Blackley Baptist Church

Gatherings for Peace



The Broadcaster

April - May 2024

Welcome to the April/May edition of The Broadcaster.

We hope that you enjoy reading our magazine, and that it helps to keep you in touch and up to date with all that is happening here at Blackley. We are a friendly and inclusive church, meeting together every Sunday, gathering for Peace.

Hello from our Ministers!

Dear Friends,

Jo says her 'Hello' throughout this edition as she's done all the editing and quite a bit of the writing. Here, Nikki and I each share a little about Experiencing Easter.

My regular dog walk with Rosie takes me up the lane to the Golf House at Bradley Hall Golf Course. It's a lovely walk with the hillside on the left and the golf course and fields beyond on the right. It was dusk and as I looked, movement caught my eye and I spotted not one, not two, but three fawns crossing the golf course. They saw us and stopped, looking directly at us and we stopped as well. They were absolutely still and so were Rosie and I. We just stood and looked intently at them in stillness and silence as they looked at us. This went on for a number of minutes and somehow the stillness was so still that it spoke to me of God. It was a time of awe and wonder at seeing the new life of these three wild fawns. It was an experience of stillness, God, creation and new life that came as gift, which I could so easily have missed. It remains in my memory as a treasured experience. I wonder if you have an experience of Easter to share?

Andy

Nikki writes...

For me, this poem captures something important about the nature of resurrection. Neither Easter, Jesus, the Cross or the tomb are named but we know it's about being trapped, feeling 'dead', yearning for new possibilities, new life.

I like it because it combines the longing, the hoping, the effort of trying to 'make it happen' with the experiential reality that we can never do it ourselves.

We need to truly desire it but we are not in control - new life comes as gift, it is wonder-full.

The poem is by Ruth Fainlight, now 92, who was born in America but lives in the UK. She was a close friend of the poet Sylvia Plath (who is buried in 100 yards from our house in Heptonstall) and was married to the author Alan Sillitoe.

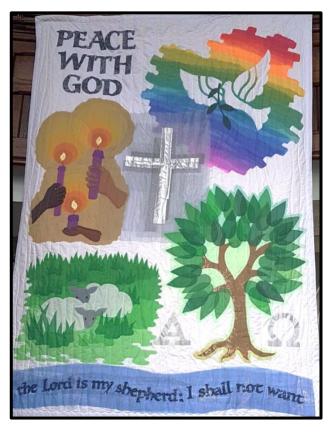
The Angel

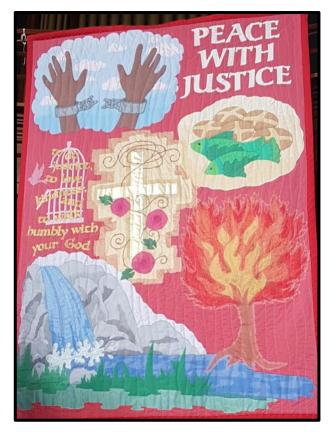
Sometimes the boulder is rolled away, but I cannot move it when I want to. An Angel must. Shall I ever see the angel's face, or will there always only be that molten glow outlining every separate hair and feathered quill, the sudden wind and odour, sunlight, music, the pain of my bruised shoulders.

The Blackley Banners

Way back in the mists of time – well, March 2023 actually – a suggestion was made to depict our 5 areas of 'Gathering for Peace' as banners to decorate our lovely chapel, and to help us as we embody our vision. At our All Age service in May 2023 we spent time 'wondering' what these may look like, making some suggestions in small groups. The very wonderful Gail Lawther, a quilter and banner maker, took our paper scribbles and sketched out what these could look like. Another small group met to look at the ideas, the banners were commissioned and created and the results were displayed on Easter Sunday!

Each banner offers several images to help us ponder and reflect on our 'Peace with...' areas, using the colours that we have 'attached' to the topic. The hope is that they will take us further into our vision of Gathering for Peace, as well as brighten and enhance the beauty of Blackley Chapel. So here they are!











The banners are yet to be hung in their correct positions, and so the photos may not 'hang straight' but hopefully they convey the life, the colour, the vibrancy that Gail has given to our ideas. Personally, I find them inspiring as they take me deeper into wondering and reflecting on what we can do as God's people, here in beautiful West Yorkshire, to grow the peace of Christ in our hearts and lives, in our communities, in our churches, and in our world.

We are excited to re-start 'Playing with Peace' Toddler Group.

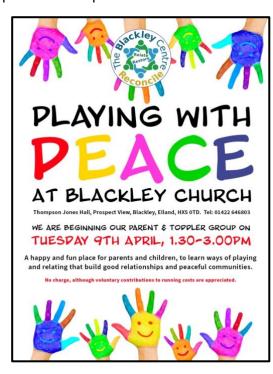
New Time: Tuesdays at 1.30 pm until 3.00 pm

We are even more excited to introduce you to
Michelle Edwards
who is our new Co Playleader.
Michelle brings with her oodles of fun,
enthusiasm and experience of working with
small children, and we are delighted to have her
as part of the team.

We will still be needing volunteers to come and be with parents and children, helping to create the lovely friendly atmosphere that we had before.

Do speak to Jo, or Michelle, if you would like to be a part of the support team!

No setting up required!!!



Peace with God...

... through Worship at Blackley

Worship on Sundays will be in the chapel at Blackley, and on Facebook, at 10.30 am, and now on You Tube. It will be led by one or more of our ministers, Andy, Jo and Nikki, unless otherwise stated. Please note that Worship for Everyone at 2.00 pm on the first Sunday of the month will not be on Facebook or You Tube for Safeguarding reasons but will be on the church Zoom account. Contact Andy or Jo for the link.

Sun 7 th April	BBC 1	Worship for Everyone at 2.00 pm	
Sun 14 th April	BBC 2	Worship, led by Revd Tim Presswood	
Sun 21st April	BBC 3	Worship with Communion + Groups for Children	
Sun 28 th April	BBC 4	Worship	
	6.00 pm	Prayers for Peace and Justice	
Sun 5 th May	BBC 1	Worship for Everyone at 2.00 pm	
Sun 5 th May Sun 12 th May	BBC 1 BBC 2	Worship for Everyone at 2.00 pm Worship	
,			
Sun 12 th May	BBC 2	Worship	

... through learning together

Spring Bible Studies

We've had two discussions on the themes of the new banners in church, which illustrate our sense of church identity around our 5 peace themes. We've met in Jenny Howland's house and been sustained not only by stimulating discussion but also by tea, coffee, biscuits and fondant fancies (thank you Jenny!) Anyone is welcome! We don't expect we will all agree about everything but we've all benefited from sharing our thoughts, questions and experiences.

We've already considered 'Peace with one another' and 'Peace with justice'.

On Wednesday 10th April we will be reflecting on 'Peace with creation'; a fortnight later - Wednesday April 24th - will be 'Peace with God' and the following fortnight, Wednesday May 8th, we will consider what 'Peace within' means for us. There will be a final meeting to consider what we've learned and share further thoughts - Wednesday May 22nd.

All start at 2.30, we talk for about an hour before refreshments and we finish by 4. Jenny lives at 16 Broomfield. I can give a lift to anyone who's stuck for transport, or join us on Zoom. Come to them all or any particular one, each session stands alone - even the concluding one.

My mobile number is 07722 093965 if you want further details or a lift.

Nikki

Peace with Justice...

... through Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week is fast approaching, and we will be looking for ways to support the work of Christian Aid. As part of Christian Aid Week's Appeal this year, they are telling the story of Aline, who lives in Burundi.

In Burundi, malnourishment and poverty affect more than 70% of the population, making survival a daily struggle. Jobs and food are hard to come by, and those who have homes often have no

electricity or running water. For Aline, life was a constant struggle. She was married young and gave birth to her eldest son, Fisto, when she was just 14 years old. Aline experienced constant abuse at the hands of her violent husband.

A few years later, Aline faced even more devastation. Her husband married another woman, forcing Aline to flee. He prevented her from taking their children with her, and in a further act of cruelty, told the

local community that Aline was mentally ill and unable to care for her children.



"I wandered the streets, asking anyone for a place to sleep. Those who showed me kindness would let me stay for two or three days, but it was difficult. People would insult me and treat me with contempt. They forgot I was a human being. It filled me with sorrow."

Hungry, scorned and alone, Aline took her first step towards her new life. She started by participating in a transformative three-day community workshop, funded by Christian Aid. She was taught how to form a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) and establish a steady income. VSLAs mean people can save for their future and borrow money to kickstart small rural businesses. With all she had learned, Aline's dream of getting her children back finally felt possible.

'I came out with amazing knowledge and skills. The trainer restored a sense of hope and energy in me,' says Aline.



With a small start-up loan, Aline started trading avocados and peanuts locally. With her profits, she bought a bicycle so she could transport greater quantities of goods to markets further afield. Eventually, her hard work had finally paid off, and she had earned the money she needed to rent a house.

Once Aline secured a home for herself, her three eldest sons were able to escape their father and join her. They told Aline that their father had abused them and sent their three young siblings to live with different members of his family. Aline still hopes that she'll be reunited with her youngest children in time.

Today, Aline lives peacefully on her own plot of land in a remote village in the Kayogoro Commune in Makamba Province. She's baked her own bricks and is building a strong home for her and her children in every sense. She can afford food, clothes and essential healthcare for her family. She's also purchased solar panels so her children can do their evening homework by electric light.

"I like to feed my family with the produce that I grow, such as beans, vegetables and corn. I am so happy that we are together. Now my children feel supported as they have a parent who can meet their needs." - Aline.

Of course, Burundi continues to be one of the toughest places on earth to live. The future is uncertain and challenges wait for families like Aline's around every corner. However, now when crisis threatens her family's survival, Aline has options. Even a small business can provide just enough resilience to weather the most brutal of storms here in Burundi.

If you would like to support the work of Christian Aid there will be the usual opportunity to make your own personal gift through the envelopes that will be available at church, as well as helping with the House-to-House collection in Blackley.

... through The Amos Trust

In response to the ongoing conflict in Gaza, at Blackley we have been giving to The Amos Trust

Amos Trust believes that another world is possible, a world where justice flows, the silenced are heard and no one is forgotten. We work to challenge injustice, restore rights and create hope. We work with vibrant grass-roots partners around the world who have unique local experience, expertise and connections — developing local solutions to global issues. Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Amos Trust is rooted in the inclusive stream of Christianity that stresses justice and liberation for the oppressed. We work to create this through non-violence, reconciliation and peace. In all our areas of work we set out to challenge attitudes which diminish justice and make liberation harder.

Amos' name was inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King's use of the Hebrew prophet Amos' call to "Let justice flow like rivers".

Our Values

- HOPE We work to nurture hope because hope is essential to human flourishing and has the power to transform our world.
- JUSTICE We know that justice is essential for long-term peace, for reconciliation and for societies to prosper.
- RIGHTS We believe in human dignity and rights for all. We want to help people know, defend and claim their rights.

Gaza Emergency Appeal Update March 2024

Since the start of the conflict on 7th October, Amos Trust has been able to send over £350,000 of emergency support to Palestine — over £310,000 of this has gone to our partners and other organisations that we work closely with in Gaza and £40,000 has been sent to the West Bank. Our commitment has been to get as much money and aid in as quickly as possible to local communities in Gaza as they desperately need it.

All details taken from the Amos Trust Website www.amostrust.org/ 9.3.24

So far, at Blackley, through gifts and offerings, including donations at the Holy Week Breakfasts we have raised nearly £270. Thank you so much... and the collection, like the need, continues...

Peace with Creation

Talk of climate change and environmental sustainability is all around us. Such a big topic! So much talk about it; it can feel like information overload and although we feel guilty about it we find it hard to actually do very much at all.

But, whatever the mechanism, a key part of nearly everybody's Christian faith is (to quote the very first words of the Bible) 'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth ...'.

How can we find ways to be more at peace with the gift of our world?

Back to basics: The 3 R's, which we probably all know environmentally speaking are:

Reduce... Reuse... Recycle.

(Some talk of 5 Rs ... but that will have to be for another time!)



I've been thinking in particular about the first one - Reduce.

Do you watch Stacey Solomon's 'Sort your Life out?' If you haven't ever seen it, I would encourage you to watch an episode. A playful and endearing team of 4 come to the home of a family whose lives have been significant diminished by the amount of 'stuff' they've acquired over the years. The family have agreed to get rid of at least half their possessions and the team then re-order the house to make it work well for the family and bring them joy. Why I'm encouraging you to watch is to see the 'Warehouse' moment. Everything in the house is packed up and taken to a huge warehouse where it is laid out – and seeing the amount of stuff they have acquired never fails to shock the family. We may not have as much as the featured families, but we all have far, far more than we need. It happens without our realising it.

Part of our decision to uproot ourselves from Northampton and seek part time ministerial roles in church communities was to downsize and shift to a less materialistic way of life. Sorting through all we had, selecting only the things that were necessary or that had particular significance for us was something we haven't regretted. The real challenge wasn't the sorting and the selling/donating but discovering a new attitude so that now we do not buy things we don't really need or don't truly know will bring us pleasure. It is so easy to trick ourselves.

This is a very counter-cultural mind-set, but feels much closer to the mindset of the man who told us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air.

Do you have a 'green' suggestion that can help us make Peace with Creation? If so, why not share it here in the Broadcaster, for we all leave a footprint on this planet so let's make it a green one!



Nikki

Peace with One Another...

Part of our collective life here at Blackley is sharing in each other's joys and struggles, and those of our families.

A cost of good relationships is the pain experienced at loss, and as a close church family we have been rocked by pain of several deaths and partings over the last couple of months. On Monday 4th March, Fixby Crematorium, Huddersfield was packed with family and friends to say farewell to Roy Bennett. Roy had been a committed member of Colne Valley Male Voice Choir and it was both comforting and uplifting to hear the chapel filled with beautifully sung hymns. Jean, supported by Angela and Alison, was very grateful for all the support, love, cards and flowers, and for the service which gave thanks to God for a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and friend. A true gentleman!

Guy Hirst left Roy's service to visit Wendy who had been taken into hospital over the weekend. Very sadly Wendy's courageous struggle with Parkinson's became too much and she died on Thursday 7th March. On Monday of Holy Week it was Blackley Chapel that was packed with family and friends, and daffodils, to say goodbye to Wendy. It was a real celebration of the 'Season of Wendy', with wonderful tributes from the family, giving thanks for a courageous, unique spirit – our funny, loving Wendy. We, of course, send our love and concern to all of Wendy's family but especially to Guy, holding him and them in our prayers.

It was with huge sadness that we also shared the news of the death of Derek Hagreen, close friend to Joe Braithwaite and to others here at Blackley. It was so lovely to have spent time with Derek at our New Year Church Meal back in February where we shared laughs and food together – it made it all the more shocking to hear of his death following a fall downstairs from which he never really recovered. Joe offered a great tribute at Derek's service at Southgate Methodist and we continue to remember Joe and all Derek's family and friends in our prayers.

Desley and Andrew have also experienced a close bereavement in the loss of Desley's closest friend Cath, and Jo and Andy have also been supporting friends in Burnley following the death of one of their former congregation and friend. So, we hold all who grieve the loss of loved ones in our prayers and in our hearts, offering them our support in their pain and understanding as they move into a new 'season' themselves following their loss.

Finally, 2 other partings – although, thankfully, not through death. Over the last year Gloria Dyer has been worshipping with us at Blackley but is now returning to the Southwest. This decision and change has come about quite quickly, but we hope to be able to say 'Goodbye' properly before she goes, sending her off with our love and God's blessing as she begins a new chapter back in Bristol. George, one of our new friends from The Rock has been moved to the Newcastle area. Hopefully this will be a good move for George, and we remember him and all our other friends at The Rock in our prayers.

Quite a few of our folk have been having tests and appointments over recent weeks, and there has been quite a bit of ill health and poorly-ness around. We remember you all in our prayers – do keep in touch with us to let us know how you are doing and what we can do to help. We wish you strength and healing, and God's unfailing peace in all things.

Meetin	ne i	and	Events
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Tuesdays @ 1.30 - 3.00 'Playing with Peace' Parent and Toddler group

Thursdays @ 10.00 Meeting to Work and Pray

Northumbria Community Morning Prayer (PS)

Church Working Party. Volunteers always welcome!

Joining together for...

Thursdays @ 11.00 Coffee and Chat for all – Prayers, Workers, Walkers, and You!

Thursdays @ 11.20 Singing group (as advised)

Other Meetings/Events (known at the time of printing)

Wednesday 10th April 10.00 am Property and Finance Meeting in PS

2.30 pm Spring Bible Study Group at Jenny's 'Creation'

Wednesday 17th April 10.00 am Deacons, Officers and Ministers Meeting

Lunchtime Shake-it-al-about Group

Friday 19th April 10 – 4 pm Peace and Quiet Day at the Centre

Wednesday 24th April 2.30 pm Spring Bible Study Group at Jenny's 'Peace with God'

Friday 26th April Mediation Skills Training begins at The Blackley Centre, and

continues every Friday for 5 weeks.

Wednesday 8th May 2.30 pm Spring Bible Study Group at Jenny's 'Peace Within'

Fri 17th – Sun 19th May Baptist Assembly at Telford

Wednesday 22nd May Final Gathering of Spring Bible Study Group at Jenny's

Sunday 26th May

Church and Congregation Members Meeting.

Thurs 30th May

11.30 – 3.00 Blackley Centre Trustees meeting

Shake-it-all-about!?

I'm sure we've all enjoyed doing the Hokey Cokey at some point - it's something all ages can join in with and it's fun. 'In, out, in, out, shake it all about'. A lot of people enjoyed the picnic on the field last summer to celebrate the Coronation, a good time was had by all at the Christmas and Pancake parties earlier this year. So we decided to re-start/re-invent the old ABC/New Team to organise some more occasions to just get together, to enjoy being with one another and perhaps get to know each other a little more.

We know that today few people have first-hand experience of church; setting foot in a church can be an unattractive prospect and a lack of knowledge about what goes on can make even the interested cautious to give it a try. We want to make it easier for people to explore and discover faith and church life for themselves, in a way that works for them. We want too to have more reasons to engage with more people outside the church by offering some opportunities to connect. But finding a point to genuinely connect can be tricky, often with suspicion on their side and overly high expectations on ours.

The biggest factor is probably simply building relationships, relationships based on trust and non-judgemental 'positive regard'; offering or receiving an unconditional welcome ... so a group of Pauline Barnard, Joe Braithwaite, Sue Clough, Pam Smith and myself have started to plan some events where those of us with faith who are 'the church' would be on an equal footing with those who might enjoy coming along to a simple community event. To shake all our habits and assumptions up a bit in a light-hearted way ... hence the name of the group. 'Shake-it-all-about.'

The first event will be on **Saturday July 6th**. It will be **'A warm-up for the Olympics'** when - we hope - the sun will be shining and all ages will be able enjoy (and participate in if feeling inclined) some simple races, activities and food together. We'll be wholly indoors if the weather isn't kind to us. Put the date in your diary. More details to follow.

If you have some ideas or want to be part of the planning group for this or other events, see me or one of the other group members. We're meeting again, over our packed lunches, on Wednesday April 17th. You would be especially welcome if you have the freshness of never having been part of a 'committee' at church. Help us shake it all about!

Nikki



APRIL 2024		
7	-	
14	Mr Joe Braithwaite	
21	Mrs Margaret Jackson	
28	Mrs Pauline Goodridge	
	MAY 2024	
	Mig.	
5	-	
12	Mrs Joan Thornton	
19	Mrs Elaine Dyson	
26	Mr Leslie Bolton	
	JUNE 2024	
2	shutte-state. 213276539	
9	Mr and Mrs Stephen Williams	
16	Mr Trevor Wilson	
23	Mrs Jean Bennett	
30	Mrs Chris Allcock	

Thank you for providing the flowers

Peace Within...

... through Prayer

People or families are listed each week together with some other areas to think about. This is not meant as an 'ought' or a pressure but something that is helpful so please use it in whatever way works for you. Thanks to Jean Whitworth for providing this for us each time. If there is something or someone which you feel should be included, please do let Jean know.

Week	People to remember this week	Areas of Church Life	Local Areas/Groups
Com	- Topic to remember this week	, and or endren blic	
Sunday 7th April 2024 All Age Worship 2pm TJHall	Christine Allcock and family The Allison family The Ambler family Darren, Deborah, Phoebe and Thomas Arber Neil and Margaret Arber Doreen and Roger Barlow Pauline & George Barnard , and Charlotte & Rob	Please pray for our ministers Andy, Jo and Nikki as they lead us in our worship and our life together as a church. We give thanks for our young families, asking God's blessing on Playing with Peace which begins this week on Tuesday and for Michelle as she begins her role as Co Playleander.	As children and young people begin the Summer Term and prepare for exam season, may they be encouraged, supported, and enabled to find their potential. Please pray for them, giving thanks for teachers and school staff who work so hard for the children.
Sunday 14 th April 10.30am Bible reader: Doreen	The Baume family Jean Bennett & family Leslie Bolton and family Joe Braithwaite, and family Ann Bryant and Family Caroline, Gordon & Poppy Buckle Susan & Alan Clough and family Mary Crowther and family	Pray for the Deacons, Officers and Ministers as they meet this week. May they be open to God's leading as they care for our church. Pray for those attending the Peace and Quiet Day on Friday that it may be a helpful and restorative day for them.	We pray for the nation of Israel as Jews get ready to celebrate the Passover. In giving thanks for God's provision and care, may they commit themselves to ways of peace for all. We pray for an end to conflict in Israel and Gaza.
Sunday 21st April 10.30am Communion Bible reader: Alan	David & Carole Denton & family Gloria Dyer Elaine Dyson and family John Farrar & Margaret Jackson, The Field family Chris & Steve Green and family Linda & Mike Greenwood and family Raymond Hanson Elaine Harvie	Please pray for the new Mediation Skills Course run from the Centre, beginning this week and continuing for 5 sessions. May all who participate learn and embed new ways of working that brings life, healing and reconciliation to broken and hurting churches and communities.	Please pray for those suffering from homelessness or poor living conditions. Pray for the Elland Food Bank and the Greetland Feed a Family project as they faithfully commit to caring for those in need through practical provision of necessary basics. We pray for a world where Foodbanks are not needed.
Sunday 28 th April 10.30am Bible reader: Mike W	Birthday: Margaret S (22 nd) Guy Hirst and family Jenny Howland and family Brenda Ingram & Family Patricia and Richard Lindsay Patricia & Graham Mitchel l and family Jenny Peckett Alan & Maureen Odhams	Pray for the Peace and Reconciliation work which takes place in our Centre, remembering 2 churches who are currently going through a healing process. We give thanks for all who work around the site, especially on Thursday mornings, to keep the place looking good and working	Let us pray for fellow Christians in our local Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches . Remember also those who attend the Elland Mosque in Elizabeth Street.
	Birthday: Elaine Dyson (30 th)	well.	

Sunday 5 th May Family First Service TJ Hall 2pm	Pam & Gordon Smith, & family Margaret Shutt & family Lyn& Philip Smith & family Jean Sykes and family Jill Sykes and family, with Millie in Australia Desley & Andrew Taylor and family Susan and Ian Taylor and family Birthday: Gordon B (9 th)	Pray for all who come to our afternoon service, that they may be encouraged and feel welcomed. We give thanks for the children who come with their families, bringing us joy, life and learning as we worship with them.	We pray for all involved in Project Violet – the research project on Women in Baptist Ministry. May our denomination be open to hearing the experiences of women ministers, even when those may be difficult or painful to hear. Help us to learn from this research to make our church safe for all.
Sunday 12 th May 10.30am Bible reader: Chris W	Joan Thornton & family Clare & Anne & families (Townend) Jean & Michael Whitworth family Chris & Ray Williams and family Wendy & Steve Williams & fam Jo, Andy, Megan and Alys Williams Birthday: Andrew T (17 th)	We give thanks for all who provide, arrange and distribute our flowers on Sundays, and those who organise all the rotas. These often un-noticed but vital tasks enable us to care and show our love and welcome to others. Please pray for all who give their time and energies to the church in this way, enabling ministry.	Pray for the local community of Blackley, for Hazelmore Fold residents, for the Cricket Club, Brosters Farm Shop, and the Golden Fleece. We pray that our friends from the Rock feel welcome and safe with us here.
Sunday 19 th May Pentecost Sunday 10.30 am Communion Bible reader: Doreen	Trevor Wilson Tricia Wilkinson & family Joyce Woodhouse Roy & Linda Dicken Margaret Ellis Nanette and Stuart, Oscar and Wilbur Birthday: Carole (21st)	This week pray for our Deacons and Property and Finance group. Guide them in their thoughts and deliberations as they care for this church Pray for Christine A as she oversees the lettings and hire of the Centre buildings and Pauline in her support.	Pray for the local community of Elland for the volunteer groups who work in the park , For the Book exchange and all the work going into the new Elland Hub .
Sunday 26 th May 10.30am Bible reader	Suzanne, Sonny and Jonah and family Toni and Andrew, and Harry The Blackley Centre for Peace and Reconciliation The Futures Group The 'Shake it all about' Group Birthdays: Sue and Ray (30 th)	Our Thursday Prayer Group and those who attend it. Those who provide our music in various different ways and our new singing group. We pray for those in the 'Shake it All About' Group as they consider ways we can meet, grow and have fun together, building relationships and love. For our Congregation and Church Members meeting today.	Remember those who are patients in Overgate Hospice, and the caring nursing staff who look after them. Please also remember our medical and hospital staff who care for our sick and infirm people.

Items for the next edition of The Broadcaster to Jo or Jenny by Sunday 26th May please.