

**ST JAMES' METHODIST & UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
WOOLTON L25 7RJ**

Web address: <http://stjameswoolton.org>



Weekly Notices 9th – 16th August 2026

This Week's Collect:

Living God, you have placed in the hearts of your children a longing for your word and a hunger for your truth. Grant that, believing in the One whom you have sent, we may know him to be the true bread of heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This week's Worship:

Sunday 9th August 10.30am – Morning Worship Circuit Service & Communion for Rev Peter's Retirement at St James'

This week's readings:

Romans 10: 5-15
Matthew 14: 22-33

Forthcoming services at St James':

Sunday 16th August 10.30am – Jayne McLaren

Sunday 23rd August 10.30am – Chris Annells

Sunday 30th August

On Sunday 30th August our Sunday worship will be a joint service taking place at Garston Park Church at 10:45 am. It would be wonderful if as many of our regular congregation as possible could attend. Andrew Gillespie will be leading the service.

**PLEASE NOTE: ST JAMES' WILL BE CLOSED THAT DAY.
THERE WILL BE NO WEEKLY NOTICE SHEET THAT WEEK.**

Forthcoming events:

Saturday 8th August 10.00am – 1.30pm: Coffee Morning in hall with light lunches

Wednesday 12th August 7.30pm – Wednesday Fellowship Group at Steve and Irene Elliott's home.

Thursday 13th August 9.30am – 11.30am: Morning Coffee

WORSHIPPING BY PHONE:

**IF YOU CANNOT COME TO WORSHIP AT ST JAMES IN PERSON WHY NOT
LISTEN IN**

The dial in instructions are as follows:

Between 2.20pm for 2.30pm on Sunday:

1. From your normal "landline" telephone: Dial: 0333-016-0300
2. You will then be asked for your Room number:
Enter 86 10 75 55 followed by the # key

Then when asked, enter the PIN: 2544 followed by the # key

You will then be directly entered into the pre-service "worship chat".

Please say your name so people know you have joined.

**This Sunday the host is Pam Bellis, Speaker: Liz Hudson reflecting on Jesus and his disciples feeding 5000 people.,
Reading: Matthew 14:13-21, Prayers: Paul Holt**

Thank you from Peter & Anne Hughes

Thank you so much for the generous gift to us from the Church on the occasion of my retirement ("sitting down").

We are really grateful for your kindness. Thanks also for the many cards and kind words. Thanks for the amazing wrestling themed cake following the service on 2nd August and for all the work involved in preparing for the Service on 9th August, including preparation of the refreshments for afterwards.

Thank you for allowing me to be your Minister for the last 9 years. It has not always been easy, especially during the Covid period. However, St James has been a faithful, welcoming, inclusive and outward looking Church and it has been a privilege to be your Minister. As you know, we will be living in Woolton following my retirement so hopefully we will see each other around the village. In order to give you some breathing space and to prepare for my eventual successor, I (Peter) will need to keep my distance for the immediate future, which I am sure you will understand. You will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers. If you want to read my thoughts at greater length, please see the words which I spoke at the Synod in March where I had to seek permission to retire ("sit down"). You will find these attached to the notices.

For now, thank you again, keep strong in your faith, God Bless, Peter

Princes Park Church's Food Pantry:

Princes Park church is a vital source for many local families and they are asking all Circuit churches if we will help to stock their Food Pantry as the school holidays approach and the need is increased. Donations of the following would be gratefully appreciated:

Tinned fruit and vegetables Soup. Pasta. Pasta sauces. Ladies and men's toiletries. Sanitary items. **We will have a box available on Saturday 8th August at our coffee and brunch event in the church hall.** please bring your donations then OR you can bring to church on Thursday or Sunday mornings prior to that. Thank you.

Church Flowers

If you would like to donate money for flowers on a particular Sunday - perhaps in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a happy event - please speak to Jonquil Dickson who can add you to the calendar for the months ahead. Also, if you would simply like to donate for flowers so that we can make sure all Sundays are covered, please speak to Jonquil. At present, we have many dates available. We have a box at the back of church for any donations or small change. All donations are gratefully received.

Praying for the Growth of our Church

Lord Jesus,

We are sorry that at times we feel like giving up.

Open our eyes to the signs of hope which we often miss.

Thank you for new lives born into our families and born again into your kingdom.

Thank you for the growth we experience in our worship and fellowship.

Open our minds to those with whom we could share our faith this week.

In the name of Jesus, Amen

Prayers

Please keep in our prayers this week all those who are in poor health, either in hospital or at home, and their family and friends and those caring for others.

We also pray for everyone in our Church family who are unable to attend church.

Please pray for those known to us who are in need of our prayers this week.

Next weeks' notice sheet

You can download all notices [from our website](#).

Anything you wish to be included in the weekly notices, please email by Thursday evening to:

St.James.notices@gmail.com

Peter Hughes: Speech requesting permission to retire (“sit down”) given at the Presbyteral Synod of the Methodist Church North West England District on 17th March 2026

I was accepted as a Candidate for Presbyteral Ministry in 1986 and started in Circuit in 1990.

After 36 years in Circuit Ministry I am seeking permission to sit down.

Two words, taught to me by my Mother, sum up what I would like to say today: **“Thank You”**.

Thank you to the Lord Jesus for calling me, as a small boy, into relationship with Him.

Thank you to the Methodist Church for giving me an excellent theological education, including a degree in theology at Manchester University. I did not have to pay any fees and there were no student loan payments hanging over me at the end. I was privileged to learn from some great theologians.

At Luther King House, Graham Slater gave sound Methodist guidance. He also insisted that if you understood a subject you should be able to sum it up on one side of A4!

The most important skill I learned at college was to reflect theologically on everything from obscure parts of the Old Testament, through pastoral encounters, films and books to conversations overheard on the bus.

My training equipped me well for Circuit Ministry in the 1990’s. I believed that if I worked hard and did things a bit better than the generation before then the Churches would grow. There have been many encouraging times but the direction, especially towards the end, has been a downward one. It would be hard to argue that the Methodist Church is stronger now than it was in 1990. I share some of the responsibility for that. However, I am proud to have been a Minister in an inclusive, accepting, welcoming and thoughtful denomination.

I have been fortunate to spend my Ministry in places where I have enjoyed living and been happy – Bolton, Southport and Liverpool.

Leaving college I was stationed in Bolton where my Superintendent was John Munsey Turner, who graciously and wisely set me in the right direction.

Throughout my Ministry I have been blessed with good Superintendents and colleagues, lay and ordained, to whom I am grateful.

I have benefited from four sabbaticals and two summer exchanges with Ministers from the USA. These times and experiences have enriched my life and Ministry.

The gifts God gave me and which the Church nurtured in me were as a pastor, and preacher.

I have come to realise that today the Church needs more ministers with gifts in evangelism and community development.

However, the call to a Ministry of Word and Sacrament is the precious thing that all Presbyters share in common, whatever our individual gifts and interests, whatever the era or arena in which we serve.

I have been blessed by many of the new ideas and initiatives that have emerged during the last 36 years. The most helpful of all was the 34 week Disciple Course which I was privileged to lead on several occasions. Disciple is hard work but it always led to people discovering new gifts and deepening their commitment to God.

The Guidance in book 7 of CPD used to include a sentence encouraging Ministers to cultivate a hobby. This is the part of CPD which I have found easiest of all to follow. I have a wide range of passions which have kept me relatively sane. Canal walking, 29 visits to Malta, watching professional wrestling and playing the organ have all enriched my Ministry.

Having been called from the organ bench into the pulpit. I would now like to return to the organ bench and observe the action from a relatively safe distance – just as at the wrestling.

I am grateful to all, within and beyond the Churches who have encouraged, supported, cared for and prayed for me.

I thank my family for the support they have given me during my ministry.

Without my wife, Anne, reminding me to take the things people say in Church meetings with an extra large pinch of salt, I probably wouldn't have survived for 36 years.

As a musician, the words of songs mean a lot to me. One has been in my mind as I have prepared for today.

“Easy” by the Commodores sums up my hope that Sunday Mornings might be easier when I sit down – hopefully at the organ!

Like Lionel Richie, I feel that have paid my dues and done all I can. From now on there will hopefully be less of **“everybody wants me to be what they want me to be”** and more opportunity for me to be free, just me.

I am grateful that God called me to be a Minister in the Methodist Church and I now request your permission to sit down.