



Issue 53 - January 2026

HAPPY NEW EVERYONE!

I hope you all had a great Christmas. It seems ages ago but actually I have still got my decorations up because I do what the catholics do and keep them up till Candlemas just so I can enjoy them a bit longer.

Candlemas commemorates the biblical story where Mary and Joseph present the baby Jesus at the Temple^(Luke 2 v22-25), where he was recognised by Simeon as the 'Light to Lighten the Gentiles'(generally applies to those who aren't Jewish). This is celebrated by the Catholics on 2nd February so I will be taking my decorations down this weekend!

This issue, as you can see, is only a short issue, partly because I didn't get sent much material for it but also because I of time constraints.

The next issue is our Easter issue and before that we have Shrove Tuesday. This is the day before Lent starts and is often celebrated with eating sweet treats, traditionally pancakes. On the back of this magazine is a recipe for pancake making.

The next day is Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of Lent which is a 40 day period leading up to Easter, where many Christians try to slow down and be kind to others, think about how to make better life choices. Some people give something up or take on a helpful habit to practice self-control and reflection. Perhaps some of you might like to consider this. It doesn't hurt to remember we should always be kind and helpful but having a special time to remember this is always good,

NCYA Christmas gifts

The NCYA decided once again to send each Sunday School (Bradford & Kearsley) a gift of some money to use in whichever way they wanted to support the children in their Sunday Schools. Here is what they chose to do:



Kearsley

Carolyn reports that they chose to have their children meet Santa who gave them a Christmas gift paid for by the NCYA. Here is Annabeth and Verity with Santa.

What a lovely picture they make.

They still have some money left but haven't decided what to do with it yet.

Bradford

Shannon Fitzgerald reported that the Christmas gift allowed the volunteers and the families to go together to Manchester on a trip on the train. There were 14 adults and 21 children. They were met by a wonderful skyline at Manchester Victoria Station.



Everyone was very excited. They also managed to pay for everyone to have a tram pass allowing people the freedom to explore for the day. This was a first for a lot of them. They went to the Science Museum and had lunch together before splitting up. Some went to the Christmas markets, some to Chinatown and some to Heaton Park. They had lots of fun all day long. Shannon ended by saying, 'Thank you for offering us this opportunity - it really helped build bonds between our congregation and the wider community project.'

NCYA Children's Day

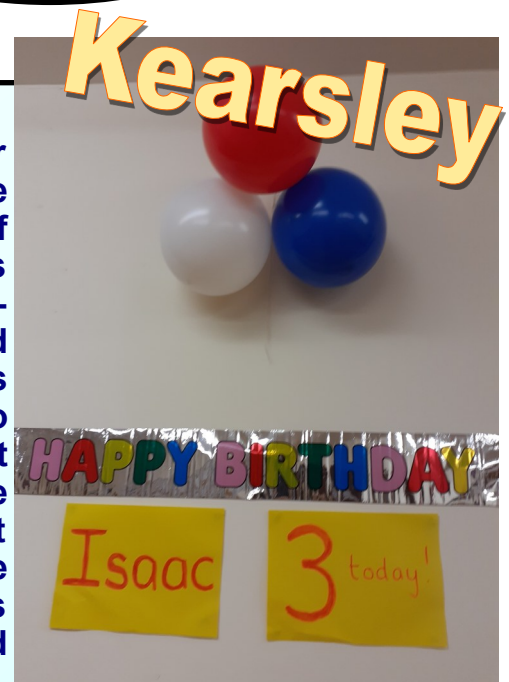
Dalton & Accrington
Gwendolen Rowe reports that she took services at Dalton & Accrington based on Children & YP being the heart of worship and that we are all part of God's children. She read part of the booklet prepared by Revd Christine Bank and used her prayers.

Revd Lynne Griffiths tells me that at Seaburn they thought about the gifts we receive from God. They used the resources provided and sang hymns associated with children - for example 'I have seen the golden Sunshine'.

Carolyn Kennion writes:

Our worship on 18th January was led by our minister, Revd Brian Talbot, who incorporated the materials written by Revd Christine Bank on behalf of the NCYA. Brian gave an illustrated children's presentation about the verses from Matthew 6:25-34 and involved Verity in naming characters and animals and reading the Bible verses. Hymns included ones about trust in the Lord and also some childhood favourites. Brian explained that this day, while being an opportunity to celebrate the Lord's gift of children, can also remind us that we are each a child of God. The Lord loves the child of God inside each one of us – that part of us which is trusting, joyful, loving, playful and inquisitive.

Children and teachers left the service for Sunday School after the second hymn as usual. The children included 2 new 'recruits' - Isaac and Paul. Isaac was baptised at our church 3 years ago and his family has recently started to regularly attend services. January 18th was a very special day for Isaac as it was his 3rd birthday. We started our session with a retelling of the 7 days of creation, with the children choosing relevant objects and pictures as the story unfolded. As it was Isaac's birthday we then played some traditional party games which were lots of fun. The adults and children reunited in the hall to sing 'Happy Birthday' to Isaac and enjoy a slice of his huge birthday cake. It was a very happy celebration of children and it was a special joy to share in the birthday of one of them.



PANCAKE RECIPE



Ingredients

(serves 12)

100g Flour

2 Large Eggs

300ml Milk

1 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil

Pinch of salt *(according to taste)*

Optionals to serve with:

Lemon wedges

Sugar

Syrup (maple or golden)

Honey

Fruit

1. Mix all the ingredients (except the oil) into a bowl and whisk thoroughly.
2. If you have time set the mixture aside to rest for 30 minutes or start cooking them straight away.
3. Heat a small amount of oil in a frying pan.
4. When hot pour in enough of the mixture just to coat the bottom of the frying pan (about a ladle full). Fry for about a minute on each side until golden brown.
5. Keep cooked pancakes warm in a low heated oven while you make the rest.
6. Serve with the lemon wedges, sugar, syrup or fruit as preferred.

ENJOY!

I would love to
hear from you.