished his career, aged only 31.

Not surprisingly, a serious breakdown followed, when Carlile questioned everything that he had been attempting in life. This search for a new meaning brought him to faith in Jesus Christ, and so turned his world upside down. He later wrote:

I have seen the crucified and risen Lord as truly as if He had made Himself visible to me bodily sight. That is for me the conclusive evidence of His existence. He touched my heart and old desires and hope left it. In their place came the new thought that I might serve Him and His poor and suffering brethren.

Wilson approached two Christians whose passion for ministry was already well known: the Americans evangelists Moody and Sanky, who were at that time in England. Wilson attended their meetings and supplied music via his harmonium. In return, he learned a lot about effective outdoors evangelism.

Carlile then prepared himself for a life of ministry. He was confirmed into the Church of England, studied at the London College of Divinity, ordained in 1880 and served his curacy at St Mary Abbots in Kensington. But Carlile wanted more than comfortable parish life, and soon began outdoor preaching again. He wanted to reach the poor, unchurched, of the community.



In the years that followed, Church Army has done great work in evangelism, as well as in social and moral welfare. It helped support the troops during World War 1. Carlile remained honorary chief secretary until retirement in 1926. He died in 1942.

Carlile left Kensington to work in a slum mission, and by 1882 he was busy uniting the local Anglican parish missions into one organisation. Here his business skills in planning and organising proved invaluable, and soon he had founded the 'Church Army.' He then founded two training colleges, to train both men and women evangelists. After slight hesitation, the Church of England agreed to incorporate the Church Army into its structure, and even created the office of Evangelist for the Church Army captains and sisters.



THE PARABLE OF THE WEEDS (MATTHEW 13.24-30)

Ever wonder why there is both good and evil allowed in this world? Jesus told a parable that touched on this subject - it is called the Parable of the Weeds. It runs like this: Consider the world as if it were a field where a Farmer has sown good seed. But then an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. So when the wheat came up, so did the weeds. What to do? Instead of destroying the weeds, and thereby risking the wheat, the Farmer tells his reapers to wait and let both wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. At the harvest he will instruct the reapers to gather up the wheat, but to discard the weeds. So do not despair when evil seems to thrive in this world - there is a reckoning still to come, and justice will be done.

**Those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings
like eagles;**

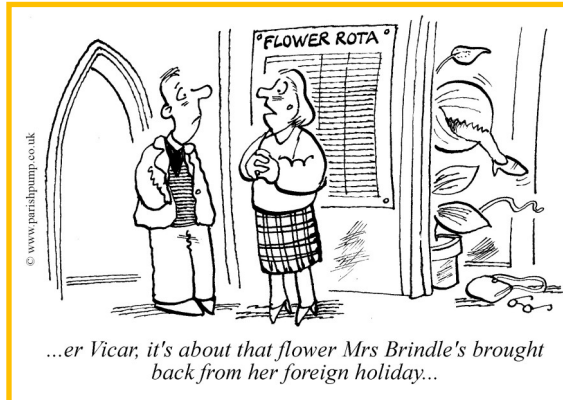


**they will run and
not grow
weary,**



**they will walk and
not be faint.**

Isaiah 40: verse 31



PUZZLES

				1				7
	5		2				9	
		1	3					
			4			3	1	
8								9
	9	2			5			
					6	4		
	3				7		2	
5				8				



Sudoku



WORDSEARCH

Can you find the listed words below in the grid?
The words can be found in any direction.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| Barn | Kingdom |
| Bundles | Let |
| Burned | Master |
| Enemy | Reap |
| Field | Root |
| Gather | Seed |
| Good | Servants |
| Grain | Sleeping |
| Grow | Sow |
| Harvest | Together |
| Heaven | Weeds |

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R E N N N T E N G R O W
R M N W D G A K S D R E
H A O A A N I R H E E E
T S W T L N E V A E H D
N T H E G E O P G R T S
S E L D N U B U R N E D
R R O E I E N I A R G L
D M M E P T R S V D O E
E Y T S E V R A H S T I
E I S E E N N G O O D F
W V N D L T E O O N O G
H L O H S B A R N E M A
    
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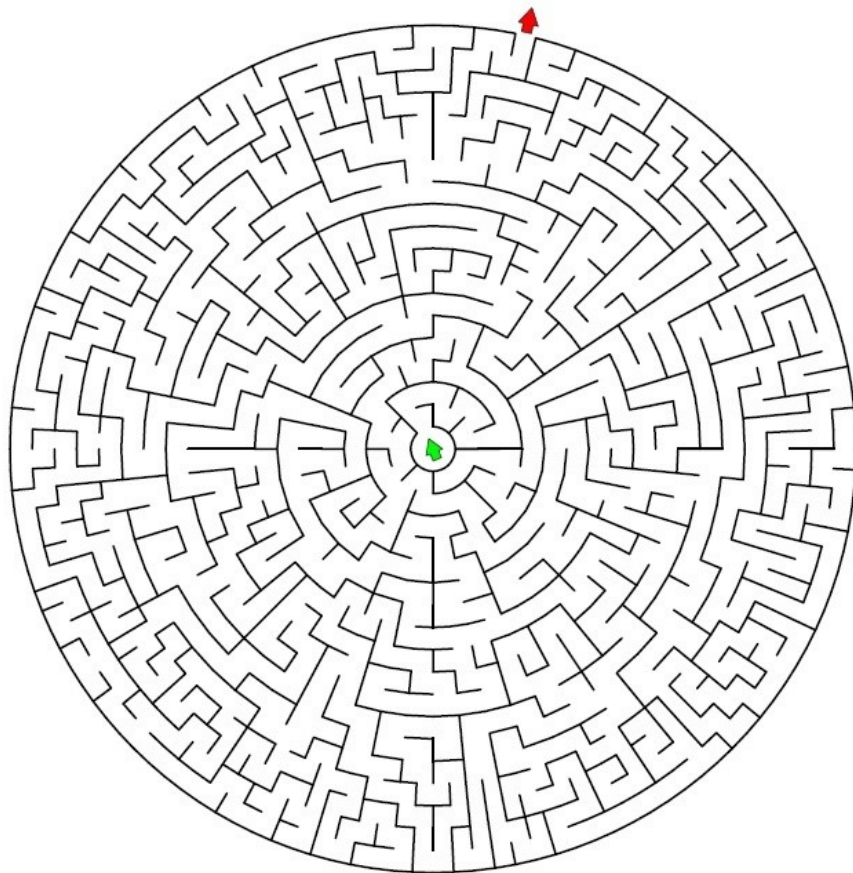
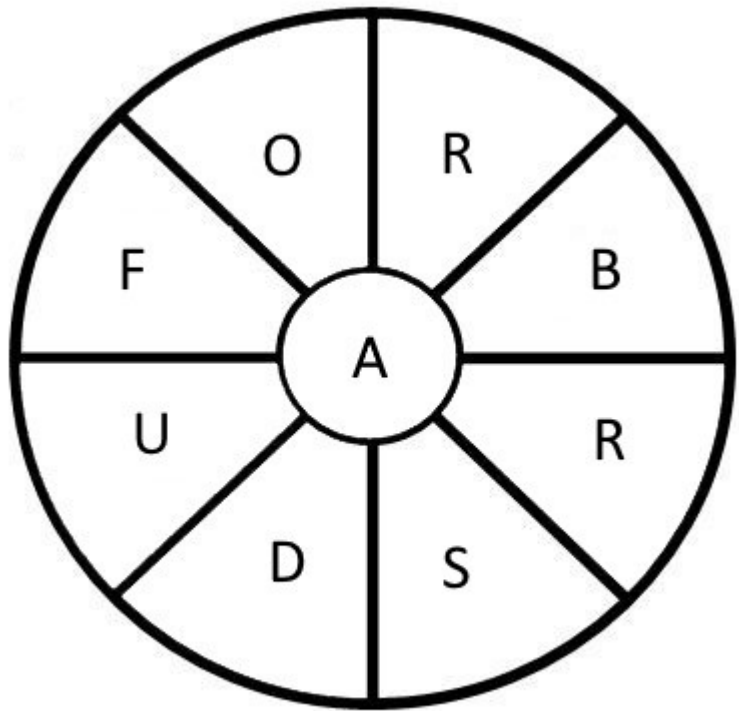


WORD WHEEL

How many words can you make using the letters in the word wheel?

Words must be four letters or more, each word must contain the central letter A. Plurals and proper nouns are not allowed. There is at least one nine letter word.

Good score 9+ Excellent 13+



MAZE

Can you find your way out of the maze?





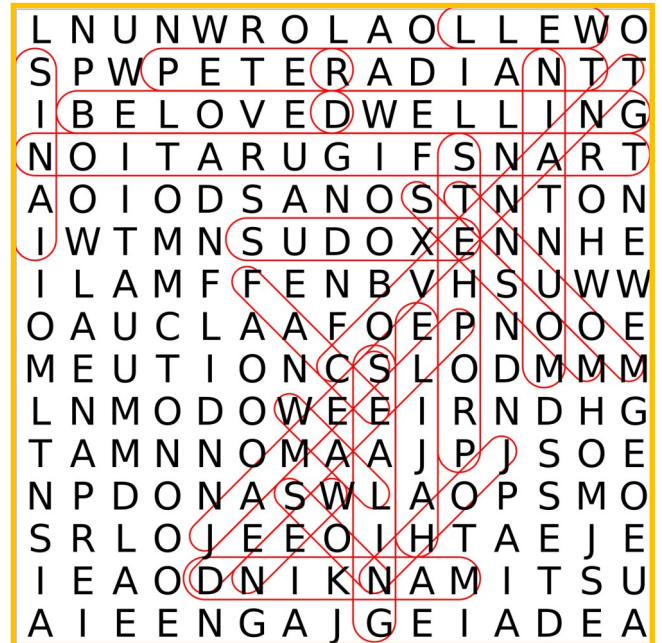
ANSWERS FROM LAST NEWSLETTER

3	5	2	4	1	6	8	9	7
1	4	6	9	7	8	3	5	2
8	7	9	3	5	2	4	1	6
7	9	3	8	2	4	5	6	1
5	1	4	6	9	7	2	3	8
2	6	8	1	3	5	7	4	9
4	8	5	2	6	9	1	7	3
6	3	7	5	8	1	9	2	4
9	2	1	7	4	3	6	8	5



SUDOKU ANSWERS

1. Aramaic
2. John Wycliffe
3. Psalms
4. Bethlehem
5. Matthias
6. Aaron
7. Gopher wood
8. Joshua
9. Curse
10. Saul of Tarsus
11. Lot's wife
12. John the Baptist
13. 350 years
14. Gabriel
15. God



WORDSEARCH ANSWERS

