

1946 - 2024



**CHURCH IS NOT
SOMETHING YOU GO TO,
IT'S A FAMILY
YOU BELONG TO.**

Broxburn Baptist Church Newsletter

- The church on your doorstep for 78 years

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No. 194 3rd February 2024

'We are ambassadors for Christ'

Some thoughts.....

Back on 13th January I mentioned the sad story of my computer back-up drive which had broken down. The result was that all the files I had saved on it were inaccessible to me. Years of work lost! However, I also mentioned that all was not lost, there was one last hope – the data recovery centre in the Netherlands. So the offending disc was sent off – more in hope than anticipation. I thought my failure to look after my drive, my inability to do anything about it, was the end and was getting used to life without it....but one morning, an email from my friendly Data Recovery Service arrived which said...

*'Dear Valued Customer,
We have successfully recovered your data....'
...and a few days later...*

*'Dear Valued Customer,
We are pleased to inform you that your return media has been shipped..'*

When I wrote this I was waiting for it to arrive but probably by the time you get this I will have it back, I will have backed it all up, the sun will be shining, and there will be peace across the world...well maybe that's going a bit too far but you get the drift.

Someone else has successfully dealt with a problem of my own making, at no expense to myself. All I've got to do is accept it. It just seems too easy!

But I don't need to accept it. I could refuse to believe that anyone could put right what I had messed up and just get on with life and live with the consequences.

I might sort of believe it but could be doing other things when the 'return media' arrives via DPD or whoever and worry about it later.

Or, of course, I could just have settled for life without my data.

This could be a metaphor for the message of the church, the gospel, the good news that we seek to share. We have all messed up, we don't live as God intended – no, not even the best of us, we can't do anything about it ourselves – not even the brightest of us, but God did all that needed to be done when Christ came to this earth and died on the cross to take the punishment for our failures – and all we need to do is accept it, ask for forgiveness, and, with his help, live as his people. The sad thing is that most do not accept what God offers.

Robert

3rd February 2024

Baptist Union of Scotland Prayer Calendar 2024

Here are the subjects for prayer this week..

W/c 5th February

Bristo Baptist Church
Broughty Ferry Baptist Church
Broxburn Baptist Church



You can sign up for prayer points via Facebook at
<https://scottishbaptist.com/prayer/>

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

What's in your hand?

In the second half of last year we announced that we would be running 'The Romans Course' on selected Sunday evenings for those interested. I must admit (lack of faith) I expected about 5 or 6 diehards and was pleasantly surprised when 16 came to the initial meeting. At the penultimate meeting last Sunday there were 14 of us – most having been there regularly and the 2 who were not had good reason (If getting married and moving away from the area and sickness count as good reasons). Over the 9 sessions there was an openness to share and discuss and maybe challenge our entrenched thinking.

One of the things which challenged me in last Sunday's session as we looked at living in community as Christians was the picture of the closed and open hand – the closed hand containing the essential things we believe as Christians and which are non-negotiable and we hold onto tight – and the things which are in the open hand and where freedom to accept or not, adopt or not, are matters of individual preference or conscience or culture and should not be a barrier between Christians. But what are our 'closed hand' beliefs? One writer has put it this way,,,

'On the whole, Baptists have much in common with other Christian denominations. They believe there is one God who exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They believe human beings are sinners in need of salvation; that the Father sent his Son, who is fully God and fully man, to die for sinners; and that by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone they become the children of God. Baptists believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world today regenerating sinners and equipping believers. Finally, Baptists believe that God will, in his own time and in his own way, bring the world to an appropriate end; that he will judge the living and the dead; and all who are in Christ will worship him forever.' <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/baptist-theology/>

I, personally, would accept that as a statement of my 'closed hand' items, the things which would allow me to share fellowship with others who share these 'closed hand' beliefs. But there are specific 'open hand' things which, as a Baptist church we believe and they are found in the '*DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE OF THE BAPTIST UNION OF SCOTLAND*' and these are the basis of on which we operate as a Baptist church..

- that the Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws;
- that Christian baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried and rose again the third day; and
- that it is the duty of every disciple to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.

While not being 'closed hand' beliefs that would stop us from having fellowship with others they are the basis on which we operate as a church.

BMS Prayer Guide 2024

BMS World Mission has learnt through tragic experiences the difference between relief and recovery when disaster strikes. Relief is immediate support provided to minimise suffering and provide basic human needs. Recovery is focused on restoring quality of life and community services to pre-disaster levels. We do both, but not without your prayers.



SUNDAY 4

Two devastating earthquakes in north-west Afghanistan killed over 1,000 people and caused major destruction last October. A broken healthcare system could hardly bear the weight of the injured. Please pray as our partners shift from relief to recovery.

MONDAY 5

At the end of last summer, Bruce Clark joined BMS to take the lead on all our relief and recovery work. His first week featured the Nagorno-Karabakh refugee crisis, the Afghan earthquakes and Hamas' attack on Israel. Lift up Bruce as he navigates a relentless role.

TUESDAY 6

Today marks a year since a 7.8-magnitude earthquake rocked south-east Türkiye (formerly Turkey), with aftershocks numbering in the thousands. Pray for the more than 1.5 million people left homeless and the continuing work of recovery.

WEDNESDAY 7

The BMS Disaster Recovery Fund is used to respond to emergencies and to help in both the prevention and aftermath of disasters. Pray for wisdom for those distributing the funds.

THURSDAY 8

BMS work looks forward. We give more grants to long-term recovery than immediate relief – for example, paying for trauma counselling, rebuilding businesses or replanting crops. Pray that God would guide all these decisions.

FRIDAY 9

Recovery and rebuilding after a war, drought or tsunami can take decades. Pray for those left behind after TV crews move on, especially in areas where disaster has recently hit.

SATURDAY 10

Pray for all those who have lost loved ones in such tragedies. May they know peace and comfort, and be able to grieve well.

Bible Reading – the whole Bible in 2 years. How did you get on last week? Only 102 weeks to go, stick with it!

4 th Feb	Genesis 13:14-18; Genesis 14:1-24; Genesis 15:1-13
5 th Feb	Genesis 15:14-21; Genesis 16:1-16; Genesis 17:1-20
6 th Feb	Genesis 17:21-27; Genesis 18:1-33; Genesis 19:1-2
7 th Feb	Genesis 19:3-38; Genesis 20:1-2
8 th Feb	Genesis 20:3-18; Genesis 21:1-27
9 th Feb	Genesis 21:28-34; Genesis 22:1-24; Genesis 23:1-15
10 th Feb	Genesis 23:16-20; Genesis 24:1-34



A Thought from Charlie

In the wonders of nature, we see God's laws in operation. Who has not looked up into the stars on a cloudless night and marvelled in silence at the glory of God's handiwork?

Who has not felt their heart lifted in the spring of the year, as they see all creation bursting with new life and vigour?

In the beauty and abundance around us, we see the magnitude of God's power and the infinite detail of His planning: But nature tells us nothing of God's love or God's grace. Conscience tells us in our innermost being, of the presence of God, and of the moral difference between good and evil: But this is a fragmentary message, in no way as distinct and comprehensive as the lessons of the Bible. It is only in its pages that we find the clear and unmistakable message upon which Christianity is based.

The sinless Son of God becoming man, stepping into time, taking the form of a servant. Going to the cross willingly. Suffering and dying there for our sins, so that we have may have peace with God.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”.

[John 3:16]

It's nearly 44 years since I believed and received the Lord Jesus as my Saviour. What about you?

Do you know what it is to have sins forgiven and have peace with God?

Duty Rota Preaching Door Vestry Prayer Communion Prayer

February	4	Donna	Isobel	Jen	Mary
	11	Robert	Phyllis	Eddie	
	18	Donna	Linda	Linda	
	25	Archie	Bill	Bill	
March	3	Donna	Mark	Robert	Jen
	10	Archie	Lindsay	Robert	



Women's Fellowship Dates – for your diary from Lyn.

7th March.	Guest speaker:	Donna
4th April		David Wilkie
2nd May.		Charlie
6th June.		Archie

'How to Survive Almost Anything 3.'

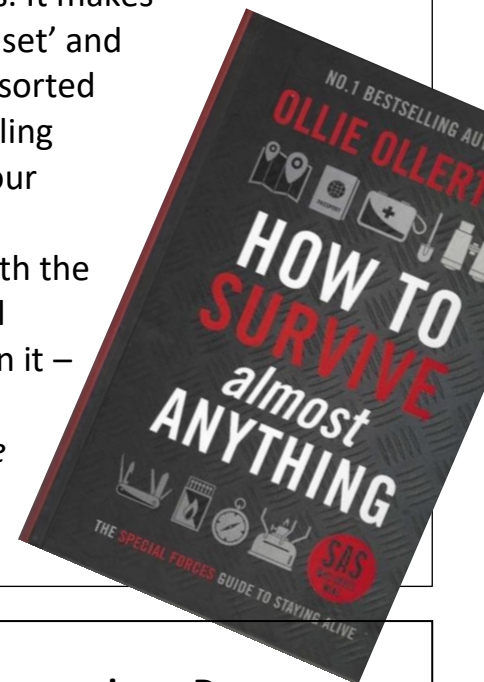
Over the past 2 weeks we've looked at the first 2 parts of the three sections of the 'Contents' page which lists three sections before you really get into the meat of the book.

- A note from the author
- Introduction
- **How to use this book**

This week we'll look at 'How to use this book'.

Now you might say 'that's obvious', that you read it. Well, if it was a novel, yes – reading it from beginning to end is the most sensible way. But this isn't a novel, it's a guide to survival in our world as it is and as it might become. It's presented in 6 parts from Part One – The Survivors Mindset to Part Six – The Breakdown of Society. The author suggests we need to focus on parts One and Two before looking at the other chapters. It makes sense because the first two parts deal with 'The Survivor's Mindset' and 'Essentials'. If we want to be survivors then getting our mindset sorted and becoming familiar with the essentials is a good basis for dealing with the threats to survival which are covered in the following four parts.

Thinking about the Bible as the Christian's manual for dealing with the things life can throw at us...The Bible is not a novel in the normal sense although it does tell the story of our world and our place in it – so, while we can read it through from cover to cover (*as we are presently doing if you follow the Bible Reading programme in the newsletter*), that may not be the best approach on every occasion. So, how do we use the Bible? **(continued next week)**



Church This Week

Sunday 4th February

11.00am Worship Service with Communion – Donna

To join on zoom just click the link below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85227893884>

3.00pm Service at Broxburn Care Home

6.00pm The Romans Course Session 10 (Coffee at 5.50pm)

Thursday

10.30 Zoom Prayer Time

Friday

9.00-12.00 The Lighthouse

Preachers

February

4th Donna

6.00pm The Romans Course 10

11th Robert

5.30pm Family Fellowship

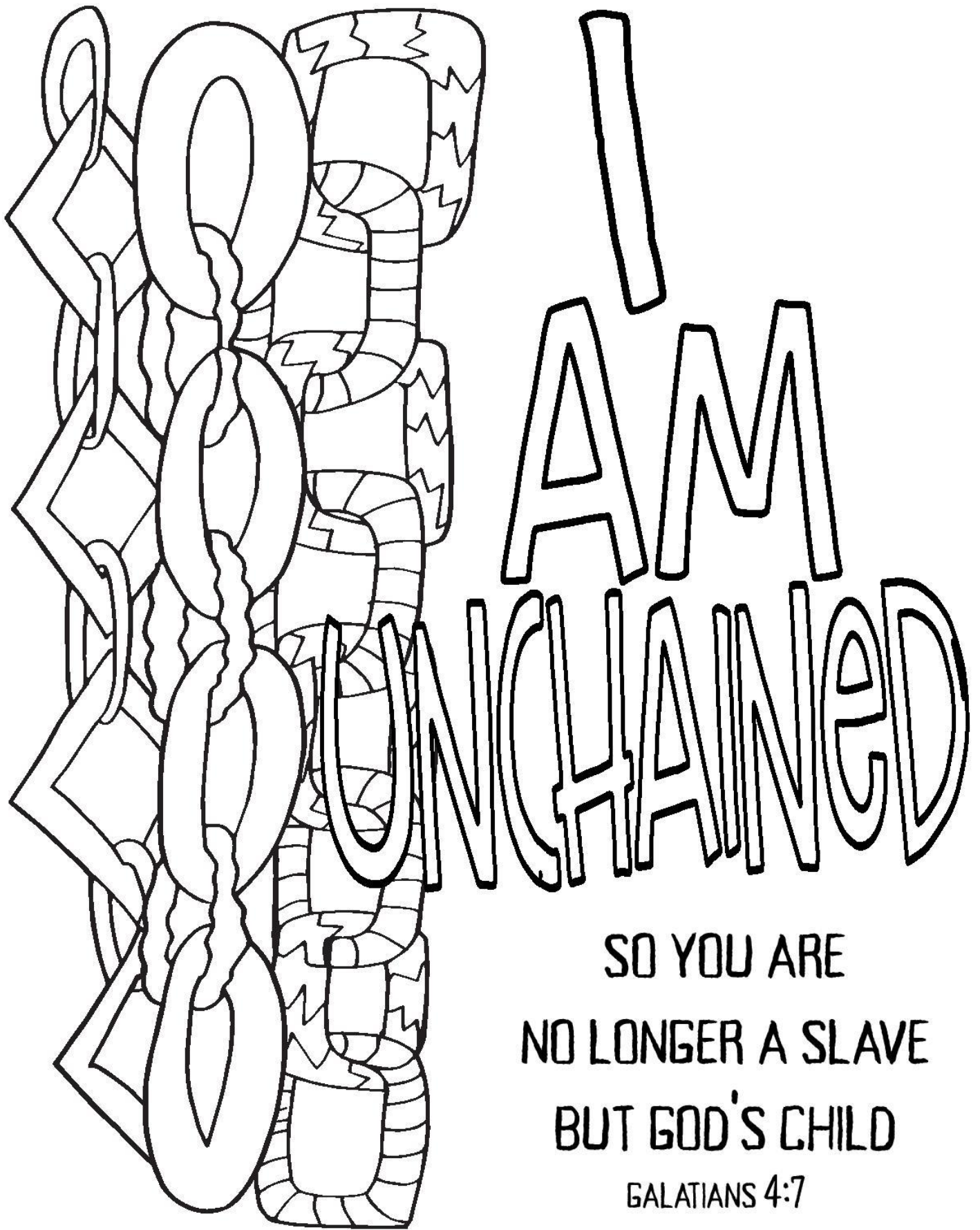
18th Donna

25th Archie

March

3rd Donna





I
AM
UNCHAINED

SO YOU ARE
NO LONGER A SLAVE
BUT GOD'S CHILD
GALATIANS 4:7

Can prayer change the world? When we watch conflict unfold on our TV screens or see pictures of fires burning in the Amazon rainforest, it doesn't always feel like it can. Sometimes I wonder if the Apostle Paul felt that way writing letters from prison, unable to meet friends that he dearly loved. But Paul knew who he was praying to. Paul kept on praying because he wanted people to know the hope to which God calls them. Paul prayed because he wanted people to know God's incomparably great power — the same power that raised Christ from the dead (Eph 1: 20-21)!

Your prayers change the world because God can change the world. When you pray, mission workers know the hope to which God has called them. When you pray, our partners are strengthened by God's resurrection power. God really can bring hope to people living in poverty, help to refugees fleeing conflict, and love to people who have never heard the good news about Jesus Christ. God chooses to pour out every spiritual blessing in Christ by answering your prayers.

Every blessing,
Chris Manktelow
BMS World Mission



PRAYER POINTS



Please pray for three villages in Cambodia: Tropeangrun, Vehpous and Sveysaw. In these villages an evangelism programme has started. In two villages, Sveysaw and Vehpous, churches have been established with a membership of 20 and 50 people respectively.

Praise God for those who are responding to be trained as disciple makers. Pray that we would be able to train 5,000 disciple makers spread across BMS World Mission partners. Many women are becoming disciples of Christ in North Africa. We pray for BMS partner BigLife to identify four women to be sent to mentor and disciple women there coming to faith in Christ.

'We are ambassadors for Christ' Page 7



Pray for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Pray for the Church and the ongoing conflict causing a high number of casualties and fatalities every day. Pray for peace in every part of the country and for the growth and progress of spiritual service.

Pray for the village of Amdir, in Mauritania, which has been suffering from a water shortage due to their well collapsing. Pray that a new well can be built and that the inhabitants of the village will gain access to a source of water.



Pray for forcibly displaced people who get stuck in refugee camps and similar settings, sometimes for years or decades. Lift up those in your life – including yourself if appropriate – who feel stuck in their journey of faith.

Pray that forcibly displaced people will receive physical, spiritual, emotional and social care to sustain them on their journey. Pray that we too may receive and give this care (Matthew 6: 11).



Astha Shrestha works with Human Development and Community Services, BMS' partner in Nepal. Pray for Astha as she promotes maternal and child health, encourages educational attainment for girls, and implements empowerment projects for women and girls.

Celebrate individuals with special needs who add value to our communities, remembering their intrinsic worth. Pray for the centre for children with learning differences run by the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development, now known as Thimar.



Pray for additional funding to scale up the agroforestry activities in Uganda with over 100 households. We wish to expand the tree growing with more households so that restoration takes place after damage done through tree cutting for charcoal.

Thank God for creating us and giving us authority over creation. We're convinced that environmental issues represent one of the greatest opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ to the world. Pray that God would help us to be good administrators of the resources of your creation, like the water that gives us life.

The Prayer Wall

Dear Lord,

As I look back over the past week I can see times when I have been true to what I believe and other times when I haven't been the person I should be. As I think over these times please forgive me and give me the strength not to make the same mistakes again.

In Jesus' name

Read Psalm 23:6

Father, Thank you for the assurance that your love and goodness are with me – in the good times but also in the times when life is difficult.
Amen

Lord, sometimes it feels I can never be good enough for others. Thank you that despite my faults and failings I am forgiven and perfect in your sight and that's what matters.

Amen

Lord – just now I'm struggling with _____ and can't see the way forward. Please open my eyes and show me the way and lead me in it.
Amen

Lord, I pray for our broken world. I know you have a plan for making all things new and I want to play my part in that plan. I can't do everything in the world but I can do something in my world – help me to show your love whenever I can, lead me to pray effectively, keep me from giving in to despair and hopelessness and remember you are Lord.

Amen

Lord, I think of those in my church family who are facing difficulties at this time. Those who are struggling with age related problems, those who are ill, those who have family issues, those who are struggling financially. Show me where I can help.

Amen

'Blessed is the one

*whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered. (Ps. 32:1)*

Father, I want to say thank you for what Jesus did on the cross for me.

Amen

*See him there upon the hill
Hear the scorn and laughter
Silent as a lamb he waits
Praying to the father*

.....

*See the empty tomb today
Death could not contain him
Once the servant of the world
Now in victory reigning*

<https://youtu.be/wX4ZCHRksBA>

Father, as I look forward to another week help me to live for you, to tell those I meet about your love for them, and honour you in everything I do.

In Jesus' name, Amen

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV

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