

Stockton Road Church News

July 2026



Mark 12: 30-31

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your mind, and with all your strength, and you shall
love your neighbour as yourself”.*

We are a union of Presbyterian and Congregational churches at the heart of Sunderland city life, growing from a past rich in mission and hospitality. We embrace this heritage utilising the Five Marks of Mission to guide and enable us to take forward current opportunities for mission and service.

July Reflection

Genesis 28:10-19a

Jacob must now do as his father, Isaac, did and take a wife from within the kinship network of Abraham. It is a long journey – Beer-Sheba was south of the Dead Sea, and Haran was over 700km north, in Mesopotamia (modern-day Turkey).

In Mesopotamia it would be common to see Ziggurats. These were elevated temple structures that had staircases (or 'ladders' – it is the same word for both in Hebrew) leading up to them, so that the people could draw near to their gods. But before Jacob gets to Haran, while he is still travelling through Canaan (modern-day Israel), he stops for the night and dreams that one of these ladders appears before him. Curiously, the ladder that Jacob sees leads not to a man-made temple, but straight to heaven itself! And instead of the people coming and going up and down the ladder it is God's own messengers (which can also be translated 'angels') who are going back and forth.

In the dream, God reminds Jacob of the promise made to Abraham about the land that Jacob is travelling through – this land is special to God and will be a place where his future purposes come to pass. God also reaffirms Jacob's inheritance of the promise made to Abraham and declares twice in verse 15 that God will be with Jacob wherever he goes. In the morning, Jacob wakes from his dream and is moved to create a monument marking the place of encounter. He renames the location Bethel, which means 'House of God'.

Sometimes, we bump into people we know but in a different place from where we usually meet them. This can lead to an awkward few moments as we begin a conversation while desperately trying to remember where we know them from and what their name is. Jacob is on the run from Esau; he has left everything he knew and all that was familiar, and he's probably exhausted from the journey. At this moment, God comes and meets him. Jacob's example shows us that God meets us where we need him, not necessarily where we expect him.

Questions

- Where do we expect to encounter God?
- Where else might God want to meet us?
- What does it feel like when we meet God?

A Prayer

Almighty God, you know us and all that we will face in the future. Help us to recognise your presence and your voice in our everyday lives. May we know that, wherever we will be, our God will be in that place.

Amen.

Lectionary Readings

5 - 11 July - Going God's way

Genesis 24:34-38,42-49,58-67; Psalm 45:10-17; Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Romans 7.15-25a; Matthew 11.16-19,25-30

12 - 18 - Choosing well

Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Romans 8.1-11; Matthew 13.1-9,18-23

19 - 25 July - God is in this place

Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12,23-24; Romans 8.12-25; Matthew 13.24-30,36-43

26 July – 1 August - Navigating the mess

Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11,45b; Romans 8.26-39; Matthew 13.31-33,44-52

Church Services

Services at 10.45am in the Sanctuary unless indicated otherwise

July 5th	Elisabeth Meikle. Coffee and Croissants in the Lower Hall.
July 12th	Revd Dr David Whiting
July 19th	Elisabeth Meikle
July 26th	Revd Jane Rowell

Weekly Church Activities (all welcome)

Bible Study Group	Tuesdays at 10.30am
Food Cycle Lunch	Tuesdays at 12.30pm
Gardening Group	Thursdays at 10.30am

Northern Synod Newsletter

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Stained Glass Festival

A number of events are being arranged during 6th to 13th September to celebrate the restoration of the Light of the World window in the sanctuary.

The damaged bottom half of the window was removed by Iona Art Glass in early June and has been taken to their studio in Amble for conservation. Iona have carried out work on windows in several important churches and other buildings. They recently appeared on the TV programme Treasures of the National Trust which featured the

conservation of a window in St Cuthbert's Chapel on the Farne Islands.

The window will be rededicated by our minister at a Bede Pastorate service on Sunday 6th September. The service will include a performance by the Kathleen Knox Dance School on the theme of the Light of the World.

On Thursday 10th September at 7pm the Revd Chris Howson, chaplain at the University who is an expert on stained glass, will be giving a talk in the Church about the artists and firms who created the windows in the sanctuary. He will also be leading our service on 13th September.

The Church will be open to visitors between 2 and 4pm on Saturday 12th September as part of the Heritage Open Days event. For this, a leaflet about all the Church's stained glass will be available, along with a folder for visitors to take round giving details of the artists, the biblical themes and those commemorated in the windows.

Neil Sinclair

Love, Amelia

Please see current Wishlist below. If you have items to donate, please bring them to church and put them in the box in the vestry. There is also an Amazon Wishlist on their website www.loveamelia.org.uk if you want to buy and donate items direct, and where you can read more about the charity and the work they do.



Wishlist June 2026



BABIES 0-2 YEARS

CLOTHES

- Clothes - Newborn + First Size
- Clothes - 12 months plus
- 0-6 month sleeping bags
- Baby Blankets

CHILDREN 3-11 YEARS

- Clothes - All sizes
- Toys (no large)
- Arts & Crafts
- Bedding

EQUIPMENT

- Prams & Strollers
- Moses baskets & Next to Me cribs
- Cots/Cot beds/Toddler beds
- Playmats & Playgyms
- Bouncers
- Baby Baths
- Toys (no large) & books
- Comforters

TEENS & ADULTS

- Clothes- all ages
- Toiletries
- Bedding

HYGIENE / FEEDING

- Baby Bottles (new only please)
- Baby Toiletries
- Sterilisers

Please only bring items on our current wishlist & only donate items in good, clean condition

See our pinned post for British Standards codes



Thank you for your support

