Our Community Focus this Month - Praying for our Local Area

Each month, our Christ with Others focus allows us to look outward, inviting the love of Jesus into our community and the world.

This month, we will be praying for our local area and the people who live, work, learn and serve within it. We invite everyone to take time during July to intentionally pray for their neighbourhood, local schools, businesses, community groups and those facing challenges around us.

There are many ways to take part. You might choose to prayer walk around your local area, pray during your daily routine, spend time praying from your home while looking out over your neighbourhood or pause to pray whenever particular places or people come to mind.

On 11th July, we invite you to join with Christians across the South West for South West Awake, bringing believers together to pray for God's Kingdom together along the South West Coast Path. Please speak to JP for more information about this or visit www.southwestawake.com

As you pray, ask God to bless our communities, reveal where He is already at work, and show us opportunities to share His love. We'd love to hear what God is saying too, so please share photos, Bible verses, answers to prayer, encouragements, or reflections from your time praying. There will also be a map in church where you can place a sticky dot to show where you have been praying each week.

Prayer requests

If you have a specific prayer request, please send them each to office@Prestonbaptistchurch.com

Also, if you would like to be included on our prayer WhatsApp group, please make contact with Tina or James.

Please pray for Gwen and her family, Brian Gray and family and Jack Sudworth and family, Neil Slade and family, the family of Beryl Owen & Novlette Smith.

Please pray for Fred Stapleton, Paul Lomas and their families

People to pray for -

Simon, Alice, Thea and Vicky
Thelma Bickford.
Cherry Sutherland
Audrey White
Matt Webster
Nora Andrews
John Stone
Anne and John Dawson
Cameron
Ann (Jack and Sylvia's daughter)
Tony and Kathy
Jean Edwards
Eli Kirollos
Margaret Harrison
Ron Godfrey
Elizabeth Billingham.
Daphne and David Lockett
Kim Ewins and family
Phoenix
Anne Brown
Dot and Roy Bagnall
Dave Barnett

PRESTON
Baptist Church

Voice@PBC

July 2026

WHO WE ARE?

We are passionate about being people and a church that live out our faith through - deepening personal relationships with God, by spending time together as a church in worship and fellowship, and looking to share the love of Christ with others outside of Church. Therefore, we start our services with a rhythm that expresses these three important aspects to our faith.

P Personal relationship with God
B Being Church together
C Christ with others

You are welcome to worship with us in our service at 10.30am each Sunday morning. Our children and young people leave the service for their own sessions after the first half hour. An unsupervised parent led creche is available for under 3s, held in the family room which is up the corridor on the right hand side.

We share communion together on the first Sunday of each month.

If you would like to know more about us, please ask one of our stewards for a contact card and we will add you to our distribution list.

To listen to our sermon us on s from home
Visit our website - www.prestonbaptistchurch.com/sermons
Call 01803 560214 Find us on Spotify

Please speak to one of the team if there's a way we could help make our services more accessible to you or to help you feel more included.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rev James Brown – Minister – Tel: 07769 406273
james.brown@prestonbaptistchurch.com
Church Office Tel: 01803 522541
Church Wi-Fi - Guest, Password - &John316

BANK DETAILS

S/C 40-52-40 A/C No 00036454
Designated People for Safeguarding - Susan Gibbons and Terena Cottell - 01803 520712

Dates and Events

Mondays	- New Life Course	- 19.00 - 20.30
Mondays (Term Time)	- Stretch Class	- 18.00 - 19.15
Tuesdays	- Prayer Meeting	- 10.30 - 12.00
Wednesdays (Term Time)	- Mummy & Me	- 09.30 - 11.30
Wednesdays	- Worship Prep	- 19.00 - 20.00
Thursdays	- Garden Café	- 09.00 - 13.00
Thursdays	- Food Club	- 10.00 - 12.00
Fridays (Term Time)	- PBC Toddlers & Baby	- 09.30 - 11.00
Sundays	- Morning Service	- 10.30 - 12.00

Craft 22 will not be meeting in July and August.

Looking Ahead

11th July - South West Awake
Tuesday 14th July - Members Meeting
Sunday 19th July - Ren's Dedication
20th to 26th July - Love Your Church Week
Sunday 26th July - Suzanne and Dave renewing vows
Sunday 26th July - Church Social BBQ at Preston Green
28th July to 3rd August - New Wine Festival

Groups in July

Wednesday 1st and 15th July - Friends Together - 10.00-12.00
Wednesday 8th July - Craft Group - 10.00 - 12.00
Friday 10th July - Messy Church - 16.00 - 18.00
Thursday 16th July - Ladies Alive - 19.00 - 21.00
Saturday 18th July – Men's Breakfast - 9.00
Thursday 23rd July - Book Club - 19.00 - 21.00

Member's Meeting - CHANGE OF DATE

Please note that our next Member's Meeting has been moved to Monday 14th July at 7pm.

The date has been changed to allow any members who would like to attend the Institution Service for Stephen Yates and the Licensing of Helen Baker to do so.

We are looking forward to meeting together to discern God's will for PBC. We hope that many of our members will be able to join us; however, if you are unable to attend, please let Tina or Amy know.

Working Times

We know it's helpful to know when our team are in the office. Please note the usual working days for Tina and Amy:

Tina, Church Secretary: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Amy, Church Coordinator: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Small Groups - Growing Together in Community

At Preston Baptist Church, we deeply value community and belonging. Each Sunday we intentionally make space under the heading of "B – Being Church Together" to connect, welcome one another and encourage each other in faith and love.

Small groups are one of the key ways we continue to live this out during the week.

They are a space to meet regularly in smaller groups to pray, learn about God together, and explore questions of faith in a safe and supportive environment. As trust builds, they become places where people can share openly, and where connections grow and deepen over time. In the midst of everyday life, small groups help us slow down, listen well, encourage one another, and grow as disciples of Jesus.

We are thankful for the new people who have joined our church and groups recently. It is a joy to welcome you, and we want to make sure everyone finds a place where they can belong and flourish.

If you would like to join a small group, please do come and speak to us. We would love to help you get connected.

We would also love to talk with anyone who feels that God may be calling them to lead or facilitate a group. Please do come and speak to us so we can talk with you and support you as you explore this further.

If you would like to include information in the August issue of The Voice please send it to Amy by Friday 17th July

Supporting Each Other to Grow in Faith

We are so blessed to have welcomed more people into our church family recently, and we care deeply about everyone being supported in their faith journey in a way that works best for them. At Preston Baptist Church, every person is valued, and we're committed to helping one another grow in faith, understanding and connection.

There are a number of resources available to support this journey. New Wine Online offers a rich library of worship and teaching from past summer conferences, which you can access using the details below:

•• https://new-wine.online/sign_in

•• Email: office@prestonbaptistchurch.com

•• Password: John@316

The Bible Project provides excellent free videos, podcasts and resources to help us see the Bible as one unified story pointing to Jesus. You can find them here:

•• Website: https://bibleproject.com

•• Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/jointhebibleproject

We also have copies of The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren available for anyone who would find this helpful.

We recognise that everyone's circumstances and schedules are different, and there are a number of ways we can support one another. House Groups are small groups that meet regularly in homes to build friendships, pray together, and explore the Bible in a relaxed and supportive setting. They are a great way to grow in faith and feel connected within the church.

We can also arrange pastoral support or set up a WhatsApp group for those who would find ongoing connection, prayer and encouragement helpful. Please do speak to us if any of these would be useful for you, or if you have another idea that might better support your journey — we would love to hear from you.

Membership at PBC

At Preston Baptist Church, we often talk about belonging, and church membership is one of the ways we express that belonging more intentionally.

Membership is a voluntary commitment to say: this is my church family, and I want to invest my time, gifts, prayers, and support into the life of the church. It's about shared life, shared responsibility, and shared joy in following Jesus together.

Membership also helps us care well for one another. It gives clarity about commitment, creates space for accountability and encouragement, and strengthens our ability to serve the wider community together.

In many ways, it's a simple but meaningful step of saying, "I'm in."

Anyone interested in membership at PBC please speak to Tina. There's no pressure and no assumption—just a warm invitation to explore what it means and see if it's the right next step for you.

SPREE Fundraiser

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and supported our SPREE fundraiser!

We enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of fun and fellowship as we raised money to help our young people attend the SPREE festival. There was something for everyone, including bunnies, cakes, crafts and a live band, making it a truly special occasion.

We are delighted to share that, thanks to your generosity and support, we raised over £1,100!

Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, baked, crafted, volunteered and helped make the event such a blessing. Your support will make a real difference as we invest in our young people and enabled them to experience all that God has in store for them at SPREE.

Christmas Shoeboxes

If anyone has any space in their garage to store some boxes of children's gifts for the shoeboxes, please could you let Julie Matthews know? Julie has a large number of items bought in the sales etc but nowhere to store them as her house has no garage and no loft! She would be very grateful indeed if anyone could allocate a corner to store these boxes of gifts until October. Many thanks.

Leadership Bible Focus

Each month, our church leaders spend time exploring a book of the Bible together. In July, we will be studying the book of Micah

You are very welcome to read along with the leadership team and we would love for you to share with us anything that God speaks to you as you reflect on this book.

Giving to God's Work at PBC

At Preston Baptist Church, we believe the greatest gift is giving your life to Jesus. If you're considering this, please speak to us—we'd love to support you.

If you're able to give financially, your generosity helps us serve God and our local community here at Preston Baptist Church.

Please prioritise your own financial well-being first. If you're in unmanageable debt, we kindly ask that you don't give at this time. Free, confidential Christian debt support is available through the Riviera Life CMA Debt Advice Centre in Torquay. Call: 07895789285. Email: debtadvice@rivieralife.co.uk

We're also part of Acts 435, connecting donors with those in genuine need. If you need support (up to £200), please speak to us.

Love Your Church Week

Monday 20th to Sunday 26th July

It is important to us that everyone in our church and wider community feels completely welcomed and comfortable here. Every year, we set aside time to pool our skills, energy, and gifts to invest in this space.

This year, Love Your Church Week will run from Monday 20th to Sunday 26th July.

As we enjoy our new extension, we'd love to give the halls a fresh look with painting and new blinds. There will also be work happening elsewhere in the building, including cleaning, gardening, and clearing.

A board listing the jobs that need to be completed during the week will be available in church. Please take a look and speak to Tina to let us know how you are able to help. Whether you can spare a short time or a longer stretch, your support would be greatly appreciated.

It's always encouraging to serve together and see what we can do as a church family.

As we look ahead to our 100th anniversary in 2027, this is a great moment to prepare our spaces for all that's still to come. We look forward to seeing you there!

Church Member Discount on Room Hire

Being a member of PBC means so much more than attending on a Sunday—you help us discern God's will together, contribute to the life and ministry of the church, and demonstrate a deep commitment to both our church family and the wider community. We are incredibly thankful for all that you do.

As part of our gratitude for all that you bring to the life of our church, we're pleased to remind you that all church members can hire our church spaces at a 50% discounted rate.

If you'd like to find out more about the spaces available or discuss a booking, please get in touch—we'd be delighted to help.

Thank you for being such an important part of the PBC community.

We're excited to be going to New Wine Festival 2026 as a church again this summer, from 28th July to 2nd August, and we would love for you to join us.

New Wine runs an annual summer festival that brings together thousands of people from churches across the UK for a week of worship, Bible teaching, prayer and community. The festival is designed for all ages and stages of faith, with dedicated programmes for children and young people, seminars and venues for adults, times of celebration worship, and space to encounter God together. Many people describe it as a week that refreshes their faith, strengthens friendships and creates lasting memories as a church family.

For ticket costs and options, please see the New Wine website: www.new-wine.org/festival/new-wine-festival-2026/. There are also bursaries available, considered individually, so please let us know if you would like us to explore this with you.

If cost is an issue, another great option is to be part of the team at the festival. There are many ways to serve, including helping in cafés, children's teams, welcome teams or supporting venues, and the ticket for being on team is just £35.

We would also like to say a heartfelt thank you to those who have already offered to financially support people from our church to attend. Your generosity has already enabled some who thought they would not be able to go to book their place, which is such an encouragement and a real blessing to our church family.

If you are interested in going, please speak to Louise.

Ways to Give

Direct Debit – Please use the bank details on the front of the Voice to set up a direct debit or speak to us if you'd like some help.

Online Giving via Zeffy – A simple way to give where 100% of your gift goes directly to PBC

www.zeffy.com/en-GB/donation-form/giving-to-god-at-pbc

PBC Gift List via Giftwhale – Help meet specific needs in the church by:

- Buying an item and having it delivered to church
- Donating towards an item and we'll purchase it
- Providing an item you already have

Please remember to reserve any item you choose so we can avoid duplicates.

www.giftwhale.com/lists/MB2YXm

Gift Aid

if you are a UK taxpayer and are able to use Gift Aid, please come and speak to us for a Gift Aid form. This allows us to reclaim tax on your donation, increasing your gift at no extra cost to you.

Thank you for your continued generosity and for being part of all that God is doing through our church.

Children & Youth Team

We want to take a moment to celebrate and express our deepest gratitude to our incredible Children and Youth Team. These amazing leaders faithfully dedicate their time, energy, and love to supporting the families within our church community.

Our young people truly enjoy their sessions, which provide a vital space for them to grow in faith, build friendships, and develop a lifelong relationship with God.

Could you help?

As our ministry continues to grow, we are looking for new friendly faces to join this fantastic team! If you have a heart for children and young people and want to help nurture the next generation, we would love to have you.

Make a Difference: Help children navigate their journey of faith.

Experience the Joy: Discover the fun, energy, and rewards of children and youth ministry.

No Pressure: You don't need to be an expert—just willing to show up and care.

To find out more, please speak to Julie.

Hall Refurbishment Project

We are very blessed to have a number of volunteers who are keen to help update and redecorate our church halls.

This summer, we will be focusing on refreshing the Main Hall to make it an even more welcoming space for both our church family and the wider community. Planned work includes painting, sanding the floor and replacing the curtains with blinds to give the hall a fresh new look.

If you are able to offer any time over the summer holidays, whether that's a day, a few hours, or more, we would love to hear from you. Please speak to Wendy to find out how you can help.

We are incredibly grateful for everyone who is willing to give their time, skills, and energy to this project. Thank you for your support as we continue to care for and improve the spaces God has entrusted to us.

Listen Again - Now on Spotify!

We're delighted to share another way to stay connected with the teaching and life of PBC: our sermons are now available on Spotify.

For those who already use Spotify, this offers a simple and convenient way to listen to sermons—whether you're catching up on a Sunday message you missed, revisiting something that particularly spoke to you, or sharing a sermon easily with friends and family. Making our sermons available on Spotify also helps us reach beyond our church walls, allowing more people in our wider community—and even further afield—to hear the good news of Jesus.

At the same time, we know that not everyone uses Spotify or feels comfortable with newer technology, and we want to reassure you that this is simply an additional option, not a replacement for existing ways of accessing sermons.

You can still listen by calling 01803 560214 and sermons will continue to be available on our website, so there are several ways to access them in the way that works best for you.

As we introduce new ways to connect, our hope is always to make church life more accessible, while ensuring everyone feels included and supported. If you'd like help accessing sermons online or using any of these options, please do ask—someone would be very happy to help.

Suzanne and David - Vow Renewal Celebration

We are delighted that on Sunday 26th July, Suzanne and David will be celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary by renewing their vows after the service.

This will be a joyful and meaningful moment, and everyone is warmly invited to stay and share in the celebration with them as we give thanks for their commitment and faithfulness over the years.

We look forward to marking this special occasion together as a church family.

Be Transformed Update

We are delighted to share that, from September, we will be welcoming a Be Transformed intern to PBC. Zach will be joining our team as a Trainee Children and Youth Worker and some of you may already have met him as he has visited us on several Sunday mornings. It has been wonderful to begin getting to know him, and we are excited for all that this will mean for our children's and youth ministry.

Be Transformed, created by South West Youth Ministries, is a Christian gap year designed to help young people grow into the person and leader God is calling them to be, while serving children and young people across the South West. Through practical ministry experience, training and discipleship, participants deepen their faith, develop lifelong skills, and gain a greater understanding of their calling and purpose.

We are excited not only about the blessing Zach will be to our church, but also about the opportunity to invest in him, to support him as he develops in faith, ministry, and discernment of God's calling on his life.

Please pray for Zach as he prepares to join us in September and for all those who will be supporting him, including his host family. We would also be very grateful to hear from anyone who feels they may be able to support Zach, either as part of the team or by offering help as a host family.

Safety Team

At Preston Baptist Church, every person in our church family is extremely valuable, as is the wonderful building we meet in — a space that allows us to welcome and serve our wider community.

Because of this, safety is extremely important to us. We are looking to put together a small team of volunteers to help us think through safety matters, carry out and review risk assessments, and support good practice across our activities and events.

If you have an interest in helping in this area, or would simply like to find out more, please speak to Tina or Amy. Your support would help us care well for both the people and the building of Preston Baptist Church.

South West Awake - 11th July

South West Awake is a movement of Christians from across the South West coming together to pray for our region. The vision is to see believers united in prayer, seeking God's blessing, renewal and transformation for the communities, towns and cities of the South West.

On 11th July, Christians will gather at locations along the South West Coast Path to pray for God's Kingdom to come and God's will to be done throughout our region. Individuals, churches and prayer groups are all invited to take part, whether by walking and praying a section of the path or joining in prayer from where they are.

This is a wonderful opportunity to stand alongside fellow believers, united in our desire to see people encounter Jesus and communities transformed by His love.

If you would like to find out more or get involved, please speak to JP or visit www.southwestawake.com.

Church Social Event - 26th July

To bring Love Your Church Week to a close, we are looking forward to gathering for a church BBQ after the service on Sunday 26th July.

This will be a relaxed and enjoyable time to say thank you for all the time, energy, and care so many of you give in serving our church and wider community.

It will be a great opportunity to connect with one another, share food, and enjoy each other's company as a church family.

We would be very grateful to anyone who is able to help in making this event possible—whether with preparation, setting up, serving, or clearing away.

We hope you will join us for this special time of celebration and fellowship.

SWBA - AGM

On 6th June Suzanne attended the SWBA AGM at Upton Vale Baptist Church. It was a friendly and enjoyable afternoon, with tea and cakes and lots of worship.

The event started with reports from all over the South West via video link and the usual summaries on 2025. Re-election of trustees were voted on and approved as was the financial report which showed that income is up and expenditure is down.

Each area gave a report and confirmed growth in all areas. Special areas for prayer were the Christian Youth Fellowship as they look for new leaders. Safeguarding Levels 1 and 2 are now available on-line and there is also DBS verifier training available.

Some takeaway items from the meeting:

28% of people record a spiritual experience

Compassion mixed with biblical learning

Bible sales soar – 134% up

14 churches from around the Torbay area were at Upton Vale and each gave a two-minute talk about their church; prayer requests, difficulties faced and aims for the future.

The meeting ended with sung worship, which was thoroughly enjoyable with one or two songs that I hadn't heard before.

Cafe Garden

Do you have any spare Summer or Early Autumn plants?

Liz would love to add them to the garden outside the cafe.

Please speak to Liz or just leave any

donated plants near the small bench.

Thank you.

Baptism Service - 30th August

We are delighted to share that we will be holding another baptism service on 30th August.

Baptism is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and share together as people take this significant step in their journey of faith. It is always a joy as a church family to witness and support those publicly declaring their commitment to follow Jesus.

If you would like to find out more about baptism, or are considering being baptised yourself, please do speak to us. We would love to talk with you and help you explore what this together.

We look forward with great expectation to celebrating together all that God is doing in people's lives.

Dedications

We are pleased to share that two families have approached us to ask whether their child could be dedicated at Preston Baptist Church.

We are delighted to be welcoming these children and their families as they take this important step. The dedications will take place on:

Ren – 19th July

Roman – 30th August

Please pray for Ren and Roman, and for their families, as they prepare for these special occasions. Child dedications are a wonderful opportunity for us as a church family to welcome and support parents as they seek to raise their children in the knowledge and love of God.

We look forward to celebrating with them and extending a warm welcome to their wider families and friends.

Leadership Nominations

At our Members' Meeting on 14th July, we will have the opportunity to discuss nominations for church members to serve as leaders.

Our current leadership team— James, Pauline, Suzanne, Tina and Wendy
—encourages you to prayerfully consider whether there is someone you feel has leadership potential, or whether this may be something God is leading them towards.

If you would like to know more about what being a leader involves, please speak to a member of the leadership team.

All nominations should be submitted by 10th July 2026. Nomination forms are available from the church office.

Leadership Nomination - JP Mentiply

We are delighted to share that JP has been nominated to join our Leadership Team.

Members will receive some information written by JP about himself, his faith journey and his sense of calling to leadership. We encourage all members to read this information carefully and to prayerfully consider the nomination.

The appointment will be considered and voted on at our Members' Meeting on 14th July. Please join us in praying for JP, our Leadership Team and the church as we seek God's guidance and wisdom in this process.

Because We Came

by Bob Baker

During a recent house group meeting, Bob Baker shared his poem "Because We Came" which he composed. We think it's apt for where we are in our church teaching and where the world is right now. Sometimes we can be touched by poetry in a different way to a sermon - like music it can create powerful connections and emotions. We hope you enjoy Bob's poem!

In a world that moves at breakneck speed,
Where everyone posts every deed,
True service doesn't make the trends
It shows up quiet, helps, and bends.

Like checking in when no one asks,
Or carrying someone else's tasks,
Being present, staying late,
Choosing love instead of hate.

Timothy walked that kind of way,
Not chasing fame or higher pay;
He cared for people, heart and soul,
And made compassion his very goal.

Epaphroditus gave his all,
Even when his strength grew small.
He pushed through pressure, stress, and strain,
Not for applause or personal gain.

Today it looks like listening well,
Helping someone out of dark and shell,
Cooking meals, or making space,
Showing kindness face to face.

It's answering calls at 2 a.m.,
Standing strong when life grows dim,
Lifting others when they fall,
Serving without keeping score at all.

Because the greatest lives we live,
Are measured by the love we give.
Not by clicks, posts, wealth or fame,
But who was better because we came.

The New Extension Update From Julie

We are delighted to share that our new extension is finally finished! If you haven't been up the corridor to have a look we would encourage you to do so to fully appreciate the space created and the wonderful quality of the workmanship.

The extension was only made possible because of the Torbay Council grant that Preschool applied for and were granted, so that they could increase their numbers. The whole project has been a great example of Preschool and church working together to achieve a shared goal. We now have a wonderful new space for the youth to use on Sundays instead of the lounge, and no doubt it will get plenty of other use in the future.

The project has taken 18 months since the grant was awarded and we faced many hurdles along the way, from appointing the right contractor, design issues, fire safety requirements and then the various building problems that were encountered along the way. Throughout it all God has been so incredibly faithful, guiding us in our decisions and enabling all the problems to be resolved.

We would like to extend our grateful thanks to all the Preschool staff and children who lived through the work! At times the noise of drilling foundations made the office shake; power cuts meant that computer work was lost and children's toilet trips took a lot longer with the diverted route! Preschool have also paid for the beautiful new patio that leads into the extension, for which we are extremely grateful.

We would also like to acknowledge the fantastic work done by the contractor, MW Benney, who really did go the extra mile to ensure the extension was all we hoped it would be. A lot of unexpected problems were addressed with no additional costs to the church or Preschool.

Praise God indeed for blessing us with this wonderful space, and may He be glorified through all that happens in there.

Members' Meeting and AGM

It was a blessing to gather together for our recent AGM and Members' Meeting, taking time to discern God's will for Preston Baptist Church together.

As part of the meeting, we reflected on all that has been achieved over the last year and gave thanks for the many people and teams who have served both the church and local community so faithfully. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all that God has been doing through people's gifts, time and commitment.

We also discussed future projects and plans for our building, as we continue to care for and develop the spaces God has entrusted to us.

An important part of the meeting was our growing focus on Connections. As we begin to establish our new connections process, we were encouraged to play our part in ensuring that both we and those around us remain connected to Christ, Church, and Community. Each of us has a role to play in noticing, welcoming and looking out for one another.

James also shared about the exciting new season of life and growth that Preston Baptist Church is entering as we look ahead to our centenary in 2027.

He spoke about the importance of People—connecting our existing church family with the many new faces joining us—and Process—building a stronger structure to support church life, including new digital communication updates and a more supportive volunteer onboarding system. The hope is to move away from a model where a small minority carries much of the responsibility and instead to equip and enable everyone to find a valued place to serve.

James also shared his desire for future meetings to be simpler and more collaborative, creating space for every voice as we continue to seek God's direction together.

We are grateful for all that God has done, and full of expectation for all that lies ahead.

The Vine & The Branches

by Isobel Burgess

During one of the storms in January this year, a massive tree was uprooted in my local park, Youngs Park, Goodrington. I felt sad to see this devastation and thought that the tree would now die. However, during the course of the next few weeks, I noticed some fresh leaves appearing on the branches lying on the ground. Amazingly, over time, the tree became full of leaves, as if it had not been uprooted. I then realised that a few roots must still be attached and drawing nutrients from the soil. This was enabling the tree to carry on its normal process of getting new Spring leaves.

This reminded me of the words of Jesus in John 15:5(a). “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.”

We need to remain in Christ and He will remain in us. To remain in Christ means to remain joined to Him spiritually, just as a branch is attached to a vine or tree. We will be like living branches if we remain joined to Christ in this way.

Just as the sap of the vine flows into the branches and gives them life, so will Christ’s Spirit flow into us and give us spiritual life.
The union between Christ and believers is just as close. In themselves, believers have no life, strength, or spiritual power. Their root is in Christ and all there is in the root is for the benefit of the branches.

Let us allow nothing to disrupt our union with Christ. If we remain in Christ, He will remain in us and enable us to bear much fruit.

Prayer

We are looking to explore new ways in which we can pray together as a church. We are passionate about prayer surrounding everything we do and everything flowing from prayer. Therefore, if there is a way you would like to be involved in prayer at our church, please let us know. Some ideas we have thought of are - a zoom prayer meeting, a prayer walk, committing to pray for the children and families in preschool etc. Please speak to Tina if you would like to support in any way.

Thank you!

We are so thankful for what this development means for the preschool, the church and the wider community. It is a real sign of God’s provision and care for us.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who has contributed to making this possible. Special recognition must go to Julie and Susan, who have worked tirelessly throughout—from securing the funding through to overseeing the building work and ensuring the space is finished to such a high standard.

We are deeply grateful, and we look forward to seeing this space used and enjoyed for many years to come.

SPREE 2026 - An Unforgettable Weekend

By Amy Carrielies

This year was the third time Preston Baptist Church has taken a group of young people to SPREE, a Christian youth festival at Exeter Westpoint. It was my first time going and, if I'm honest, I felt a little apprehensive about taking 24 young people aged 8–17, plus three younger children camping! I needn't have worried though, because the weekend was absolutely incredible!

This year's theme was "Unstoppable", exploring God's unstoppable love for us, our love for God, how that love changes us and how we can share it with others.

Each morning and evening we attended sessions for either the primary or secondary age groups, filled with worship, Bible teaching, games and discussion (and, for the younger group, plenty of gunge!).

The highlight for me was watching our young people grow in confidence, deepen friendships and develop their faith. It was such a privilege to see them worshipping together, praying for one another and talking openly about God. For some, this was their very first experience of church, making those moments even more special.

It was wonderful to see some of our young people make a first-time commitment to following Jesus. Watching them move from feeling unsure and nervous to responding with confidence was a moment none of us will forget.

Back at camp, we shared meals together, laughed together and enjoyed the constant buzz of conversations and growing friendships.

There was also plenty of time to simply enjoy being together, mountain biking, laser battles, craft activities and so much more. A highlight seemed to be a fairground ride called Freak Out. Thankfully I managed to escape this one! Our younger children particularly loved the circus skills and bouncy castles. They were also really excited to watch England vs Panama on Saturday evening!

I honestly don't think I can find enough words to describe what a blessing the weekend was—not only for our young people, but for the leaders too. There were so many moments when we looked around at what was happening and felt overwhelmed by God's presence and the incredible way God was moving among our group.

In my role, it is such a privilege to see the work that happens behind the scenes to make events like this possible. A very special thank you goes to Louise and Julie, whose countless hours of planning and preparation made the weekend possible. So much time, love and prayer went into every detail. Thank you also to all our brilliant leaders for giving up their weekend to encourage, pray for and support our young people, and to Gill Poore, our amazing camp coordinator, who kept us all well fed and looked after.

Finally, thank you to everyone who prayed for us and gave financially to make the weekend possible. SPREE is a real highlight of the year for many of our young people, and your support makes experiences like this possible.

Please keep praying for our young people as they return to home, school and everyday life. Pray that the work God has begun in them continues and keep encouraging and supporting them throughout the year ahead.

Now, if you'll excuse us, we're all off to catch up on some very much-needed sleep!