

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

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



Weekly Notices 16th – 23rd August 2026

This Week's Collect:

God of the nations, to whose table all are invited and in whose kingdom no one is a stranger: hear the cries of the hungry and mercifully extend to all the peoples on earth the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This week's Worship:

Sunday 16th August 10.30am – Jayne McLaren

This week's readings:

Psalm 133
Psalm 67

Forthcoming services at St James':

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.

Sunday 6th September 10.30am: Andrew Gillespie

Sunday 13th September 10.30am: Marrissa Thorpe, All age worship

Forthcoming events:

Thursday 20th 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 Graham Martin, Speaker: Steve Elliott,
Reading: Liz Hudson, Prayers: Irene Elliott**

Praying for the Growth of our Church

*God of mission, who alone brings growth to your church,
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, joy to our worship, and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local community,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN*

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

Thank you for everything that was done to make the Circuit Farewell Service on Sunday 16th August such a special occasion.

I am grateful to Margaret Dee, Dave and Jonquil Dickson for their work as Communion Stewards, helping the communion to flow smoothly. Thanks to Dave Bedford and Peter Bounds for the music, Irene Elliott as the vestry Steward and Steve Elliott as reader.

A huge thank you to Wendy Doig and her team on the catering, which I think consisted of Margaret Dee, Dave & Jonquil Dickson, Glenys Evans, Liz Hudson, Pam Bellis and maybe a few others who were working so hard that I didn't even see them! Apologies if I have left any of you out. I know the visitors from Southport especially appreciated the lunch before their minibus trip home.

I am sorry if I didn't say goodbye properly to everyone. I got to the point where I just had to take a deep breath and walk out for the last time (for now).

Thank you to all of you for your cards, gifts and kind words. Most of all, thank you for your support over the years and the love which you have shown to Anne and I.

God Bless,

Peter

UNICEF WALK

Once again, a massive thank you to everyone who supported and donated to the sponsored walk for UNICEF. The final amount raised is £1,500, a fantastic amount which will support children in crisis all over the world. Jane Laverty.

COFFEE MORNING

Our Saturday coffee and brunches on 8th August raised £344.00.

Thank you to everyone who supported us and many, many thanks to those who worked so hard to make it happen!

Request from an accommodation unit we support

We are looking for donation of a double bed
If anyone has one they are considering letting go!
Please contact Wendy on 07867795179

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.

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.