

Found by Jesus – Reflections from the Diocesan Centenary Conference

This week I had the privilege of attending the Diocese of Blackburn's Centenary Conference at Liverpool Hope University. I have to confess, as the day approached, I wasn't entirely convinced it was where I should be. Taking four days away from parish ministry, particularly in the final week before the school holidays, felt very indulgent. All I could see was the growing mountain of work waiting for me back at St Leonard's. So, if I'm honest, it was a somewhat reluctant—and slightly grumpy—Rev Simon who headed south down the M6 on Monday lunchtime.

I needn't have worried. The welcome set the tone for the whole week. Bishop Philip, standing in the sunshine directing traffic with a giant yellow foam finger, immediately reminded us that this was going to be a conference that didn't take itself too seriously! Over the following four days, through outstanding keynote

speakers, inspiring worship, thought-provoking workshops and a diocesan birthday celebration unlike anything I have ever experienced, one thing became abundantly clear: ours is a wonderfully diverse Diocese, united by a shared love for Jesus Christ and a desire to see his Kingdom grow.

The conference theme, "Found by Jesus," was drawn from Luke's Gospel and the Book of Acts. My mornings began with Bible teaching from Jeremy Duff, the new Dean of Emmanuel Theological College. His engaging style, humour and fresh insights into Jesus' parables reminded me just how brilliantly those familiar stories were crafted. I suspect one or two of his ideas may well find their way into future sermons here at St Leonard's!

Another personal highlight was attending a preaching workshop led by my former college tutor, the Revd Dr Matt Allen. It was a joy to sit under his teaching again and to be reminded of

the privilege and responsibility of opening God's Word week by week. Closer to home, it was also good to hear the Revd Dr Tom Woolford, who gave an excellent seminar exploring the Council of Jerusalem and the way the Church has continued to gather, discern and make difficult decisions together throughout its history.

The music throughout the conference was brilliant. We were introduced to a brand-new hymn written especially for the Diocese's centenary celebrations, celebrating the rich Christian heritage of Lancashire. I very much hope we'll be able to sing it together at St Leonard's once the music becomes available.

Perhaps the biggest surprise came on the final evening. The Rector's lawn was transformed into a birthday celebration complete with crazy golf, a silent disco led by three clergy DJs and even Bishop Philip enthusiastically taking on an enormous inflatable game of Whack-a-Mole!

It perfectly reflected his challenge to us all to "pray hard and play hard."

Yet, for me, the greatest gift of the conference wasn't any particular speaker or event. It was simply spending time with colleagues from across Lancashire, sharing stories, encouraging one another and being reminded that none of us serves alone.

I came home tired—but refreshed. Encouraged by the faith, commitment and vision of so many people serving Christ across our Diocese, I found myself reflecting on Luke's Gospel once again. The same Holy Spirit who empowered the disciples all those years ago is still at work today. He is still calling people, still transforming lives, still building his Church.

As we celebrate one hundred years of the Diocese of Blackburn, that seems a wonderful reason to give thanks—and an even better reason to look forward with a fresh sense of calling and real hope.



What's On at St. Leonard's

Weekly Events

Yoga with Linda. Mondays at 6.15pm Contact: Linda on 07963 111239

Magic Moments Memory singing group. Tuesdays at 10.30am.
Contact Skylarks on 07538 580296

Skylarks Community Choir. Mondays from 11am to 12noon. Contact Skylarks on 07538 580296

Rawstorne Singers. Wednesdays at 7.30pm to 9.30pm Contact: rawstornesingers@gmail.com

St. Leonard's Church Choir. Thursdays at 6.45pm. Contact : saintleonardspenwortham@gmail.com

Ling Shui Tai Chi Club. Thursdays at 7pm. Contact Mark at info@taichipreston.co.uk

St. Leonard's Gilbert & Sullivan Group. Fridays at 7.30pm. Rehearsals for next show "Iolanthe".
Contact: stleonardsgsg@gmail.com

Preston Society (Birdwatching and Natural History) - Mondays at 7.30pm in church (From October to March)
For more information and current programme of talks and trips please go to www.prestonsociety.co.uk
Contact: prestonwildlife@gmail.com or 07565 497065

Term Time only

Boosh After-School Club. Weekdays—Monday to Wednesday. Contact Fiona on 07890 502966

Love2 Learn Mondays from 10am
Interactive and engaging phonics education for preschool children. Contact: lovet2learn.org.uk

Rainbows and Brownies. Tuesdays at 5pm and 6.15pm. Contact Wendy (Rainbows) on 07846 490876 or Sinead (Brownies) on 07855 865513

L.E.Y.M.E.R.S (Lancashire Early Years Music Educators)
Music Sessions for Early years in a session of fun and engaging music making. Wednesdays at 9.30am
Contact: www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/89924 or just turn up, but place not guaranteed

Monthly Events - Just turn up!

Talking Tables & Chatting Chairs. Usually 1st Tuesday at 1.30pm until 3.30pm

Messy Church for children. Next dates - Saturday 3 October & Saturday 12 December from 10am to 12noon

A Purrfect Friend Jumble Sales. Usually 4th Saturday at 11am to 12noon



Dates for your Diary August to December 2026



August

Friday 14 August - Bloom Town and Play (Stay and Play Sessions for young children) (Large Hall) See poster on church porch notice board. Book a place: Colleen Coppenhull 07561126958 or prettybloomevents@outlook.com

Friday 21 to Monday 24 August - Parishes in Bloom at BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL.—Please put your name on the list at the back of church if you wish to go on the coach. Day to be decided.

September

Saturday 5 September - A Purrfect Friend Extravaganza 2pm (Hall)

Friday 11 to Sunday 11 September - Diocesan Centenary Weekend – Please watch this space for further details.

Sunday 20 September - Autumn lunch in the hall

October

Saturday 3 October - Messy Church 12noon to 2pm (Hall)

Sunday 4 October - Preston Symphony Orchestra Concert in Church - Tickets online from

Sunday 11 October - Harvest Festival— Services at 8.30am, 10am with Choral Evensong at 6pm

Saturday 17 October - Preston Cecilian Choral Society - "Come and Sing Choruses from Messiah"

Rehearsal at 10am, Performance at 5pm

Friday 30 October - Bloom Town and Play (Stay and Play Sessions) - Spooky town themed event for young children (Large Hall) Book a place: Colleen Coppenhull 07561126958
prettybloomevents@outlook.com

November

Sunday 1 November - Patronal Festival Communion Services at 8.30am and 10am.

Patronal Lunch in the hall at 12.30pm, Choral Evensong at 6pm

Sunday 15 November - Gilbert & Sullivan Group concert 2pm in Church

Sunday 21 November - A Purrfect Friend Christmas Fair 2pm in the Large Hall

Saturday 28 & Sunday 29 November - Christmas Tree Festival in Church and Halls

December

Saturday 5 December - Bloom Town and Play (Stay and Play Sessions) Christmas Elves themed event for young children (Large Hall) Book a place: Colleen Coppenhull 07561126958
prettybloomevents@outlook.com

Sunday 6 December - Preston Opera concert 2pm

Sunday 6 December - Choral Evensong 6pm in Church

Sunday 12 December - Messy Church for Christmas in the Large Hall

Church Services at Christmas to be confirmed

www.stleonardspenwortham.org.uk

In Association with Preston Arts Festival

**Preston
Symphony
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Leader
Peter Blackburn

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Preston Symphony Orchestra perform your favourite music from Stage and Screen.

Selections from Mary Poppins, Jesus Christ Superstar, Cats, Chicago, and many others...

Including new music specially composed and conducted by our friend Bill Connor.

An evening not to be missed!

Sunday 4th October 2026 at 7pm

**St Leonard's Church, Marshalls Brow
Penwortham PR1 9JA**

Tickets Adults: £15; U18: £8

www.ticketsource.co.uk/preston-symphony-orchestra



BLOOM & PLAY TINY TOWN STAY & PLAY SESSIONS



Come and explore our pop-up role play town, filled with beautiful wooden play equipment, ride-on toys and fancy dress.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES

All centred around a community park complete with an ice cream van, picnic area, post box and cosy reading corner – a calm, welcoming space particularly suited to babies and younger explorers.

90-MINUTE SESSIONS		
Friday 24th July	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)
Friday 7th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)
Friday 14th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Leonard's Church Hall, Penwortham (PR1 9JA)
Saturday 29th August	10:00am & 12:15pm	St Peter's Church Hall, Chorley (PR6 0HP)

Under 1 year
£3.50

Ages 1-6 years
£7.50

Discounts available for multiple child bookings
Complimentary refreshments included

DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-6 YEARS



SPACES ARE LIMITED –
FIND BLOOM & PLAY TINY TOWN ON FACEBOOK TO BOOK!

Step Together in Faith

WALK TO CHURCH Month

DURING July

A Healthy Step for You,
A Stronger Step in Faith.

- GOOD FOR YOU**
Walk for your health and well-being.
- GOOD FOR OUR COMMUNITY**
Build connections and care for others.
- GOOD FOR YOUR FAITH**
A step closer to God, together.

LEAVE WORRIES BEHIND. TAKE STEPS OF Faith

LET'S WALK TOGETHER!

- WALK for Health**
- WALK for Community**
- WALK for Christ**

EVERY STEP MATTERS. ALL ARE WELCOME!

KIDS SUMMER CAMP

PRIME SPORTS

£1 SUMMER BOOKINGS

AFTERNOON MULTI SPORTS SESSIONS ARE BACK!

KINGSFOLD VENUE ONLY

VENUE: Penwortham Community Centre
Kingsfold Drive, PR1 9EQ

AGES: Open to children aged 4 – 13

WHEN: Afternoon session only
1:30pm – 6pm

PRICE: Just £1 per booking
Afternoon session only

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