



## Weekly Bulletin

### Sundays 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023



#### Happy Christmas!

Many Christmas cards will feature snowy scenes with a festive, red-breasted robin. I wonder if you have either sent or received one. But perhaps the true Christmas bird is not the robin (or even a turkey!) but the goldfinch.

Yes, here is the goldfinch perched on Mother Mary's finger. The story goes that as Jesus carried his cross on the Via Dolorosa, a little goldfinch was so distressed to see the agony of Jesus that it flew down to try to help. It couldn't lift the cross itself, but the goldfinch instead tried to peck away at the thorns in the crown of thorns on Jesus' head. As it did so, some of Jesus' blood dropped onto the little goldfinch's head. So now, today, the goldfinch has a red spot on its head. By including the bird in their nativity scenes, painters like Bernardo Daddi, point the way forwards to the story of Christ's passion and the cross.

When I first saw this painting, upstairs in the Manchester Art Gallery, I did wonder what the bird was doing there on Mary's finger, but I was much more struck by the compassionate way in which the Christ Child reaches his hand up towards his mother's cheek. Her look is one of tenderness, and perhaps even sadness. Maybe,

Virgin and Child with the Goldfinch

Bernardo Daddi (c.1280–1348) (School of)  
Manchester Art Gallery

<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/virgin-and-child-with-the-goldfinch-204814>

the warnings she has been given by the Wise Men (albeit cryptically in their choice of gifts like the myrrh), more strongly by Simeon and Anna in the Temple, and indeed by Gabriel at the annunciation, all have led her to realise that her son will not have an easy life. And, neither will she! "Sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your heart..." In this painting, then, Jesus reaches up as if to say, "Don't cry, Mum."

Actually... a very similar story about how the Goldfinch got the red patch on its head is told about how the Robin got its red breast. Even in its entry about the European Robin, Wikipedia says (so it must be true!): *"Legend has it that when Jesus was dying on the cross, the robin, then simply brown in colour, flew to his side and sang into his ear in order to comfort him in his pain. The blood from his wounds stained the robin's breast, and thereafter all robins carry the mark of Christ's blood upon them."* So, you don't need to bemoan the secular-ness of all those Christmas cards with the jolly, plump red robin on them, because they are really pointing us towards the man that the Christ Child grows up to be – his cross and his resurrection.



Have a great Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Rev. Dave



### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Eve - Advent 4**

#### **Penrith**

**10.30am** ~ Carols in Town – Meet at PMC at 10.30am ~ See separate notice

**11.30pm** ~ Midnight Communion ~ Rev. Tim Cooke

#### **Alston Moor**

**11am** ~ Morning Communion ~ Rev. David Milner

#### **Langwathby**

**11am** ~ Carols & Coffee ~ See separate notice

#### **Kirkoswald**

**6pm** ~ Nativity Walk ~ Rev. Keith Speck & Rev. Canon Katharine Butterfield

#### **Renwick**

**4pm** ~ Christingle ~ Rev. David Milner

#### **Great Salkeld**

**4pm** ~ Crib Service/Christingle at St. Cuthbert's Church ~ Veronica Priest & Team

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**10AM** - SKELTON, MRS. LOIS MORTON

**10.30AM** - PMC, MR. MORGAN TEBB-ROGER

★ **10.30AM** - STAINTON, REV. TIM COOKE



***There are alternative Anglican services available.***

***For details, please see the EEMC website: [www.eastofedenmc.org.uk](http://www.eastofedenmc.org.uk)***

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**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December – New Year’s Eve**

**Penrith**

**10.30am** ~ Morning Worship – Mr. Michael Boone

*‘A New Dawn: Walking into God’s Glorious Future’*

Reading: Isaiah 61: 10 – 62: 3

**Patterdale**

**10.30am** ~ Morning Worship ~ Rev. Andrew Callaway

**Skelton**

**10.30am** ~ Members Service

**Stainton**

**10.30am** ~ Morning Worship ~ Mr. Lawrence Tomlinson

**Cottage Wood Centre**

**3pm** ~ Afternoon Worship ~ Rev. David Milner

**Lazonby**

**10am** ~ Joint EEMC Communion Service at St. Nicholas’ Church ~

Rev. David Milner & Rev. Lindsay Harrod

*This is a joint service for all of the churches together in the East of Eden Mission Community. There are no other East of Eden services today.*

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✠ **So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven** ✠

Look at yourself. Where do you see the divine reflected back at you.

# Weekly Diary

## **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December - Boxing Day**

**NO** Midweek Service at PMC

**NO** 'He Brews' Coffee Club at Gamblesby

## **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January - New Years Day**

**9.30am** ~ Monday Walk - Meet outside PMC

## **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

**10am** ~ Midweek Communion Service ~ Rev. Gillian Belford

**10am** ~ 'He Brews' Coffee Club - Gamblesby Methodist Chapel

## **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

**10am** ~ Coffee Morning - Skelton Methodist Church

**1.30pm** ~ Wednesday Get Together - Skelton Methodist Church

**7pm - 8pm** ~ Cottage Wood Monthly Prayer Time - *We are continuing to pray at home, and all are welcome to take part for any or all of the hour.*

## **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January**

**10.15am** ~ Meeting Point - Langwathby Methodist Chapel

## **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January**

**12 noon** ~ Lunch Club - Ullswater/PMC

## **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

**Penrith: 10.30am** ~ Covenant Service ~ Rev. Tim Cooke

**Skelton: 10.30am** ~ Covenant Service ~ Rev. David Milner

**Stainton: 10.30am** ~ Morning Worship ~ Mr. Morgan Tebb-Roger

**Cottage Wood Centre: 3pm** ~ Covenant Service ~ Rev. Tim Cooke

**Alston Moor: 11am** ~ Covenant Service ~ Rev. Mary Elliot

**Nenthead: 5pm** ~ Pennine Praise

**Culgaith: 11am** ~ Covenant Service ~ Rev. Keith Speck

**Langwathby: 5pm** ~ Taize Service

**Gamblesby: 10am** ~ Little Acorns



## **'On the 7th day God rested' (Genesis 2:2)**

Just a quick note to ask everyone to please respect our wonderful staff when they come to worship on a Sunday.

They come to worship, not work, so please save any work-related matter for office hours.

Thank you all!

Rev. Tim.

## Gamblesby Community Nativity

A full dress rehearsal of the Gamblesby Nativity has taken place and the stage is set for our annual Community Nativity Service which will be held this **Friday 22 December at 4pm in the chapel.**

This year our Little Acorns children will explore the Christmas service as seen by 'The New Star' which includes songs by the children, a ladies' choir and congregational carols. The service will also be broadcast on Eden FM 107.5 and is to be followed by refreshments, with a craft stall for any last-minute Christmas presents.

All are welcome to what will be a lovely start to the Christmas weekend.



**Please Note: This service will not be live streamed.**



### Christmas Eve

A service for all the family to celebrate Christmas

Langwathby Methodist Church

Coffee and mince pies from 10.45

Service starting at 11.00 approx.

*All are welcome*

**Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> January** – “Meeting Point” at Langwathby Methodist Church: Coffee and conversation from 10.15am, closing with a thought for the day. All are welcome.

**Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> January** – A “Taize-style” reflective service at Langwathby Methodist Church at 5pm. All are welcome.



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### Christmas Cards - PMC

A reminder to please check the pigeon-holes in the glasshouse at PMC. There are a number of Christmas cards waiting to be collected.

There are also some cards by the globe in the Crush Hall which we have received for the whole Church family from past members, so please take a look.

Donations to 'All We Can' can still be placed in the globe in lieu of Christmas cards.



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### PMC Christmas Charities

This year, any cash donations received at our Christmas services will be divided between the CAP Eden Debt Centre and Unicef Palestine/Gaza Appeal.

## Carols by Candlelight

Thank you from the bottom of my heart to all who took part in Carols by Candlelight for all your dedication and hard work. A special thank you also to John Peacock for being such a brilliant host of the evening.

You all always seem to be committed and get behind things, especially following my creative mind, so from the bottom of my heart thank you.

Michael Boone.



I am sure everyone will want to join us this Christmas-time in saying a huge thank you to our amazing Circuit staff!

Sarah, Maureen, Lindsay, Morgan, Jon, Jen, Keith and Trace have worked incredibly hard in what has been a challenging year on many levels.

Their passion, dedication and commitment to helping all of us build God's Kingdom has been a real joy and an amazing blessing to the church.

So, thank you from the Ministers, and all of us who make up this amazing family! We love you and are so grateful for all you do!

Rev. Tim and Rev. Dave.



✠ Yet in Thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light ✠

Look at the people around you. Where do you notice the divine shining back at you?

Please join us in sending love and congratulations to Katie and Loren who will be getting married at a small, family ceremony conducted by Rev. Tim at PMC tomorrow – Saturday 23 December.

Katie and Loren were due to be married in May next year, but have chosen to bring it forward. Rev. Tim Thorpe will be leading a bigger service of blessing and celebration in May 2024 for wider friends and family.

**TOM TAKES ON A**

# **24HR MARATHON KAYAK PORTAGE**

**RAISING MONEY FOR BEEP DOCTORS**



Tom Taylor, aged 13, is taking on a marathon in 24hrs, pulling his kayak around the streets of Penrith to raise money for BEEP Doctors. Starting with 3 miles during the first hour, then one mile each hour thereafter for 24 hrs.

**SUPPORT THE EVENT!**

**23rd - 24th DECEMBER 2023**

For more information and to support Tom scan the QR Code or visit the website below:  
[justgiving.com/page/tomtaylor-kayak-portage-marathon](https://www.justgiving.com/page/tomtaylor-kayak-portage-marathon)



*Tom is a member of PMC's Friday night Youth Club.*





### Curious about faith?

Join a series of group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. At each Alpha session, you'll be hosted in a small group and watch an episode on a different question of faith - then you have a chance to share your thoughts and hear what others think. You can say anything you like, or nothing at all.

Everyone's welcome. You're invited, no matter your background or beliefs. It's free and there's no pressure to come back.

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Starts 11th Jan 2024 7.30pm

'Restore' Shop, New Squares

Penrith Tel. 07748988033



**An event for young people in the District arranged by Su Davis, District Young People's Work Coordinator.**

**This is for anyone aged between 11 and 21 years of age and will take place at 3 pm on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January at Penrith Methodist Church.**

**Those under 18 must have a signed consent form.**

A blue poster for 'The Freedom Challenge'. At the top, it says 'THE Freedom CHALLENGE' in white and yellow text, with a graphic of a door inside a speech bubble. Below that, it says 'AN ESCAPE ROOM STYLE ADVENTURE'. The main text reads 'Come and test your escaping abilities as you and your team face The Freedom Challenge!'. At the bottom, there is a white box containing event details: a calendar icon for 'January 27th', a clock icon for '3pm', and a location pin icon for 'Penrith Methodist Church'. At the very bottom, it says 'For more info please contact Su Davis on cumbriamethodistyouth@gmail.com'.

## A New Year Resolution – try a Daily Reflection App!

While you are all digesting the last of the turkey and your thoughts turn to new year resolutions, perhaps you might consider using one of the daily Bible devotional apps that you can download to your phone or tablet.

But which one? Here are my top tips for three apps I think are well worth considering. You can find them on google play, or App store.

### 1. Lectio 365 – FREE!



This is an app developed by the 24/7 Prayer team. It includes a morning devotion that begins with reading a Psalm, some prayers, the reading of another Bible text, and some commentary / reflection. You can listen to the audio, or just read it. Takes about 10 minutes. Quite evangelical in theology. There is also an evening, Compline type reflection (which I really like) which is more contemplative – also about 10 minutes.

### 2. Reflections - £2.99 a quarter



This app, from the Church of England, is one Trace and I do together each day. It's good in that it includes each of the three lectionary texts for the day – so in 3 years, you'd more or less read the whole Bible! There is a link to each of the Bible passages, and then a written commentary by a different contributor who changes roughly every couple of weeks. Some you will prefer more than others!

### 3. Pray as you go – Free



This is my favourite app at the moment! In the style of Ignatian spirituality, the daily prayer can be read or listened to. Takes about 10 minutes and begins with some gentle, contemplative music, then a Bible text is read, followed by some reflection and meditation, before the text is read for a second time. There are also a number of other different spiritual devotions you can listen to depending on your mood! Trace and I listen in the evenings – but can be done any time. I love it!

Whichever you choose to do – spending intentional time with God each day is a great habit, so enjoy!

Rev. Tim.

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### Monday Zoom Prayer Meetings

These will resume on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm. If anyone would like the link emailing, please either contact the Circuit Office or Chris Swift.



# Our Calling

**A NEW YEAR, A NEW SERIES - EXPLORING  
OUR RESPONSE TO THE CALL OF JESUS**

Week 1 – 7 Jan – Rev. Tim – Covenant service

Week 2 - 14 Jan - Dave - WORSHIP

Week 3 - 21 Jan - Morgan - LEARNING and CARING

Week 4 - 28 Jan - Tim - SERVICE

Week 5 - 4 Feb - Michael - EVANGELISM.

**Join us for worship live at PMC at 10.30am  
or catch up on YouTube anytime!**



Worship



Learning and Caring



Service



Evangelism

Let's do **LUNCH**  
**SUNDAY 7TH JANUARY**  
Following the PMC morning service



## **PAID OPPORTUNITY FOR PROPERTY PROJECT**

### **EAST CUMBRIA METHODIST CIRCUIT - REVIEW OF PROPERTY ASSETS**



This new Circuit came into being on 1st September 2023 as the Penrith and Kirkoswald and Alston Moor Circuits merged. In developing a vision and strategy for the new Circuit the need to review our property assets has become apparent. We have recently sold Ainstable, Renwick and Sleagill chapels - with Salkeld Dykes chapel also now no longer needed.

As we develop Ecumenical Mission Communities, we are now looking for a volunteer to ideally manage these assets, and in particular, to lead a review of the remaining 6 chapels and 6 Manses. You will also help the Circuit to evaluate our future building needs, taking into account the current conditions which are outlined in recent Quinquennial inspections, and the Circuit's overall Vision and Mission Statement.

This will be time limited project to be completed during 2024 ensuring compliance with well documented Methodist procedures. Reviewing our manses will include liaison with the managing agents for the two that are currently let out.

An honorarium payment will be available for delivery of the required recommendations.

For further details and/or an informal discussion please contact John Slee on 07971446286 before the end of 2023 or thereafter Rev. Tim Cooke.



☞ Above Thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by ☞

Look at the world around you. Where do  
you see glimmers of the divine?

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The Circuit Office will be closed from 1pm on  
Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and will re-open at 9am on  
Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

We would like to thank all who have given their time and talents  
in any way over the last year. We wish you a peaceful and blessed  
Christmas and pray for a happy and healthy 2024.



## Contact Details:

### Co-Superintendent Ministers

**Rev. Tim Cooke:** 01768 890465 or email: [tim.cooke@methodist.org.uk](mailto:tim.cooke@methodist.org.uk)

**Rev. David Milner:** 01768 863209 or email: [dave@revmilner.plus.com](mailto:dave@revmilner.plus.com)

**Circuit Pastor: Rev. Keith Speck:** 01768 898257 or email: [keithspck1@googlemail.com](mailto:keithspck1@googlemail.com)

**Missional Pioneer & Communities Lay Pastor: Morgan Tebb-Roger:** 07949 156051  
or email: [outreach@penrithmethodist.co.uk](mailto:outreach@penrithmethodist.co.uk)

**Stainton Outreach Worker: Trace Cooke:** 01768 890465  
or email: [tracecooke1@gmail.com](mailto:tracecooke1@gmail.com)

**Circuit Office:** 01768 862787 or email: [admin@penrithmethodist.co.uk](mailto:admin@penrithmethodist.co.uk)  
(Open 9am - 1pm, Monday to Friday)

**Circuit Administrative Manager: Sarah Mulheron**

**Administrative Assistant: Maureen Brunskill**

**Premises Manager: Lindsay Wilson**

**Eden Debt Centre Manager (CAP): Jon Cook:** 07464 939138  
or email: [joncook@capuk.org](mailto:joncook@capuk.org)

**Debt Coach:** Jen Dixon: 07799 271710 or email: [jendixon@capuk.org](mailto:jendixon@capuk.org)

**Cottage Wood Centre - Please send a request to join our Facebook group.**

**East of Eden Mission Community Website:** [www.eastofedenmc.org.uk](http://www.eastofedenmc.org.uk)

**PMC Website:** [www.penrithmethodist.co.uk](http://www.penrithmethodist.co.uk)

**Find our Sunday services on YouTube**

**Follow us on Twitter @PMCMethodists and on Facebook**

**Let's stay connected with one another!**

