

Welcome to the December 2024 edition of your United Benefice magazine.

If you know anyone who would like to be added to our mailing list, please ask them to email unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com or, for anyone who is not online, please phone 01254 814041.



St Leonard's Balderstone

St Mary's Mellor



St Leonard the Less
Samlesbury



Light Reflections...The Gospel “Let your light shine...” (Matthew 5.16)

The Assistant Priest's Reflection.

‘Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given’.

As I am writing this reflection out of my window I can see the first snowy day of the year; everything is covered in a blanket of shimmering white. A quiet reminder that Winter is not too far away.

As we begin our journey through Advent, we begin a time of expectancy and waiting for the coming birth of our Lord Jesus. During Advent and Christmas, when we face the long dark nights of Winter, we are reminded that Jesus the Light of the World has come among us, and no matter how dark or troubled the world may seem, the darkness can never overcome the light. What amazes me is that the darker it gets, the brighter the light shines.

But behind all of these things, we need to think about who Jesus is and why he came to be one of us. Jesus was, and is, not only God's Son, but God-God with us. Emmanuel. He chose to identify with us, to walk and share with us, experience and ultimately die for us so that we could be reconciled to God. If we can get our hearts around this, then how should we respond? This isn't an easy question to answer, but one to think about as we travel through the season of Advent and Christmas.

Perhaps we could try and spend more time reading our Bible and in prayer each day through the Advent season. As the cold and dark nights begin to bite perhaps we could try and think of those around us for whom Christmas will be a difficult time; those who are unwell, lonely or bereaved.

As Christ's followers we are each called to be a people of hope, who reflect Christ's light in the world, as the closing words of the baptism service reminds us:

‘God has delivered us from darkness and has given us a place with the saints in light. You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life. Shine as a light in the world, to the glory of God the Father’.

I do hope that you will take time to join us in one or more of our Christmas services in the three churches of our Benefice. On behalf of our Benefice, may I wish you and your families the love of Christ, His Peace and Goodwill this Advent and Christmas season and a new year of blessings.

All my thoughts and prayers, Reverend Barbara.

New Beginnings

This week I watched the preview of the John Lewis advert for Christmas in the app. (Sad, I know!) It is all about buying the right gift in that tinselly way big stores go about these things. But we all know that our Christmas doesn't depend upon buying everyone the right thing. There is more to Christmas than presents. As you read this, we're beginning the season of Advent when we wait for the birth of our saviour.

In Isaiah the prophet says: ‘Behold I'm doing a new thing; do you not perceive it?’ (Isaiah 43:19) It was to bring hope to people as they faced the fall of Jerusalem during his lifetime, but we Christians think of it as foretelling the change that Jesus brings. The people of Israel thought the end had come, but God says that it is just the beginning.

Waiting for change is never easy, whether it is moving up in school or finding a new job or house. In the New Year which approaches we will say goodbye to Karen as she moves on and we will find a new vicar for our benefice. But we must remember that: Behold! God is doing a new thing. It isn't an end but a beginning. However much we will miss her.

God always asks us to use our waiting time carefully. Whether that is our practise of Advent or our planning for the new future of the benefice. Each year the Diocese produces a booklet of bible study notes to take us through Advent together. It's available in print and by email. It is also on the fruitful app along with many other resources. There is a lot to help us.



<https://fruitful.faith/get-the-app>

In our press there is so much depressing talk about the end of the Church of England and there is change here in our benefice. It's so tempting to think we're finished, never to return. But really, we're waiting for a new beginning. When it comes to our future it is important we get hold of the right gift. Not some tinselly item from a department store but that relationship with Jesus that he offers us. It's worth far more than anything money can possibly buy and is available to us all and we don't even need to have an app for it. We just need to pick up our bibles and pray.

Merry Christmas, Pam Daunton

United Benefice Church Services: December 2024

	<u>Balderstone</u>	<u>Mellor</u>	<u>Samlesbury</u>
Sunday 1 st December	09:30 Holy Communion	16:00 Festival of Light	11:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 8 th December	16:00 Café Church in Balderstone School	09:30 Mothers Union Holy Communion	11:00 Morning Praise All Age Worship
Sunday 15 th December	09:30 Holy Communion	09:30 Morning Prayer	11:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 22 nd December	09:30 Holy Communion with Christmas Carols	16:00 Carol Service	18:30 Carol Service
Tuesday 24 th December	16:00 Christingle Service	16:00 Christingle Service	-
Wednesday 25 th December	-	09:30 Holy Communion	11:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 29 th December	09:30 United Benefice Joint Book Of Common Prayer Service at St Leonard's Church, Balderstone		

PRAYER DIARY



Each month, as a United Benefice, we will be focusing our prayers on a strand of the Diocesan Vision 2026. Every week, we will pray an aspect of that strand, as we seek God's face and will for our Benefice.

Dec

Being Witness to Jesus Christ

Week 1

Lord Jesus, give us the confidence to share the Good News of your saving grace with others, in both word and deed. Amen

Week 2

Dear God, open our eyes and hearts to see the needs of those around us, both near and far, and help us to meet those needs with actions as well as words. Amen

Week 3

Father, enable us to catch the vision and work with you in growing your Kingdom through new ways of being church. Amen

Week 4

Creator God, as you looked at everything that you have made and saw that it was 'very good', may we as good stewards, care for all of your creation as you would want us to. Amen

Rev'd Karen has asked that Saturdays be respected as her day off. If you feel you have a genuine emergency, on a Saturday, that requires help, please contact a Church Warden first and they will help to advise you. Please find their contact details on page 17 of this magazine. The Vicarage office phone number is 01254 814041 and the email address is unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com.

Midweek United Benefice Services

Everyone is welcome to come and join us at our weekly, midweek United Benefice services.



Our midweek United Benefice Holy Communion Services are held on Tuesdays at 9:30am at St Mary's Church, Mellor. These services are open to all from Balderstone, Mellor, Samlesbury and beyond and are followed by coffee and friendly chat. Please do come along for worship & fellowship.

Midweek United Benefice services are also held every Friday, at 4:00pm, when Rev'd Karen will be saying Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor. All are invited to join her as we pray for Church Growth across our parishes of Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury.



United Benefice Diary Dates

For further details of any of these diary events, please see our event posters, read through the articles in our magazines or email unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com.

1 st Dec	Brass Band Christmas Concert at St Leonard's Church, Balderstone	6:30pm
2 nd Dec	Rev'd Karen leading School Worship at St Leonard the Less Church, Samlesbury	2:45pm
2 nd Dec	Advent in The Bible and Art Retreat Begins at Whalley Abbey	4:00pm
2 nd Dec	Christmas Wreath Making at Mellor Village Hall	6:00pm
3 rd Dec	United Benefice Holy Communion Service at St Mary's (Repeated Weekly)	9:30am
3 rd Dec	United Benefice Concurrent PCC Meeting at Mellor St Mary's School	7:00pm
4 th Dec	Organ Concert with John Hosking at Blackburn Cathedral	12:15pm
4 th Dec	St Mary's Choir Practice at St Mary's Church, Mellor	6:30pm
4 th Dec	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury (Repeated Weekly)	7:00pm
6 th Dec	Samlesbury Lunch Club at Samlesbury War Memorial Hall	12:30pm
6 th Dec	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor (Repeated Weekly)	4:00pm
7 th Dec	Artisan Christmas Market at Samlesbury War Memorial Hall	10:00am
7 th Dec	St Leonard's Christmas Fayre at Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary School	2:00pm
7 th Dec	Blackburn Music Society Perform Handel's Messiah at Blackburn Cathedral	7:30pm
10 th Dec	United Benefice Holy Communion Service at St Mary's (Repeated Weekly)	9:30am
10 th Dec	Balderstone Mothers' Union Christmas Lunch	
10 th Dec	United Benefice Schools' Cathedral Carol Service at Blackburn Cathedral	1:00pm
10 th Dec	Mellor Mothers' Union Christmas Party	7:00pm
10 th Dec	Balderstone & District Women's Institute at Mellor Brook Community Centre	7:30pm
11 th Dec	St Mary's Choir Practice at St Mary's Church, Mellor	6:30pm
11 th Dec	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury (Repeated Weekly)	7:00pm
13 th Dec	Rev'd Karen leading Collective Worship at Mellor St Mary CE Primary School	
13 th Dec	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor (Repeated Weekly)	4:00pm
13 th Dec	Christmas by Candlelight Concert of Classic Sing-Alongs at Blackburn	7:30pm

	Cathedral	
14 th Dec	Advent Antiphons Quiet Day led by The Bishop of Blackburn at Whalley Abbey	10:00am
14 th Dec	Christmas Spectacular Performance at Blackburn Cathedral	7:30pm
15 th Dec	Film Club at Mellor Brook Community Centre	7:30pm

St Leonards Church, Balderstone – News and Events

Our next event is **The Candle-Lit Christmas Concert, with the brilliant Coppull & Standish Brass Band, is on Sunday 1st December 6.30pm in church.**

The cost is £6.00 adults and children free.

Our excellent Pop-Up Choir will be performing and there will be an opportunity for the children to get involved. Mulled wine, soft drinks, mince pies and chocolate biscuits will be available in school after the concert.

If you haven't managed to buy tickets, you can pay on the night.

The Christmas Fair will be held in school on Saturday 7th December at 2pm

Entrance cost £1 adults 50p children with donations for refreshments.

Father Christmas will be in his Grotto and there will be stalls, games and raffles etc

The school children will be opening the Fair and the brilliant Ukuleles will be playing during the afternoon. Please do come and enjoy a festive afternoon.

Our provisional dates for Walking Day and our Summer event next year are:-

Walking Day Saturday 10th May

Our Summer Event Saturday 14th June

Please save the dates and more details of these and other events will be in the next newsletter.

The next meeting of the Social Committee is on Thursday 6th February 7.30pm at Pickering Fold Farm when we will be discussing events for 2025. Please do come with any ideas, suggestions etc. all welcome.

On behalf of the Social Committee, we would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2025

Many thanks for all your support, help and generosity and we look forward to seeing you,

Best wishes Catherine Dixon 01772 877289 / 07976 550882 / Catherine@dixon drainage.co.uk

Balderstone Mothers' Union

Cheryl Sandford our deanery Presiding Member came along in November and gave us an illustrated talk on a trip to Thailand. She was very interesting and the pictures were superb. We all thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

Thank you so much Cheryl. Afterwards we had our usual tea and biscuits, kindly provided by Olwyn.

We next meet for our Christmas Lunch on December 10th, this year at the Traders Arms in Mellor 12.30 pm. Its always nice to get together particularly at Christmas. In the evening one or two of us will be attending Mellor MU Christmas party. I can thoroughly recommend it, always a really nice evening.

I send you all my best wishes for a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Susan Baron

Forest Church at St Leonard's, Balderstone

We were delighted to welcome the Right Reverend Dr Joe Kennedy, Bishop of Burnley, to our Forest Church service. The theme of our service was "Christ the king" which we explored with the help of nature. Learning about robins and how they behave helped us develop our understanding.



With robins, everything isn't quite what we expect! We think of robins as very friendly birds as they often perch close to gardeners and can even be tame enough to feed by hand. Of course, they are actually waiting for the gardener's digging to bring worms to the surface for them to eat. Robins look so sweet, but they can get quite cross. They don't like other birds spoiling their patch and are quick to drive intruders away. We think of robins appearing only at Christmas, but they don't disappear. In spring they are busy nesting and in summer they are finding plenty of food in nearby woodland. Robins sing loudly in the light and the dark. In fact, they are always with us – all day, all night and all year round.

Clutching our torches, we then ventured outside in the dark to the Butterfly, Bird and Bee garden

where we learned how to provide food and shelter for robins during the cold winter months ahead. The children discussed where would be the safest place to position our new brushwood nester from the RSPB and a small ball was floated in the bird bath to prevent the water from completely freezing over.



Huddled together in the shelter, we all became Bible detectives and thought carefully about the type of king Jesus showed himself to be in 3 short Bible passages. It was clear that Jesus was a very special king. He was a great teacher and leader who was loved and worshipped by many. But, just like with robins, everything wasn't quite what was expected! Jesus was a very humble king. He came to serve others and reached out to all sorts of people to help them live better lives. He was outspoken and fearless and this made him an unpopular king with some.



Gathered together in the school worship area, Bishop Joe explained that Christ the king came to carry out God's plan. He came to die on the cross, taking the punishment we deserve for turning away from God. His crown was a crown of thorns. As we move into the season of Advent, we must remember that the story of Christ the king continues beyond Christmas. Every part of his story is important right through to the joy of Easter. When Jesus ascended to heaven, he said, "You can be sure that I will be with you always." Now Jesus is alive again and his throne is in heaven. Christ the king is with us all day, all night, all year round and forever!



Our wonderful Ukulele group and Pop Up Choir led our singing of "Here I am to worship" and then the themed refreshments and craft activities were enjoyed by everyone.

Rosemary Cummins

St Mary's Church, Mellor – News and Events

Mellor Mother's Union

MELLOR's MU meeting on 22 November opened with welcoming two new members to our group. Margaret Ashton conducted the induction and prayers to which we all joined in and greeted the new members warmly.

Following this, we enjoyed a talk by Phil Rainford on Discovering Forgotten Varieties of Apples and Pears and had brought with him an abundance of delicious looking examples. Phil explained that during the 1950s as a young boy, with his peers, he was often 'trainspotting' collecting steam engine numbers, however, as time went on, his passion evolved and the trainspotting was left behind and a more 'edible' kind of 'spotting' began of apples and pear tree varieties that had been lost over time. Twenty years later, in the 1970s, Phil's interest was further piqued as he read an article which highlighted the demise of many old regional apples and so he purchased a copy of the National Apple Register to investigate further. After



tracking down a lost C18 Lancashire apple named Hargreave's Green Sweet, he has been involved in researching and seeking out rare and missing apple and pear trees in many locations ever since. Members were surprised to learn there are 2800 varieties of apples in the UK and 550 pear varieties. Phil pointed out he tries to limit his research to the old Lancashire historical boundaries but finds it a difficult undertaking with being a member of The Northern Fruit Group based in Harrogate and other further afield groups. He visits many old orchards and takes grafts of 'lost variety' trees to plant and sends DNA samples to Brogdale Collections, an apple and pear identification service to help his research. He explained every county has it's own unique varieties

peculiar to specific places, i.e. Longridge has 'Proctus Seedling' which is not known to grow outside of the area. Phil passed around lots of different old variety apples he had grown complete with a slicing knife and the members were very happy to cut slices of the apples to taste. Some were sweet and some bitter tasting as they were also classed as 'cooking' apples, some were slightly strange in shape and one apple, in particular, when sliced, exposed a beautiful red striped flesh. We sampled Yellow Burknot, St Michael's, Blenheim Orange and Jenny Lynd which tastes of Melon and Pineapple and a few more.

Phil offered all the left over apples to us to take away if we wished to taste them.

Di Ibbotson thanked him very much for the fun evening of tasting and learning 'new old apple names'.

Frances Jackson
Deputy Roving Reporter

Mellor St Mary's Mothers Union
would like to invite you to a
Christmas Party.
Buffet Supper and Entertainment in
school Tuesday, 10th December at
7p.m. Tickets £7



St. Mary's Family Service

At our family service this time, the children made crowns to celebrate 'Christ the King' and our Christmas tree!



Remembrance Service at St Mary's



A Touching Tribute by Our Young Parishioners

This past Remembrance Sunday, our church community saw a beautiful tribute from our youngest members. The children coloured both red and purple poppies, the red to honour the fallen soldiers and the purple to remember the animals sacrificed during the war. Their heartfelt artwork was created into a wreath and laid at the cenotaph.



The children were very respectful throughout, showing great care and understanding of the significance of their actions. It was a powerful reminder of the importance of remembering and honoring our history and the sacrifices made by so many.

We are proud of our young parishioners and grateful to everyone who contributed to wreath making. Let us continue to teach our children the value of remembrance, ensuring that the legacy of the fallen is never forgotten.

Ruth Metcalf

I was so pleased to be asked to read out the names of men who lost their lives in 2 World Wars. It was especially meaningful as Barbara's father was one of them. Margaret did a brilliant job organising the service.



Alan Smith

Mellor Card Ladies – Recycled Cards

We would like to thank everyone who supported our recent Poppy Appeal, both those who bought the poppies and the local businesses, Mellor Beauty and Littlers' Deli, who allowed us to sell the poppies there. A wonderful total of £153.40 was raised, all of which will be sent to The Royal British Legion.

Our Christmas cards are now on sale in Church, either individually or in packs 10 assorted cards. Please take a look at our Card Stall, and see our range of Christmas items. We have recently made a donations of £25 to Teenage Cancer Trust in memory of Christine Taylor's nephew, James Addyman, £20 to Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) in memory of Sophie Clarke and £20 to the Children in Need Charity.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us in our efforts to raise funds for the various charities that we support by buying our Christmas cards and novelties at various events recently; not forgetting of course all the wonderful support we have received throughout the year. We wish you all a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2025.

The Card Ladies

Little Angels

We enjoyed a busy afternoon decorating our Christmas Tree, making a card, listening to a story about the angel visiting Mary and playing with toys. Such a blessing to welcome our little ones each month and especially when Sarah comes along. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 12th December when Mr Birchall will be bringing his class from school to come to sing to us always a joy to see former little angels in their school uniform.

Happy Christmas from us all x

Rita Gorman



[St Leonard the Less Church – News and Events](#)

[Samlesbury Lunch Club](#)

The next lunch club date is **Friday, 6th December** at 12:30pm. Anyone in the community, who would enjoy friendship and a meal, is very welcome. Although there is a suggested donation of £6, we are very happy for anyone who is less able to pay to join us. For those without transport, please let us know and we will arrange a driver to collect you. To book a lunch on Friday 6th December, please contact Grace Eastham on 01772 877076 or Gaynor Dockerill at gaynor.dockerill@gmail.com.

[Ros Slinger](#)

[Baptism Thanks at Samlesbury](#)

Stephen and I would like to send our thanks to Rev Karen for her lovely service for Lucas' Baptism.

She was so kind thoughtful, especially when Lucas needed a little feed during the service.

Thank you

Stephen, Sophie, Logan & Lucas



[Christmas Afternoon Tea](#)

Storm Bert failed to deter a great turnout of families and friends for this annual event and they weren't disappointed. The central buffet table was laden with a great variety of savouries and delicious cakes and pastries whilst tea and coffee pots were regularly replenished by our loyal team of workers.

Christmas stalls with cakes and crafts plus competitions for all ages provided plenty of entertainment and the highlight for the children was a surprise visit from Father Christmas to his grotto.

From our Rose Queen to our generous donors and volunteers, thank you for making this such a memorable and happy afternoon for everyone who joined us.

St Leonard the Less Social Committee



United Benefice (Balderstone, Mellor & Samlesbury) Churchwarden's meeting

11th Nov 2024

Present: Sarah Lees, Lloyd Brown, Ryan Dixon, Mary Shorthouse, John Eastham & Paul Daunton.

Karen sent her apologies.

The meeting opened with a prayer.

1. The main topic for discussion was Karen's resignation as the Benefice vicar and the meeting arranged with Bishop Phillip to discuss the future.
 - a. We agreed that we need to amend the previous Parish Profile to reflect the changes that have happened over the last 3 1/2 years and that this would be quicker if we met together rather than via Zoom.
 - b. We will also ask Karen for any feedback on her time as vicar which could be incorporated into the revised Parish Profile.
2. It was decided that the next concurrent PCC, which is planned to be held at Mellor school on the 28th of November, should be postponed a week to the 3rd of December to allow the meeting with +Phillip to happen first. The church wardens can then report back on that meeting to the PCC's. Sarah will check if Mellor school is still available as a venue on that date and the PCC secretaries will be asked to promulgate the change of date, as well as this going into the weekly notice sheets.
3. The Benefice services are all covered for the remainder of November whilst Karen is signed off work and whilst we all pray that Karen will return to work at the end of the month, there is a plan in place for December just in case. Looking ahead to 2025, we felt that sticking to the existing services rota would be sensible, although there will have to be some adjustment to midweek services.
4. We discussed the appointment of our new Benefice administrator (Angela Preedy), and what a blessing her agreeing to take on the role has been. The overall hours that we employ an administrator for have not changed, however the split between Angela and Sam has been altered to reflect the changed roles and this will be kept under review. As you will have seen in the last edition, Sam is now our newsletter coordinator.
 - a. It was agreed that they needed a shared Benefice Microsoft 365 account at a cost of roughly £80 to better manage and share information.
5. Having got as far as a draft Baptism policy, it was felt that this would be better left until a new vicar is appointed.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

The next meeting is planned for early December – date to be confirmed.

Mission Action Plan – United Benefice of Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury

Our Purpose Statement Our purpose/reason to be here	To love God, love others & serve the world by being a united community
Our Vision Statement What God is calling our United Benefice to become	We seek to be outward looking in mission, to grow our faith, fellowship & leaders and to be welcoming to all
Our Priority goals Over the next 5 years we will:	1. Introduce greater Intergenerational worship 2. Make better use of Technology 3. Outreach to our local community

Actions		
1	B	Continue to develop Café church. Promote Forest church to be more inclusive for teenagers. Develop further the Holiday church idea.
	M	Improve parish engagement with the school head teacher. Develop further ‘golden opportunities’ which can be held in/with school. Both the above to increase engagement/involvement with school.
	S	Provide kitchen and toilet facilities to better offer hospitality as part of intergenerational worship. Develop the Café church idea.
2	B	Pursue an electronic collection system that doesn’t require WiFi.
	M	Seek specialist advice on installing WiFi into church. Additional screen/speakers to improve the AV system. Adapt the AV system to be able to use PowerPoint presentations.
	S	Look at being able to record/live stream services. Improve Wi Fi provision
3	B	Look at inviting more people into church through social media. Investigate opening church on a more regular basis.
	M	Expand outreach to the local community by making the church more welcoming – sperate meeting to discuss fixing the heating and making changes to the pews.
	S	Improve the links with school through after school worship services and craft activity sessions.
Shared UB Priorities		
1	UB	Explore implementing a Pastoral scheme
2	UB	Live streaming/recording of services
3	UB	Organise more joint UB social events. Make the newsletter more relevant to the wider community.

Date published: 1st November 2024

Date to be reviewed: update at each Concurrent PCC meeting and annual reviews for next 3-5 years (1st November 2025)



For with God nothing shall be impossible

News from the Classroom....

This month the school news comes from the school at the top of the hill. And what a lot of news we have for you all. We have had an amazing first term with lots of fundraising events, visits and experiences to name but a few.



Our newly formed School Council held a Macmillan Coffee afternoon with the help of Mrs Higgins and raised over £450 selling delicious cakes and drinks to all those who visited school in September.



As part of our harvest giving, junior children were asked to save some of their own pocket money to donate to Bishop Philip's Harvest Appeal which this year was supporting the Diocese of Multan in Pakistan. Together they raised £150, whilst infant children provided lots of tinned and dried goods for Blackburn Foodbank. Cards, notes and pictures created by the children were also distributed to local residents as another way of sharing in our harvest celebrations and giving.



As I write this newsletter, we are in our third week of selling poppies and poppy merchandise to help raise money for the Royal British Legion as part of our Remembrance Day learning in school. The children have learnt about different people who sacrificed their own lives to help save others as well as some remarkable animals who served their countries and were awarded medals for valour. As a school we will be laying a wreath at Mellor Cenotaph as part of our Parish Remembrance Service on Sunday 10th November.

Harry's Prayer



Inspired by a previous national refugee assembly led by the Krish Handiah from the Sanctuary Foundation, Harry decided to write his own prayer to help children understand the plight of refugees in the world today. This was sent to the Sanctuary Foundation who then invited Harry to write another prayer for their live national worship for Black History month. So, pen in hand, Harry rose to the challenge and wrote another prayer which was then live streamed to over 1500 school and 200,000 children as part of the Sanctuary Foundation's Black History national assembly. Here is Harry's prayer

Dear God, please let everybody be treated the same, because no one deserves to be treated differently to others. Everyone is loved fairly and should be treated fairly too. In God's eyes everyone is seen, loved and cared for. Please let people know that no matter their skin tone, we are all loved the same. Amen

A meeting with a Space man!

Have you ever met a real-life Spaceman? Well Year 5 and Year 6 children certainly have as part of an 'out of this world' book signing at Westholme school. The children not only listened to him explaining what it was like living on the international space station, but also got to ask him direct questions and received a signed copy of his new book. They particularly enjoyed listening to how he managed to complete mundane tasks without any gravity!



We still have a lot more we would like to tell you, but so little space left – (no pun intended!) So, if you would like to find out what has been happening in all our United Benefice schools, then please use the links below.
Balderstone weekly newsletter <https://www.balderstoneschool.co.uk/page/?title=School+Newsletter&pid=192>
Mellor monthly newsletter <https://www.mellor.lancs.sch.uk/stream/newsletters/full/1/-//>
Samlesbury monthly newsletter <https://www.samlesburyceprimary.co.uk/parents/newsletters>

Believing, Learning and Sharing Together from Mrs Embley-Peers and everyone in Mellor St Mary School.

United Benefice Community News and Events

Are you interested in Volunteering?

Due to retirement, Mellor Brook Brownies are looking for 2 volunteers to continue the unit from January 2025.

The logo for the Mellor Brook Brownies unit, featuring the word "Brownies" in a yellow, bubbly font with a small flower icon above the 'i'.

If you feel this is something you would like to do, then please refer to the Girl Guiding Go! website to express your interest.

Alternatively come and see us at Mellor Brook Community Centre on Monday evenings (term time) between 6.30 and 7.45pm or email gaynor.dockerill@gmail.com.



Many thanks,
Michelle and Gaynor

Mellor Brook Parent & Toddler Group

Everyone is welcome, parents and grandparents, to our happy group at Mellor Brook Community Centre (09:45 - 11:45) for £4.00 per family, each Monday, during term time. To request to join our Facebook group or for further information about our activities, please email me.britcliffe@btinternet.com.

Maureen Britcliffe (07940 709165)



Balderstone and District Women's Institute

We have started a new fiscal year and have appointed a new president, Mrs Janet Edmondson. We thank Jennifer McNamee for her untiring service over the last two years.

Our strollers visited Gisburn Park and enjoyed a lovely walk in the cold sunshine for an hour before visiting the cafe for lunch and the usual natter. These meetings keep us going during the winter months.

The walkers visited Clitheroe. They did a walk which included visiting the castle and admiring the beautiful view from the battlements.

We have continued with our craft days, the last Monday of each month. This month we are making decorations for the tree we are entering in the Christmas Tree celebration at St Mary's Church Mellor.

December will be busy for all of us I'm sure. Our Christmas party will be held on the 10th December at Mellor Brook Community centre where we will be

entertained by a choir and have a festive feast with drinks included

We have decided that all our walkers will get together on the 18th December for a walk and then lunch at the Nabs Head Salmesbury.



We wish all our members and everyone a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year

Quiz Nights at Samlesbury War Memorial Hall

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall Quiz Night

We are trialing a new format on Saturday 7th December 7.30pm.

It will be £3 per person with under 11s free.

Please bring your own nibbles & drinks.

Tea & coffee will be provided.

Cash Prizes.

Please contact Clare Lewis on 07739 585860 or info@samlesburymemorialhall.co.uk with the number in your team & your team name.



Everyone welcome.

The January Samlesbury War Memorial Hall Quiz Night will be on Saturday 11th January 2025 at 7.30pm

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall Burns Night Ceilidh

Saturday 25th January 7.30pm.

Live Ceilidh Band - with 'caller'.

Scottish supper of haggis, neeps & tatties.

Traditional addressing of the haggis.

Bring your own drinks.

£20 adults, £10 accompanied children.

Always a popular event of music, dancing & dinner.

Book your tickets from Clare Lewis on 07739 585860 or info@samlesburymemorialhall.co.uk

Carole Coughlin

MELLOR BROOK & DISTRICT COMMUNITY CENTRE

Whalley Road, Mellor Brook, BB2 7PR.

The Community Centre is the perfect venue for a variety of events such as private functions, children's parties, conferences and meetings. It offers excellent amenities including a fully equipped kitchen, conference room set-up, Wi-Fi and IT facilities, PA system and a brand new state of the art lighting rig. With excellent transport links, it's situated in a rural, yet central, location within the heart of the Ribble Valley.

Hire Costs Per Hour

For one off bookings: £15 Main Hall, £13 Front Room, £13 Foyer, £13 Upstairs Room, £4 Kitchen.

Regular weekly / fortnightly bookings: commercial organisations receive a one third discount and charitable organisations receive a two thirds discount off the standard hire rate.

Regular groups:

Monday – Toddlers (term-time), Brownies (term-time), Pilates.

Tuesday – Palatine Fiddlers, Cheryl's Dance Studios (term-time), Women's Institute.

Wednesday – Beavers (term-time).

Thursday – Little Voices BDRV (term-time), Community Ukulele.

Friday – Cheryl's Dance Studios (term-time). Sunday – Film Club 8th December, Santa Paws Event 15th December 11am to 2pm.

Please check out our website www.mellorbrook.org, Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064876410507> and X @MellorBrook for news and forthcoming events.

Contact Us

Tel: 07436 271153

Email: rachael@mellorbrook.org

Rachael Calvey

[Mellor Village Hall - Upcoming Events](#)

Please find below details of upcoming special events at Mellor Village Hall.
To book tickets, please visit: <https://www.mellorvillagehall.org.uk/event-list>



Join us on 2nd December from 6:00pm – 9:00pm for a festive wreath making class with prosecco. All materials included with a choice of decorations to add to your wreath to personalise it. Wreaths will last around four or five weeks and are suitable for outdoors.



Join us for a fantastic New Year's Eve celebration at Mellor Village Hall! The hall will be completely transformed into a dazzling venue for a night to remember.

[Regular Classes and Groups at Mellor Village Hall](#)

If you are interested in any of the following activities, please click on the link below to find out more about the regular classes and groups at Mellor Village Hall.

[Girl Guides](#) [Knit and Natter](#) [Line Dancing](#) [Singing](#) [Indoor Bowls](#) [Walking Netball](#) [Walking Football](#)
[Dog Ways](#) [Genjitsu](#) [Badminton](#) [Mellor Tots](#) [Aerobics](#) [Gaming Night](#) [Yoga](#)
[Ukulele Lessons](#) [Arts and Crafts](#) [Balderstone Brass Band](#) [Saturday Café](#) [Pickle Ball](#)

<https://www.mellorvillagehall.org.uk/classes-groups>

Mellor Library

<u>Opening Times</u>	
Day	Times
Monday	1pm - 7pm
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	9am - 1pm
Thursday	Closed
Friday	1pm - 5pm
Saturday	9am - 1pm
Sunday	Closed

Mellor Library
6, St Mary's Gardens
Mellor
Blackburn
BB2 7JW

Librarian – Angela Preedy

All our libraries will be closed on bank and public holidays and some additional days.

About the Library

We are a warm and welcome space where you can access information, reading material, advice and spend time with others. During the winter months, hot drink supplies are available free of charge.

We have a wide range of books including fiction, non-fiction, large print and audio books. There is also a section on biographies, autobiographies and local history. We also have a dedicated children's area with appropriate reading material for all juniors.

The library has a Windows 10 desktop computer, a flatbed scanner, printing facilities and free Wi-Fi. (Printing charges apply.)

This offers access to the internet, word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and database applications and printing using the [People's Network](#) computers. Computers may be used for up to two hours a day, but may be restricted at peak periods, such as school holidays. You may be able to use a computer for longer, if demand allows.



Children under eight can use the computers, but they must be always accompanied by a responsible adult who logs in using their own library card number and PIN.

People's Network computers in libraries can be reserved, in advance. You will need your library card number and PIN. Just logon, select the library you want and book a session.

Please note that the computers are switched off ten minutes before the library closes.

An A4 photocopier is also available for public use (charges apply).

Events And Activities

<u>Get Online at Your Library</u>	<u>Little Steps Sessions</u>
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mellor Library, Ribble Valley • Every Friday (2:00pm to 4:00pm) between 02/02/2024 and 31/01/2025 • Free event - no booking required. <p>Start your digital journey today. Free help to learn digital skills to apply for jobs, online forms, using email, find free entertainment, follow your hobbies and use public services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mellor Library, Ribble Valley • 3rd Wednesday each month (9:30am to 10:30am) between 20/03/2024 and 29/01/2025 • Free event - no booking required. • Delivered in partnership with the Children and Family Wellbeing service. <p>Come along to this regular family session aimed at children aged 2 to 5. It's all about chatting, playing, reading, and learning.</p>

United Benefice Contacts

St Leonard's Church, Balderstone

Churchwardens: Mary Shorthouse – mary.shorthouse@outlook.com 01254 812710
Ryan Dixon – ryandixon466@gmail.com 07976 323221
PCC Secretary: Kathy Evans - kabelliveau@btinternet.com
Treasurer: Keith Roberts
Headteacher: Victoria Gow - 01254 769150

St Mary's Church, Mellor

Churchwardens: Sarah Lees - sarahlucy93@hotmail.co.uk 07450 295417
Lloyd Brown – 07714 791256
PCC Secretary: Ann Doolan - anndoolan@btinternet.com 07969 047984
Treasurer: Mary Brown – 07832 625646
Headteacher: Jo Embley-Peers - 01254 812581

St Leonard the Less Church, Samlesbury

UB Licensed Lay Minister: Canon Pam Daunton - 01772 877017
Churchwardens: Paul Daunton - 07979 496499
John Eastham - 01772 877076
PCC Secretary: Dr Nick Buckley – nickb2505@gmail.com 07542 762941
Treasurer: Gaynor Dockerill - 07563 262784
Co-Headteachers: Lucy Sutton & Louise Quayle - 01772 877200

United Benefice Administrators: Sam Metcalfe & Angela Preedy unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com

Useful Website Links

Our United Benefice

<https://www.facebook.com/BMSBenefice>

St Leonard's Church, Balderstone

<https://www.facebook.com/balderstonestleonards>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11534/>

St Mary's Church, Mellor

<https://www.facebook.com/mellorparishchurch>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11535/>
<https://www.mellorparishchurch.org/>

St Leonard the Less Church, Samlesbury

<https://www.facebook.com/stleonardlessamlesbury>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11517/>

Blackburn Cathedral

<https://blackburncathedral.com/>

Mellor Brook Community Centre

<https://mellorbrook.org/>

Mellor Village Hall

<https://www.mellorvillagehall.org.uk/>

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall

<https://www.samlesburymemorialhall.co.uk/>

Whalley Abbey

<https://www.whalleyabbey.org/>

Magazine Adverts – Working Together in our United Benefice

For full contact details, of the businesses listed below, please view their adverts in our two advert supplements. To join our community of advertisers and place an advert, please contact Sam Metcalfe by emailing unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com. An advert costs just £25 for 12 months.

A&G Chimney Sweeps	07944 099871
Absolute Enigma Studio	07817 398494
Andrew Ball Plumbing & Heating Ltd	07817 844002
Andy Brunnschweiler Car Servicing	07798 827224
Balderstone Logs	07976 323221
Ben Lewis Tree Services	07843 018973
Birch Health & Wellness	07987 036364
Booths The Good Grocers	01772 693800
Bowland IT Support Services	01254 947082
Bowland Vets	01254 311311
Canberra Fitness Centre	01254 765084
Community Ukes	01254 813210
C P Simm Fencing & Landscaping	07807 337717
Crochet Classes & Tuition with Keely Robertson	07904 590552
D.J. Worcester Chimney Sweep	01772 616467
Evabel Sundecks	01254 813089
Fabric Box	07712 413904
Farleys Solicitors	01254 606000
Fired 4 U (Paint, Pottery and Clay Studio)	01772 203060
G.Cross Agricultural Engineering Ltd	07802 278525
GO Driver Training	07931 316109
Goose Foot Gin	07909 700311
Green Clean Upholstery & Stone Cleaning Services	07737 932607
Hair By Amy Campbell	07770 238258
Hatha Yoga – Live Yoga UK with Blair	07511 591880
Heritage Café at Samlesbury Hall	01254 812010
Hoghton Contractors: David Devaney	07887 843085
Hoghton Village Vet	01254 782737
Home Care Mellor	01254 689981
Homewise Society: Home Improvements Handyperson – Small Repairs	01254 232249
Hoze-It Power Cleaning Services	07841 348290
Ian Wilde Independent Funeral Directors	01772 902345
James L Knowles Electrician	01772 877469
Jane's Hairstylist	01254 812677
Karina's Crafty Creations	07890 789138
Kerry Woods Photography	07894 878847
Let's Foster Carers (Mike Dixon)	07855 963740
Lilac Tree Interiors at Holland House Garden Centre	07714 794623
Mad Cow's Catering	07837 453497
Mellor Brook & District Community Centre	07436 271153
Mellor Plant UK	01254 812937
Mellor Pharmacy	01254 812999
M J Barton Contractors	07999 711926
M W Holdsworth Builder & Property Repairer	07970 200371
My Adventure Campers	07383 449449
N & T Construction	07503 053375
North West Autocare	01772 314873
NSS News	01772 455421
Old Oak Farm Nurseries Garden Centre	01254 852065
Osbaldeston Riding Centre	01254 813159

Pennine Service Station Ltd	01254 812715
Peter Whalley Plasterer	07709 673310
Pete's Sports Massage	07584 655855
Preston Garden Services Ltd	07855 974540
Progressive Wills Ltd	07543 238543
Promedica 24 Care At Home	01254 411004
Red Rose Insurance Solutions	01254 790796
Ribble Home Surveys	07764 490589
Right At Home Carers	01254 658899
Samlesbury Secure Dog Run	07798 575750
SG Animal Feeds	01254 261866
Stevenson Memorials	01254 202019
St Mary's Court Community Hall	01254 812333
Stones Young Estate Agents	01254 682470
Stove Installer	07787 858585
Stuart Taylor International Ground Care & Trailers	01254 813175
Taylor's Chippy	07999 192884
T.Forrest Pet Food	01254 852873
The Flooring & Carpets Studio	07743 192833
The Garage at Mellor Brook (Beauty Treatments with Zara Booth)	07398 711578
The Old Coach House Antiques and Interiors	07598 878498
The Retro Bungalow	01254 852723
The Wilpshire Clinic	01254 246144
Tiggis Italian Restaurant	01254 769133
Wherry Gardens – Bespoke Garden Maintenance	07508 455694
Wilpshire Dental Clinic	01254 205529
W.M.Alty & Sons Ltd: The Alty Funeral Service	01254 503240
X-Press Ironing Services	07712 413904