

Newsletter September 2026

This is our monthly newsletter. The newsletter can be received by anyone who has an e-mail address. To subscribe to this service please send your e-mail address to: northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk.

Press On: God Is Not Finished with Us

A pastoral reflection on Philippians 3:1–14

"But this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal." — Philippians 3:13–14

Dear Friends,

At the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, I watched the relay runners with real admiration. Each athlete took the baton, found her stride, and ran hard for the line. What stood out most was what happened after the handoff: no runner turned back or stopped on the track to celebrate the last leg. She just kept pushing forward.

That image fits us well as we enter a new Methodist year across the circuit. "Press on". Two simple words, but they carry real weight. To press on means moving forward when things get tough, uncertain, or unfamiliar. It means leaving yesterday behind and keeping our eyes fixed on the goal ahead.

In Philippians 3, Paul had every human reason to look back. His religious credentials were top-tier, a Pharisee, a Hebrew of Hebrews, deeply zealous for his faith. If anyone could rest on past achievements, it was him. Yet Paul called all of that a loss compared to knowing Jesus.

Pressing on isn't just self-reliance, optimism, or grit. It isn't trying to manufacture our own success. It's the natural response of anyone who has met Jesus and realised nothing else compares to Him. Paul didn't dwell on who he used to be; he stayed focused on what Christ was doing in him right now.

When Paul talks about "forgetting," he doesn't mean wiping his memory clear. He remembered his mistakes, his history, and his past successes clearly. Rather, he refused to let his past become his final destination. A recent visit to the Englesea Brook Museum reminds us how rich our local Primitive Methodist heritage really is. History is good, it anchors us, inspires us, and shows us where we came from. But there is a vital difference between honouring our heritage and being held captive by it.

The church isn't a museum meant to keep everything frozen in time; it's a living journey of discipleship. Paul didn't claim to have everything sorted out. He simply said, *"I press on."*

That takes the pressure off. We don't need every detail of the road ahead mapped out. We just need to keep moving toward Jesus. When energy is low, answers seem delayed, or the way forward feels steep, we press on—not because our own strength is enough, but because Christ has taken hold of us. Our hope doesn't rely on our ability to grip onto God. It relies on the fact that, in Christ, God has already taken hold of us.

Living in this region, we are surrounded by reminders of a heritage shaped by **clay, fire and craftsmanship**. We know that a beautiful piece of pottery does not begin as something impressive. It begins as ordinary clay, rough, shapeless and full of potential.

Picture a lump of clay on the potter's wheel. As the wheel turns, the master potter carefully centres it. Then comes the pressure: firm hands pulling, stretching, pressing and reshaping. The clay may feel the strain and wonder what is happening to it or what it is becoming. Yet the clay must remain in the potter's hands. If it resists the shaping or flies from the wheel, the work remains unfinished.

The same is true of the spiritual journey. God is not finished with us simply because we have reached a difficult or unfamiliar season. Sometimes God uses change, challenge and uncertainty to reshape us for something new. But pottery is not finished on the wheel.

It must pass through the **kiln**. Anyone familiar with the Potteries understands the significance of fire. The kiln brings intense heat. It is a severe stage in the process, but the potter does not place the vessel in the fire to destroy it. The fire strengthens the clay, hardens it and makes it durable. What was once fragile becomes capable of carrying something precious. As we look toward the future across our circuit, we might feel like that clay spun around by changing times, shaped by unseen pressure, or feeling the heat of uncertain seasons ahead. But take heart: **we are safe in the Potter's hands**.

As a new season starts across our circuit, the message is clear: God is not finished with us. There is still work to do in our communities, lives to support, neighbours to welcome, prayers to offer, and the love of Jesus to share. The baton is in our hands for this part of the race.

Let's give thanks for where we've been without getting stuck there. Let's learn from past without being defined by it. Above all, let's trust that God's greatest work among us isn't behind us, it lies ahead.

Fix your eyes on Christ.

Receive His grace.

Take the next faithful step.

For the God who called us is faithful, and He will finish the good work He started in us.

Press on.

Amen.

Rev'd Teddy

North Staffordshire Circuit (11/22)

Preaching Plan – September 2026

					September			
					6	13	20	27
					23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	24th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Education Sunday)	25th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Peace Sunday)	26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Lectionary Year (A)					Exodus 12:1-14	Exodus 14:19-31	Exodus 16:2-15	Exodus 17:1-7
(Principal Service)					Psalms 149	Psalms 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21	Psalms 105:1-6, 34-45	Psalms 78:1-4, 12-16
					Romans 13:8-14	Romans 14:1-12	Philippians 1:21-30	Philippians 2:1-13
					Matthew 18:15-20	Matthew 18:21-35	Matthew 20:1-16	Matthew 21:23-32
Please Pray For:					Silverdale	Wolstanton	Audley	Bradwell
Cross Heath	TS	11.00	StF	NIV	LA	Siwila HC	R Jones	Siwila HF
(23)		3.00	MWB					
Higherland	TS/KB	10.00	StF	MM	Barnett	Wakelin HC	Parkes	LA HF
(35)		3.00						
		6.00	MWB					Siwila Café Church
Silverdale	TS	11.00	StF	MM	Café Church	Chadwick	Siwila HC	Emmaus
(51)		3.00						
		5.00						Refuel
Wolstanton	TS	10.30	StF		Siwila HC	LA	Chadwick	N Jones
(92)		3.00	MWB					
Audley	JV	10.30	StF	SoF 1&2	Wakelin HC CA	Harrison T	Green HF	LA prayer brunch
(25)		3.00	MWB	GNB				
Bradwell	JV	10.00	StF	SoF 1&2	Ventom HC	LA	Higherland LA Leaders	Chadwick
(30)		3.00	MWB	NIV H&P				
Halmer End	JV	10.30	StF	SoF 1&2	Rowley	Parkes HC	X	Matthews
(19)		3.00	MWB	GNB H&P			Hoe HF	
Madeley	JV	10.30	StF	SoF 1234	Willis HC	N Jones	LA	Ventom + CC
(23)		3.00	MWB	NIV				
St Luke's	JV	10.30	H&P	GNB	LA	Ventom HC	Barnett	Parkes HF
(22)		3.00	MWB					
Printed Service for this week prepared by:					Ventom	Parkes	Davies	Heap

Eco Tips

The Season of Creation (1 September-4 October) is dedicated to God as the Creator and sustainer of all life. Join A Rocha UK's Season of Creation prayer and reflection webinar on Wednesday 2 September to start this season with others. During this period of the church calendar, many churches celebrate Harvest, thanking God for his provision through the land and the food that it produces. If you are part of a church or community, suggest that a service or gathering has a Season of Creation focus. Prayers, worship, teaching and the offering could focus on creation. Could there be an activity with a creation focus too? Explore more Season of Creation resources at: arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/season-of-creation

A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips 2026 Calendar

Harvest appeal



Help support your food bank this Harvest

In the three weeks leading up to Harvest, the food bank will provide around 600 food parcels for local individuals and families facing hardship.

Donate food



Donate an item or two from our shopping list, ensuring we can provide food for people facing hardship in your community.

Donate money



Help to cover the costs of storing and distributing food, as well as developing sustainable projects.

Shopping list

Baked Beans

Long Life Milk

Tinned Cold Meat

Long Life Juice

Biscuits

Rice

Cat Food

Washing Up Liquid

Deodorant

Bags For Life

Newcastle-Staffs Foodbank
newcastlestaffs.foodbank.org.uk

Registered as a CIO in England & Wales (1194404)

CIRCUIT SERVICE

Welcome Service for Rev'd Teddy Siwila
on Wednesday, 2nd September at 7.00 pm
at Wolstanton Methodist Church



EXPLORERS!

At Halmer End Methodist Church
High St, ST7 8AD

Calling all Master builders!

Come and join us for building fun, 6.00 pm till 7.00 pm,
Back from our Summer Break!

Meeting again on **MONDAY 7th September 2026!**

Suitable for Reception to Year 6 children accompanied by an adult; Year 7 and above unaccompanied, but must have parental permission.

Contact: Helen 01782 722685 or David 01782 722014

See www.halmerendmethodists.org.uk & Facebook



Drinks Bible Stories



THANK YOU

Many thanks to all the churches for their generous donations at the recent Circuit Service. £273.00 was collected and has been sent off to the Christian Aid Columbia Appeal.

THANK YOU

Dear Friends

We would like to say thank you to you all for the love, friendship and care you have shown us over the past five years. The warm welcome we have always received at your church, whether we have been there often or just infrequently, has helped to make our time in this Circuit a joy and a pleasure. We carry many lovely memories into the future with us.

Thank you also for the very generous gift the Circuit has given us – it will be put to very good use when we move into our new home which we are hoping will be soon!

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with you all as you continue on your journey with God. May he bless you and all those you love and care for.

With our love and best wishes

Liz and Peter



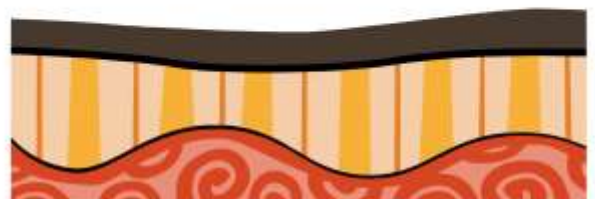
Bible Study on the book of Ruth

10 to 11.30am on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

11th August 2026
8th September
13th October
10th November
8th December
Break January and February
9th March 2027
13th April



Bring a Bible with you
St. Luke's Methodist Church ST5 4BH





Places to be booked through Eventbrite:

[Chester & Stoke District: Are We All Depressed? Tickets, Saturday 3 October • 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)



*Friendly Chatter & discussion,
Welcoming Smiles & a good laugh,
Songs, poems, thoughts & Prayers
Drinks & biscuits.*

Come along @ 6pm

Sunday 27th Sep

JOIN US FOR...
KnitWits
Craft & Fellowship

Love to knit, crochet, sketch, or craft?
Looking for a relaxed space to chat
and meet new friends?

Bring your current portable project, grab a hot drink, and join us
for a purely social afternoon. No agendas, no pressure
just good community and conversation.

All crafts and skill levels are completely welcome!

WHEN
Monday 28th September
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

WHERE
Higherland Church Coffee Bar

*Grab a coffee, bring a project, enjoy the company.
See you there!*



Are you, or someone you know, looking for a group to join or an activity to take part in, there may be something happening at Wolstanton Methodist Church that will suit?



Every other Monday 2.30-4pm: Elderberries a church social group for older people normally with a speaker always with refreshments

1st Monday of the month 2-4pm: Trefoil Guild a social meeting for people connected with Girl Guiding

Monday 5.30pm- 8.30pm: [Workout with Mika](#) three different exercise classes from hula hoop fitness to boxing to rock music workoutwithmika@gmail.com

Monday 6.30-7.30pm Pilates with Nicola nicolajherd@hotmail.com

Tuesday 9.30am-10.30am Baby Signing and Tiny Talk for young babies under 1 year nicolaausterberry@tinytalk.co.uk

Tuesday 10am - 11am: [YogaJules.Stoke](#) yogajules.stoke@gmail.com

Tuesday 7.30pm-9pm: Church Music Group

1st Wednesday of the month Bible Study 2.30pm -4pm

Wednesday 10.30am-12.30pm: Community coffee morning - open to all

Wednesday 6-7.30: Brownies

Wednesday 7.30pm-9.30pm: [NULCO Newcastle under Lyme Community Orchestra](#) music rehearsals for shows and concerts secretary@nulco.co.uk

1st Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sugar craft – fondant decorations for cake.

Thursday 10am -11am: [Tots of fun](#) music and play for little ones under 4 totoffunuk@gmail.com

Thursday 11.45am-12.45am Tots of Fun new mums social with coffee and cake for young babies and new mums totoffunuk@gmail.com

Thursday 7.30pm-9.30pm Jazz Orchestra / Flute ensemble alternative weeks

Thursday 6pm 7 6.45pm: Dog obedience classes
darwins-dog-grooming.square.site

Friday 9.30am-11.30am Tots of Fun Playgroup totoffunuk@gmail.com

Saturday 9am-10.15am: Spanish lessons for children
delia.alvarez@kidslingo.co.uk

**Book Swap
at
Bradwell Methodist Church**

There is a new free book swap library outside Bradwell Methodist Church. Please take a look and if you have any unwanted books please pop them in.



**Coffee Morning's at
Audley Methodist Church**

Refreshments, in a
welcoming
"WARM SPACE"
await you

Join us
every
Tuesday
10am to
midday



Coffee Morning

10.30am – 12.30pm

Every Wednesday at
Wolstanton
Methodist Church

Madeley Methodist Church
invites you to join us at our



Warm Space
Elevenes



On Wednesdays at 11am

Chat

Free
Refreshments

Activities

Everyone Welcome

There's nothing like a good cuppa coffee and a friend like you to share it with!

Let's catch up!

**WHY NOT CATCH UP
WITH FRIENDS OLD
AND NEW**

**BRADWELL METHODIST
CHURCH**
THURSDAY'S 10 - 12

Christian Resources for Life
@ Methodist Book Centre
Support your local, independent
Christian bookshop

In Store

Online

www.crfl.co.uk
Gitana Street, Hanley, ST1 1DY
01782 212146

MAGIC MOMENTS
St. Luke's Methodist Church
Severn Drive
Clayton
ST5 4BH

MAGIC MOMENTS

FREE ENTRY

Crafts

Activities

Games

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Bingo

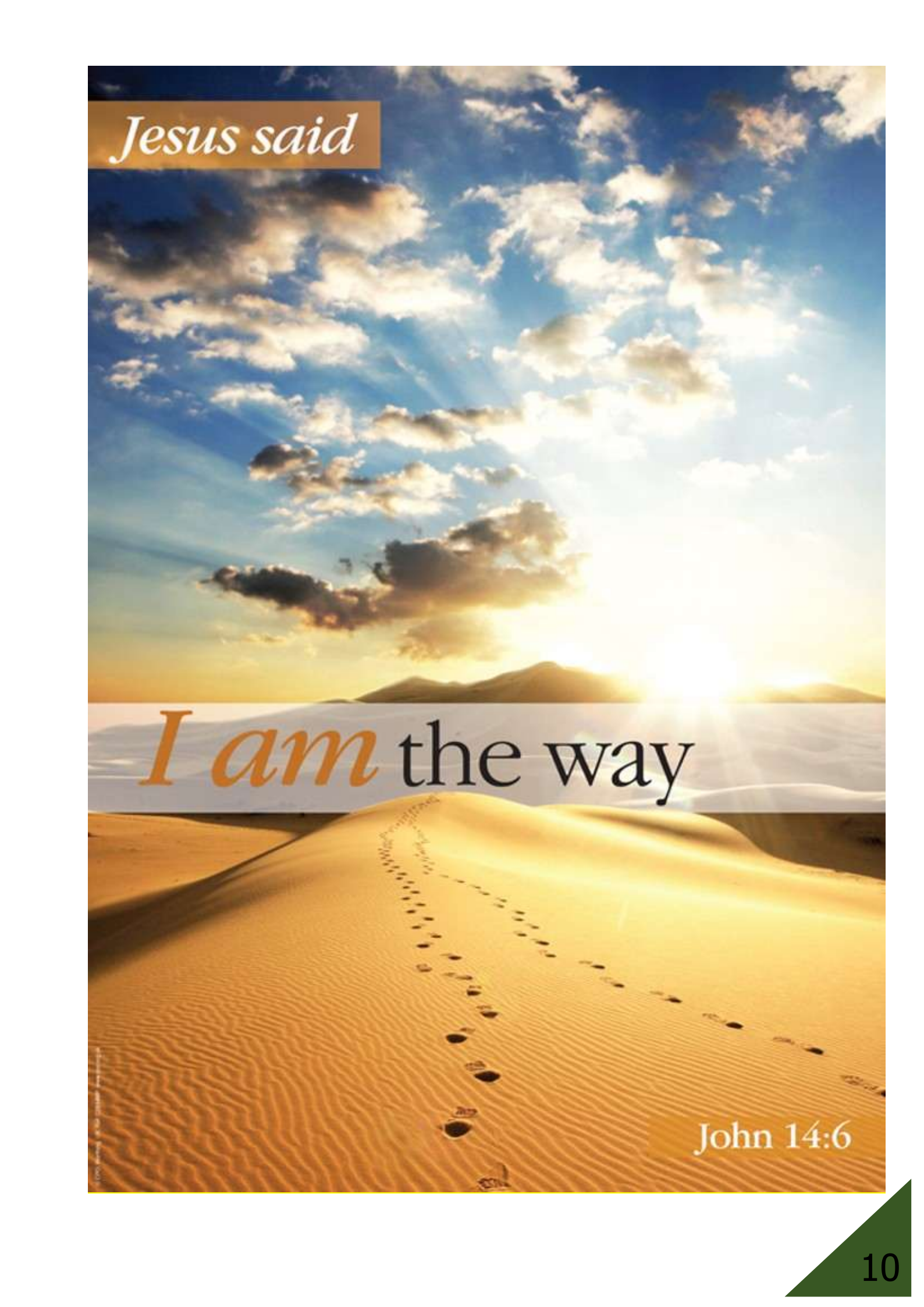
Quiz

Stories

10.00am - 12.00 noon, last Thursday of every month.

Fun, explore together in lots of creative, interactive and fun ways.
A great opportunity to enjoy some time together.

For more information please contact Phil or Joannette Hodges
on 01782 634766 or look on our Facebook page.

A full-page background image of a desert landscape. In the foreground, a series of footprints leads from the bottom center towards the horizon. The sand dunes are golden and have a fine, rippled texture. In the background, a bright sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the sky. The sky is filled with scattered, fluffy white and grey clouds. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by yellows, oranges, and blues.

Jesus said

I am the way

John 14:6