

“Methodist and United Reformed Church News in Darwen”

Working together to learn, live, love and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

October and November 2025

CENTRAL

BRIGHT STREET

SPRING VALE

TRINITY

TOCKHOLES

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URC Churches – Central URC, Tockholes URC and Trinity URC/Methodist
For baptisms, marriages and funerals and other enquiries please contact the appropriate church secretary.

Central Website: www.centralurcdarwen.org.uk

Methodist Website: www.darwenmethodists.co.uk

Our magazine is now produced in this format for email and printing purposes. If anyone does not receive a copy or knows of someone who hasn't received a copy, please contact Liz Rutherford 07505 052133 or email lizrutherford@live.co.uk

“Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.”
(Ps. 100:2)

Dear Friends in Christ,

This verse has been on my heart recently, especially as I reflected on a story about a young graduate who, on his first day of work, was asked to sweep the shop floor. He was surprised as he believed such a task was beneath him. In a genuinely polite manner, the manager took the broom from him and did the sweeping. By doing this, his manager gently reminded him that no job is too small when it contributes to the whole.

This story speaks powerfully to our life together as churches within Lancashire East Missional Partnership. Every act of service matters, whether it is leading worship, arranging flowers, singing, making refreshments, setting out chairs, or simply offering a word of encouragement. Each role, however hidden, helps us share God's love and keeps His work moving forward.

As we enter this season of Harvest Thanksgiving (I am sure at the time you are reading this, some of you may have already celebrated Harvest Thanksgiving in your churches), we are reminded to give thanks not only for the food we enjoy but also for the many ways God provides through one another's gifts of service. Then, as Remembrance Day comes, we pause to honour those who gave their lives for peace and reflect on what it means to live lives of gratitude and service today.

On a personal note, I am delighted to let you know that Florence and I will soon be getting into a matrimonial journey, and our wedding ceremony has been planned for March 27, 2026, at Westbury Gardens URC. This is a joyful new chapter for me, and I am deeply thankful for your prayers and encouragement. Continue to pray for us as we plan for this event and journey.

Finally, dear God's good people, I encourage each of us to ask: ***how is God calling me to serve Him today?*** In a role you already do faithfully, or perhaps in something new: making a phone call, sending a card, or simply praying for others. Whatever it may be, remember: no act of love is too small for God to use.

A Prayer for the Season

Gracious God, we thank You for the fruits of the earth, the blessings of community, and the gift of remembrance. As we serve You in small and great ways, may our lives bring joy to others and glory to Your name. Keep us faithful in gratitude and generous in service, until the day when Your kingdom comes in peace and fullness. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With love and blessings,

Your friend and Minister,
Gilbert Esambe (Rev.)

CENTRAL (Janet Goodship)

In some ways this has been a sad period for Central, with the loss of long-standing and much-loved members of the church, and the illness of others. The funeral of David Yates took place at Central in August. The church was completely full of his family and the many, many friends David had made during his lifetime. It was a lovely celebration of his life. With so many people there it was hardly surprising that the singing was amazing. I'm sure David would have loved it.

Another very sad loss was that of Beryl Slater. She was a lovely lady, always so elegantly turned out and always cheerful, despite several serious illnesses in her last years. She was renowned in church for her skill in baking – many are the delicious cakes and scones the church has enjoyed over the years. She had requested that at her funeral bright colours were worn rather than black and this request was honoured – especially lovely were the sparkly dresses worn by two of her young relatives. What a good way to remember such a smart lady.

On a happier note, but still cake-related, a cake sale was held in aid of the Ripple Effect (of which Alizon's daughter Rachel is an ambassador). This was followed by a very pleasant afternoon with more scrumptious cakes at Alizon's, also in aid of the charity. Those attending were fortunate to manage some time outside in the sun before the rain came down and all had to move indoors. The sale and garden event raised £275 for Ripple Effect.

The move through the year from Summer to Autumn is marked by the Harvest Festival, which this year was led by Danny. The church as always looked at its best thanks to the efforts of those who decorated it for the service.

Birthday Celebrations: Beryl Shaw; Adebola; Dorothy C; Elsa; John Briggs; Norma's son; Val; Raymond; Raymond and Doris' grandson; Keith; Barbara's grandson; Angela's great-granddaughter.

Wedding Anniversaries: Barbara and Harry, Eileen and Gary, Ade and Adebola, Beryl and Keith, Debbie and Martin

Prayers - Each week in church we continue to mention people by name in need of our prayers.

Coffee Bar Rota

Oct 5th	Janice Cowell, Elsa Peacock
Oct 12th	Dorothy Yates, Margaret Burns
Oct 19th	Beryl Shaw, Pauline Henson
Oct 26th	Barbara Duxbury, Karen Narramore.
Nov. 2nd	Margaret East, Liz Staffa
Nov 9th	Janice Cowell, Elsa Peacock
Nov 16th	Dorothy Yates, Margaret Burns
Nov 23rd	Beryl Shaw, Pauline Henson
Nov 30th	Barbara Duxbury, Karen Narramore

Central Fellowship

Thursday 16th October 2 o'clock - Communion

Thursday 13th November - speaker Susan Schofield

Bible Study 10 am – 23rd October. No date for November.

Flower Rota

October 5th 'In loving memory of Joe and Olive Hargreaves' the family
October 12th Flower Fund
October 19th 'In Memory' Elsa Peacock
October 26th 'In memory of Geoff and Eunice Yates' the family

November 2nd 'In memory of Edwin and Doris Raine ' the family
November 9th 'In memory of Edward Marsden and John Shorrocks and those who lost their
lives in wars' Barbara Hirst
November 16th Maureen Ainsworth
November 23rd Flower Fund
November 30th Flower Fund

Margaret Oldham

Communion Rota -2nd Sunday in the month

October - Liz Rutherford (bread), Dorothy Yates

November – Elsa Peacock (bread), Nancy Briggs

Vestry Duty

October - Janice Cowell

November – Karen Narramore

Gift Day Quiz at Central URC – Saturday 25th October 7 pm

Tickets £5 or pay on the door. Bring your own drinks

Small snacks provided (crisps/nuts) Raffle

Contact Liz Rutherford 07505052133

DARE- a huge thank-you to Central Church for donating all the Harvest goods to DARE. These will be taken out and distributed to families in need in our community.

ACTIVE REMOVALS – ESTABLISHED OVER 35 YEARS

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Liz

TRINITY FELLOWSHIP NEWS (Judith Atkinson)

Over the past few weeks we have continued to pray for Mary as she recovers from another fall and another stay in hospital. We were very happy to hear that she has now returned home and is managing well, with the help of carers. We hope she continues on the path to recovery.

In our prayers we have also remembered Helen, who recently underwent an operation on her eye, Sheila, and Ruth, who is increasingly finding it difficult to join us on a Sunday morning. Our prayers are also with our former minister Peter Rand and his family following the recent death of Susan.

Those celebrating birthdays have included Phil, Emily and Michael – we hope you all enjoyed your special days. And we wished Janet and George a happy 47th wedding anniversary.

TOCKHOLES URC (Ann Treadwell)

What a wealth of interesting sermons, joyful music and warm fellowship has been experienced over the past two months at Tockholes Chapel!

It began with Gilbert's sermon on sharing, when he delighted the congregation with a story of two boys, one who shared and the other who did not. We had to work out which one was the caring child and Marion and Brian's great-grand-children deduced it correctly!

The following week, David Foster's thought-provoking sermon was illustrated with some stories from his experiences as a teacher.

Next week, Barbara tackled the difficult subject of peace. We left knowing that peace is not necessarily lack of conflict, but the feeling in our own hearts and that shared with other Christians, even though the rest of the world might be in turmoil. It is not outward peace at any cost.

'Awesome' was the subject approached the next week by John East after Tansy had read of the amazing wonder of God's creation in the Old Testament. We also listened to Bible stories on healing as well as the modern-day miracle of John's own daughter being healed. Because God is a just God, we heard that he is also awesome in his judgement and there will be eventual justice. John continued the following week with his sermon 'Dare to Care', which was illustrated by stories of John's youth when he cared in the community. We laughed our heads off, but at the same time felt gratitude for the fact that our chapel is already caring. Now, we need to go out into the community to give more active service to others.

Following this, Danny Wilson got us thinking when he explained the story of Jeremiah who did not want to be a prophet at first but then went on to endure ridicule and physical punishment by his peers because the people did not want to repent of their sins. He likened it to the present generation destroying the environment and doing little to repair the damage. It was interesting to learn that our present economic system would collapse if all debts were paid or cancelled. In the New Testament reading, we learned more about the slave Onesemus when Danny filled us in on the context, and it was shocking to learn that there is more slavery in our modern world than ever before.

Big thanks to Emma and her daughters as well as the others who decorated the Chapel so beautifully last Saturday! It was a joyful experience. Next day was the Harvest Festival, when our visiting preacher, Lena Talbot, gave a lovely service for all ages. I especially enjoyed when she retold the story 'Babette's Feast' by Isac Dinesen, which is about Babette giving a celebration meal for neighbours whom she

hardly knew before. Next Terry Donnelly moved us with the beautiful performance of 'Look at the World' by John Rutter and 'All things bright and beautiful' accompanied by Sarah on the organ. Several of the congregation baked delicious cakes and giant cookies afterwards, so we all tucked into our own 'Babette's Feast.' Everyone agreed it was a marvellous festival.

We look forward to two more services this month including Holy Communion next Sunday then more worship and fellowship in October and November.

Flower Rota

Dates	Donated by
Oct. 5 th	Vacant
Oct 12 th	Ann Treadwell 'In memory'
Oct 19 th	Mark and Camille Webster 'In memory of Dad'
Oct 26 th	Mr and Mrs B. Isherwood 'In memory'
Nov. 2 nd	Mr and Mrs R Gradwell
Nov. 9 th	Mrs Kathleen Knowles
Nov 16 th	Mr and Mrs Pickup
Nov 23 rd	Mr and Mrs Woolford.
Nov 30 th	Mrs O. Pickup 'In memory of Mr A. Turner'

SPRING VALE METHODIST CHURCH (David Foster)

The last two months have been a memorable time for Spring Vale. Having bade farewell to Rev Elizabeth Kirova we were pleased to welcome our new minister and Superintendent Revd Dr Joseph Suray. We had a well-attended Welcome Service at Lammack Methodist Church in Blackburn at the end of August. This was followed by his first service at Spring Vale on 7 September. Not only was it memorable for being Rev Joseph's first service in our Circuit but we brought six people into membership of our church.

Last month saw the refurbishment of the vestry, making it much more suitable as both a quiet space for the preacher before the service and a much better office space.

We were pleased to welcome back from Italy Duncan and Carol Turner, with Duncan continuing his role as Church Steward and helping with services. Carol has continued her work leading our Sunday School, which is a real strength and joy for the church. The children often share what they have learned with the rest of the congregation.

The Beetle Drive was a great success with many people coming across it for the first time. It was an opportunity to mix.

By the time you read this we will have had our Macmillan Big Coffee Morning at Spring Vale. On Saturday 4 October at 6:00 pm we have our Harvest Supper and Quiz Night in aid of Tear Fund. On Sunday 30 November in the afternoon, we will be having our Christmas Fair.

Our Bible Group is restarting after the summer break; we meet every Thursday at 6:30 to share a meal and study some Biblical topic.

NEWS FROM BRIGHT STREET METHODIST CHURCH (Karen Rowley)

Greetings from Bright Street as we move into Autumn with its shorter days and darker nights. I hope you are all feeling renewed and refreshed after the summer break.

In July, Bright Street were the hosts for the farewell service for Rev Elizabeth. Whilst we were sad to say farewell, she goes with our love and prayers that she will settle into her new circuit and be truly blessed as she blesses others. The service was a joyous experience with a full church and we raised the roof with our singing. It is always so uplifting when all the Circuit churches worship together.

The welcome service for our new Superintendent and Minister, Rev Dr Joseph Suray, was held at Lammack Church on the 31st August and this too was well attended with representation from all the Circuit churches. Rev Joseph, as well as being the circuit superintendent, will have pastoral responsibility for Lammack, Wilpshire, Mellor, Darwen Bright Street and Darwen Spring Vale along with chairing the Management Committee at Wesley Hall. We look forward to working with Rev Joseph, moving forward with purpose and a new vision to serve the Lord and our community.

Jean and I saw an ad for 'Breast Cancer Now' Afternoon Tea. We've had a quiet summer, shall we do it, we said. So, we decided to go ahead and I ordered the kit. We'll just do a small event we said. Then Maude, a regular at our Friday Well-Being Group, offered to do a sponsored headshave and from there the event grew and grew. On the day we had around 100 people turn up, which was quite a few more than we anticipated and we made £750. However, we think that Maude asked every single person in Darwen (and Blackburn) to sponsor her and with her sponsor money the final total raised was £2,536.80. A massive thank you to Maude for being so brave and to all who helped on the day.

Due to various circumstances, we took a step of faith to change Stay and Play toddler group from Friday mornings to Thursday mornings. I am pleased to report that although many of our regulars have moved on to full time nursery or started school, it is going well and we have been pleased to welcome lots of new faces.

It is with sadness that I report that some of the churches in our circuit, namely Stanhill, Haslingden and Feniscowles, after much prayer and deliberation, have made the difficult decision to cease to worship. It is always sad to see churches closing their doors, but sometimes due to lack of resources, both human and other, it becomes impossible to carry on. Our prayers are with all of their congregations as they move on and hopefully settle into worshipping at a new church. As a result of those closures we have been extremely pleased to welcome 6 or 7 lovely people from Feniscowles who have been worshipping with us over the last 3 weeks. We hope they feel welcomed and loved enough to stay with us, because we have loved having them.

Karen

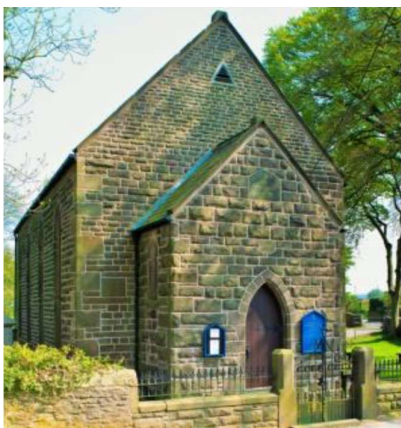
DEADLINE DATES FOR MAGAZINE 2025

December 2025/January 2026	Sunday 23 rd November
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URC CHURCH SERVICES IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2025

Date	Central	Trinity
5 th October	Doreen Goodship	George Grime
12 th October	Rev Gilbert Esambe	Barbara Duxbury
19 th October	Doreen Goodship	Rev Gilbert Esambe
26 th October	John East (Gift Day)	Rev Daleen ten Cate
2 nd November	George Grime	Doreen Goodship
9 th November (Remembrance)	Barbara Duxbury	George Grime
16 th November	Barbara Duxbury	Rev Joseph Suray
23 rd November	David Foster	Rev Gilbert Esambe
30 th November	George Grime	John East

TOCKHOLES URC CHURCH



5 th October	John East
12 th October	Barbara Duxbury
19 th October	George Grime
26 th October	Simon Huggill
2 nd November	Barbara Duxbury
9 th November	George Grime
16 th November	Barbara Duxbury
23 rd November	George Grime
30 th November	Rev Gilbert Esambe

CHURCH GROUPS

CENTRAL URC

Day	Time	Name of Group and Room
Monday	9:30-Noon	DARE (Hall and Lounge)
	6.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Ballroom/sequence dancing (Hall)
Tuesday	10am to 11:00 am	Yoga (Hall)
	11.30 am to 12.30 pm	Dance Fit Exercise Group (Hall)
	6.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Ballroom/sequence Dancing (Hall)
Wednesday	10.00 am to 1 pm	DARE (Hall and Lounge)
	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm	Ashleigh Singers (Hall)
	5.00 pm to 9.00 pm	Line Dancing (7pm-8pm) Ballroom (Hall) 8 – 9 pm
Thursday	9.00 am to 12.00 noon	P.R.O.B.U.S. alternate weeks (Hall and Lounge)
	10.00 am to 11.30 am	Bible Study once a month (Lounge)
	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm	Church Fellowship once a month (Hall/Lounge)
	7 pm to 9 pm	Beginners Line Dancing/Ballroom
Friday	8.00 am to 10.00 am	Slimming World (Hall)
	11.00 am to 12 noon	Yoga (Hall)
Sunday	1.00 pm to 3.00 pm	Lighthouse of Glory Church Darwen

TIME WELLBEING GROUP - AUTUMN TERM - 1-3 pm at Bright Street

3 rd October	Speaker: Gary Stacey
10 th October	Games Day
17 th October	Lancashire Day
24 th October	To be confirmed
31 st October	Speaker: Blackburn Rotary Club
7 th November	Poppy making
14 th November	Speaker: Ben Fish – My running journey
21 st November	Trip to Blackpool Illuminations
28 th November	Speaker: Elizabeth – The Norwegian Fjords
5 th December	Christmas Decorations
12 th December	Ashleigh Choir – Songs for Christmas
19 th December	Christmas Party

Any questions ring Elizabeth 01254 776294

DARWEN METHODIST CHURCH AT BRIGHT STREET

Sunday	10.30 am	Sunday service – multi-media Contact Karen Rowley 07941 881833 Karenliz1947@gmail.com
Monday	11.30 am – 12.15 pm	Pilates
	7 to 8.45 pm	Fellowship Group
Tuesday	10.30 to 11.30 am	Tai Chi
	6 to 7 pm	Fit n Funky
Wednesday	11am to 12 noon	Strength & Balance
	1 pm to 2 pm	Strength & Balance
	6 to 7 pm	Yoga (for menopausal women)
	7.30 to 9 pm	Trefoil Guild (1st Wednesday of every month)
Thursday	9.30 to 12 noon	Stay & Play Toddler Group
	10 am to 12 noon	Beading Group
	1 pm to 2 pm	Making Memories
Friday	1 to 3pm	“Time” wellbeing Group
Saturday	9-10 am	WW

SPRING VALE

Sunday	10.30 am	Sunday Service & Junior Church
Monday	5 pm	Drama Group
Tuesday	10.30 am to 12.00 noon	Stay and Play Toddler Group
Tuesday	2 pm to 4 pm	Craft Group
Tuesday	5.45 pm to 7.00 pm	Rainbows
Wednesday	5 pm	Drama Group
Wednesday	6.00 pm to 7.30 pm	Brownies
Wednesday	7.30 pm to 9.00 pm	Guides
Thursday	10 am	Lullaby Baby Group
Thursday	6.30 to 9 pm	Bible Study
Friday	7pm	Karate

During the months of **October and November** we at DARE are collecting donations for our Winter Warmer boxes if you can help for DARE families, elderly, isolated, poor and vulnerable people in the community.

Hats



Fluffy socks



Gloves



Scarves

Toiletries



Scented candles



Sweeties



DARE

Darwen Asylum Refugee Enterprise

Wordsearch – False Teachers

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

Ambitious, Avoid, Contradictions, Controversy, Deceived, Desires
riches, Destructive, Different, Disagree, Discernment, Discontent,
Dissension, Doctrine, Envy, Flee, Gain, Irreverent, Lead astray,
Money, Root of evil, Ruin, Secret, Senseless, Slander, Snare,
Suspicious, Swerved, Temptation, Unhealthy, Unsound, Wolves

Answer to last Wordsearch - Nebuchadnezzar

BIBLE READINGS

OCTOBER 2025

1st Proverbs 29:23-27, Psalm 68:1-6, 32-35
 2nd Proverbs 30:1-9, Psalm 69:1-18
 3rd Proverbs 31:10-20, Psalm 69:30-36
 4th Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, Psalm 70
 5th Luke 17:5-10, Psalm 37:1-9
 6th Matthew 12:1-8, Psalm 71:1-16
 7th Matthew 12:9-22, Psalm 71:17-24
 8th Matthew 13:1-9, Psalm 73:1-14
 9th Matthew 12:46-50, Psalm 63: 15-28
 10th Matthew 13:1-9, Psalm 74:1-11
 11th Matthew 13:10-17, Psalm 74:12-17
 12th Luke 17:11-19, Psalm 111
 13th Matthew 13:17-23, Psalm 74:18-23
 14th Matthew 13:24-30, Psalm 72
 15th Matthew 13:31-35, Psalm 75:1-7
 16th Matthew 13:36-43, Psalm 76
 17th Matthew 13:44-53, Psalm 77
 18th Matthew 13:54-58, Psalm 78:1-7
 19th Luke 18:1-8, Psalm 121
 20th Matthew 14:1-12, Psalm 80
 21st Matthew 14:13-21, Psalm 81
 22nd Matthew 14:22-33, Psalm 85
 23rd Matthew 14:34-36, Psalm 86:1-13
 24th Matthew 15:1-9, Psalm 90
 25th Matthew 15:10-20, Psalm 91
 26th Luke 18:9-14, Psalm 84
 27th Matthew 15:21-28, Psalm 89:1-18
 28th Matthew 15:29-31, Psalm 89:19-37
 29th Matthew 15:32-39, Psalm 89:46-52
 30th Matthew 16:1-12, Psalm 92
 31st Matthew 16:13-27, Psalm 93

NOVEMBER 2025

1st Matthew 17:1-8, Psalm 95
 2nd Luke 6:20-31, Psalm 149
 3rd Matthew 17:9-13, Psalm 96:1-9
 4th Matthew 17:14-21, Psalm 96:10-13
 5th Matthew 17:22-27, Psalm 97
 6th Matthew 18:1-14, Psalm 99
 7th Matthew 18:15-35, Psalm 100
 8th Matthew 19:13-15, Psalm 103
 9th Luke 20:27-38, Psalm 17:1-9
 10th Matthew 19:16-22, Psalm 102:1-11
 11th Matthew 19:23-26, Psalm 102:12-28
 12th Matthew 19:27-30, Psalm 110
 13th Matthew 20:1-16, Psalm 104:1-23
 14th Matthew 20:17-19, Psalm 104:24-35
 15th Matthew 20:20-34, Psalm 105:1-11
 16th Luke 21:5-19, Psalm 98
 17th Deuteronomy 4:1-14, Psalm 107:1-16
 18th Deuteronomy 4:32-40, Psalm 107:17-32
 19th Deuteronomy 6:4-13, Psalm 107:33-43
 20th Deuteronomy 10:12-22, Psalm Psalm 111
 21st Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Psalm 112
 22nd Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 113
 23rd Luke 23:33-43, Psalm 46
 24th Deuteronomy 31:1-13, Psalm 114
 25th Deuteronomy 31:23-28, Psalm 115
 26th Deuteronomy 31:30-32:14, Psalm 116
 27th Deuteronomy 32:44-52, Psalm 117
 28th Deuteronomy 33:26-29, Psalm 118:1-18
 29th Deuteronomy 34:1-12, Psalm 118:19-29
 30th Matthew 24:36-44, Psalm 122

CHURCH DIRECTORY

CENTRAL:

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David Foster
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Worship Leader Donna Boothman

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TOCKHOLES:

Secretary: Kathleen Knowles Tel 01254 706489

CHURCH NEWS EDITOR

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FORMAL YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Spring Vale: Guides, Brownies, Rainbows;

Methodist at Bright Street: Brownies, Rainbows

PARENT AND TODDLER GROUPS

Weekday Groups at Spring Vale, Trinity and Bright Street

ENQUIRIES:

URC Churches – Central URC, Tockholes URC and Trinity URC/Methodist

For baptisms, marriages and funerals and any other enquires please contact the appropriate church secretary.

Methodist Churches—please contact the Minister or Stewards.