

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. 200 16th March 2024

'We are ambassadors for Christ'

Some thoughts.....

You might have noticed this is the 200th edition of this newsletter, The first was dated 21st March 2020. The week after lockdown was declared – remember those blissful days of not having to think about what you would do that day, those not so blissful days of increasing death tolls and fear and worry, those scary days on an uncertain future? In that first newsletter I referred back to the last service we held in-person in the church and some thoughts I had shared from Acts 27.....

.....where Paul was faced with the real possibility of a shipwreck which threatened all on board the ship taking him to Rome. In verse 29 we read that the sailors put out 4 anchors and in his book on the life of Paul, Chuck Swindoll labels them the anchors of:

Stability – we hold on to God who promised never to leave us.

Unity – we support each other and fulfil the greatest commandment to love God and love one another.

Renewal – we stay close to God; spend time in prayer; relax in his presence.

Reality – God has put us here, in our time and place, for a purpose so we don't wish the situation away we pray. We deal with it. We stick to the hygiene rules. **We be salt and light in our community!**

Well – how have we done? Things have changed, no doubt, church is not the same as it was – but not worse just different. We've been **stable**, holding on to God despite missing those who were taken home during these 4 years; we've been **united** despite the tensions of being apart, learning how to do zoom worship, and virtual coffee mornings; we have seen **renewal** with new folk joining the fellowship and people coming to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour; and we have dealt with the **reality** of being a numerically small church in our time and place; relying on our all sufficient God. **We have dealt with it, we have been salt and light in our community.** But where from here? No looking back in longing for 'the good old days' – looking forward to what God is going to do as we trust and obey him. No sticking with the familiar but working out what church needs to look like to serve the present, not the past. The attendance at church last Sunday morning was the largest for some time – God is working - are we?

Robert

16th March 2024

Baptist Union of Scotland Prayer Calendar 2024

Here are the subjects for prayer this week..

W/c 18th March

Coastline Community Church
Coatbridge Baptist Church
Collydean Baptist Church



You can sign up for prayer points via Facebook at

<https://scottishbaptist.com/prayer/>

Acts 2:17 “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

Lent Bible Studies and Holy Week Services

Lent Bible Study

Tuesdays from 10.30-11.30am in Broxburn Parish Church Small Hall

Wednesday evenings from 7-8pm in The Open Door, Uphall

The Session themes are:

This week Session 6 – Finding Jesus as our Saviour – Psalm 22, Matthew 27 and John 20

Broxburn and Uphall Council of Churches.

Holy Week Services all at 7pm.

Monday 25th March
Praise and Prayer.

Uphall South
Church.

Thursday 28th March
Communion.

Broxburn
Baptist Church.

Friday 29th March
Good Friday

Strathbrock
St Nicholas Church

Rules For Growing Christians

Don't neglect your prayer time. It is the breath of the soul (Luke 18:1).

Don't neglect your Bible. It is your sword for conquest, your hammer for construction, your guiding light for dreary days (Rev. 1:3).

Don't neglect your body. It is the capital on which you are to do business for the rest of your life (1 Cor. 6: 19,20).

Don't neglect your mind. It is your channel for reaching up to the very thoughts of God (Phil. 4:8).

Don't neglect your laugh. Bible teaches that "A merry heart does good like medicine" (Prov. 17:22).

Don't neglect your reputation. It is the gold with which you will meet the demands of a complex civilization (Mt. 5:14-16).

Don't neglect your influence. It will point others to the living God whom you serve (Prov. 11:6).

Bulletin Digest (Nov. 2007)

'We are ambassadors for Christ' Page 2

BMS Prayer Guide 2024

Nepal's anti-conversion law restricts religious conversion and the free expression of faith in Nepal. Many believers have been arrested, some imprisoned. Against a backdrop of political, social and spiritual challenges, BMS World Mission workers and partners continue to point to the one who can bring about total transformation.



SUNDAY 17

In light of the anti-conversion law, please pray for wisdom and protection in these challenging times. Pray that believers would continue to be light in the darkness and know how to respond to the increased restriction.

MONDAY 18

BMS partner KISC EQUIP trains Nepali teachers across the country. Pray that EQUIP's support will improve the academic and emotional needs of the children and the communities in which EQUIP serves.

TUESDAY 19

BMS worker Toby Vokuhl continues PhD research about the interconnection of reconstructed housing in post-disaster areas and building occupant wellbeing. Pray for the successful completion of the research, and protection for Pippa and the children while he is travelling for fieldwork.

WEDNESDAY 20

BMS partner Human Development and Community Services (HDCS) operates community hospitals in Sundar Bazaar and Rukum. Pray that HDCS staff will be faithful witnesses of Christ in these communities.

THURSDAY 21

BMS workers Alan and Megan Barker are seconded to HDCS. Pray that many lives would be transformed by their work.

FRIDAY 22

Pray for wisdom for Megan as she balances multiple roles, including through the Association of Nepali Occupational Therapists.

SATURDAY 23

Government attitudes towards faith-based organisations can sometimes be different compared to other organisations. Pray for stable working relationships, and a positive and supportive stance with local and national government bodies, stakeholders, and communities.

Bible Reading – the whole Bible in 2 years.

17 th	Exodus 21:15-36; Exodus 22:1-16
18 th	Exodus 22:17-31; Exodus 23:1-31
19 th	Exodus 23:32-33; Exodus 24:1-18; Exodus 25:1-30
20 th	Exodus 25:31-40; Exodus 26:1-37; Exodus 27:1-5
21 st	Exodus 27:6-21; Exodus 28:1-29
22 nd	Exodus 28:30-43; Exodus 29:1-27
23 rd	Exodus 29:28-46; Exodus 30:1-25



A Thought from Charlie

“Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals”
(1 Corinthians 15:33).

Those who follow the crowd usually get lost in it. We know those words to be true, but oftentimes we fail to live by them. Instead of trusting God for guidance, we imitate our friends and suffer the consequences. Instead of seeking to please our Father in Heaven, we strive to please our peers, with decidedly mixed results. Instead of doing the right thing, we do the easy thing or the popular thing. And when we do, we pay a high price for our short sightedness.

Would you like a time tested formula for successful living? Here is a simple formula that has been proven and is true. Don't give in to peer pressure. Period.

Instead of getting lost in the crowd, you should find guidance from God. Does this sound too simple? Perhaps it is simple, but it is also the only way to reap all the marvellous riches that God has in store for you.

Rather than following the crowd, it would be better if we followed our conscience. Do you want to be wise? Well, choose wise friends. For better or worse, you will eventually become more and more like the people you associate with. So why not associate with people who will make your life better, not worse!

A great way to guard your steps is by associating with friends who guard theirs.

Duty Rota **Preaching** **Door** **Vestry Prayer** **Communion Prayer**

March	17	Donna	Doreen	Jim B.	
PALM SUNDAY	24	Robert	Mark	Donna	
EASTER	31	Donna	Kevin	Mary	
April	7	Archie	Isobel	Jen	Jim B.
	14	Archie	Phyllis	Eddie	
	21	Donna	Linda	Linda	



Church This Week

Sunday 17th

11.00am Worship Service – Donna

To join on zoom just click the link below.

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

6.00pm Fellowship Communion

Thursday

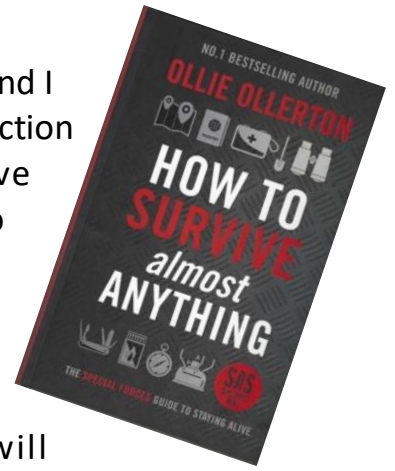
10.30 Zoom Prayer Time

Friday

9.00-12.00 The Lighthouse

'How to Survive Almost Anything 10.'

Last week we were thinking about having 'A Spirit of Adventure' and I trust you had an adventurous week. This week we're still in the section headed 'The Survivor's Mindset' and looking at 'How to Survive in the Wilderness'. If we want to be survivors, we have to learn how to deal with the harshest of circumstances. A spirit of adventure can get us into all sorts of situations that we need to be ready for. We need the right mindset, we need the right skills, we need the right equipment. In this part Ollie Ollerton gives a list of skills and kit which will increase our chances of survival.



Skills like:

- Building a fire – for warmth and safety
- Finding and purifying water
- Foraging for and hunting for food
- Making a shelter
- Navigating – finding your way
- Keeping clean and keeping calm

Kit like:

- Tools for cutting
- Fire making tools
- Material for coverings
- Containers – for water etc
- String, rope for tying things together

(Just thought this sounds like the contents of a woman's handbag!!)

The Bible talks about wilderness experiences.

In 1 Kings 19 Elijah finds himself in the wilderness, fleeing from the wrath of the wicked Queen Jezebel. We're told *'he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness.'* He was at the end of his tether, in fact *'He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."* ⁵ *Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.'*

Elijah was pretty short on survival skills and had left his toolkit behind him but he was not there by accident and he was not alone. No sooner had he fallen asleep when... *an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat."*

You would have forgiven Elijah for thinking this was some sick joke – he might have said 'We're in the wilderness! Where will I find food?' but he didn't *'He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again'* God was in the wilderness with Elijah and he had plans for Elijah. *And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?".....* *'The Lord said to him, "Go.....'*

Maybe you feel that with the things that you've been going through that it's the end...it's not. God is with you and he has plans for you...get up, eat and go!

Journey to Jerusalem

Some time ago the Scottish Bible Society produced this series of 10 Bible Studies for use running up to Easter. I include them and trust you will find them useful. The first study is for use on Friday of this week.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Journey to Jerusalem, a daily Bible reading resource that encourages us to journey with Jesus through the events leading up to Easter Sunday.

The ten days of readings begin on the Friday before Holy Week with the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. This reading sets the scene for Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, which begins on Saturday with his return to Bethany, the scene of that amazing miracle and the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. In Matthew's account, Bethany acts as a base for Jesus and his disciples during the events of Holy Week. It is at Bethany that Jesus is anointed with oil, preparing his body for his death to come. And it is from Bethany that Jesus makes his final journey into Jerusalem that will lead to his death and resurrection.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Each day there is a set Bible reading. Before you read, take time to pray that God would open his Word and speak, that you might understand more of Jesus. We have provided a reflection on the text for each day. Following the reading, the same four questions are suggested to help your personal reflection upon the passage:

- ***What did you like and dislike about this passage?***
- ***What did you notice about humanity and what did you notice about God?***
- ***Which part impacted you most?***
- ***Who do you know that needs to hear about this today?***

Friday 22nd March

READ JOHN 11: 17-44

Lazarus has been dead and buried for four days and Mary and Martha are mourning the loss of their brother. Jesus' delay in coming to Bethany adds to the pain, as Martha says, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." Some among the crowds have a similar question, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" In the midst of a people trying to make sense of loss, Jesus' presence is transformative. It is Jesus' penetrating statement that brings hope, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

As Jesus calls Lazarus to life from the tomb we get a glimpse of what will happen during the week that follows when Jesus himself experiences death, when confusion and loss grips his followers, and an empty grave and a resurrection morning utterly transform life. For the religious leaders, the resurrection of Lazarus is the event that leads them to plot to take Jesus' life. Yet for Jesus, who declared himself the resurrection and the life, death could never be the end.

As we face disorientating circumstances in life it is good to know that Jesus draws near to comfort us and that he listens to the questions we have. Jesus' presence with us makes all the difference. It is as we listen for and receive his Word of life that our lives are transformed.

- ***What did you like and dislike about this passage?***
- ***What did you notice about humanity and what did you notice about God?***
- ***Which part impacted you most?***
- ***Who do you know that needs to hear about this today?***

Saturday 23rd March

READ JOHN 12: 1-11

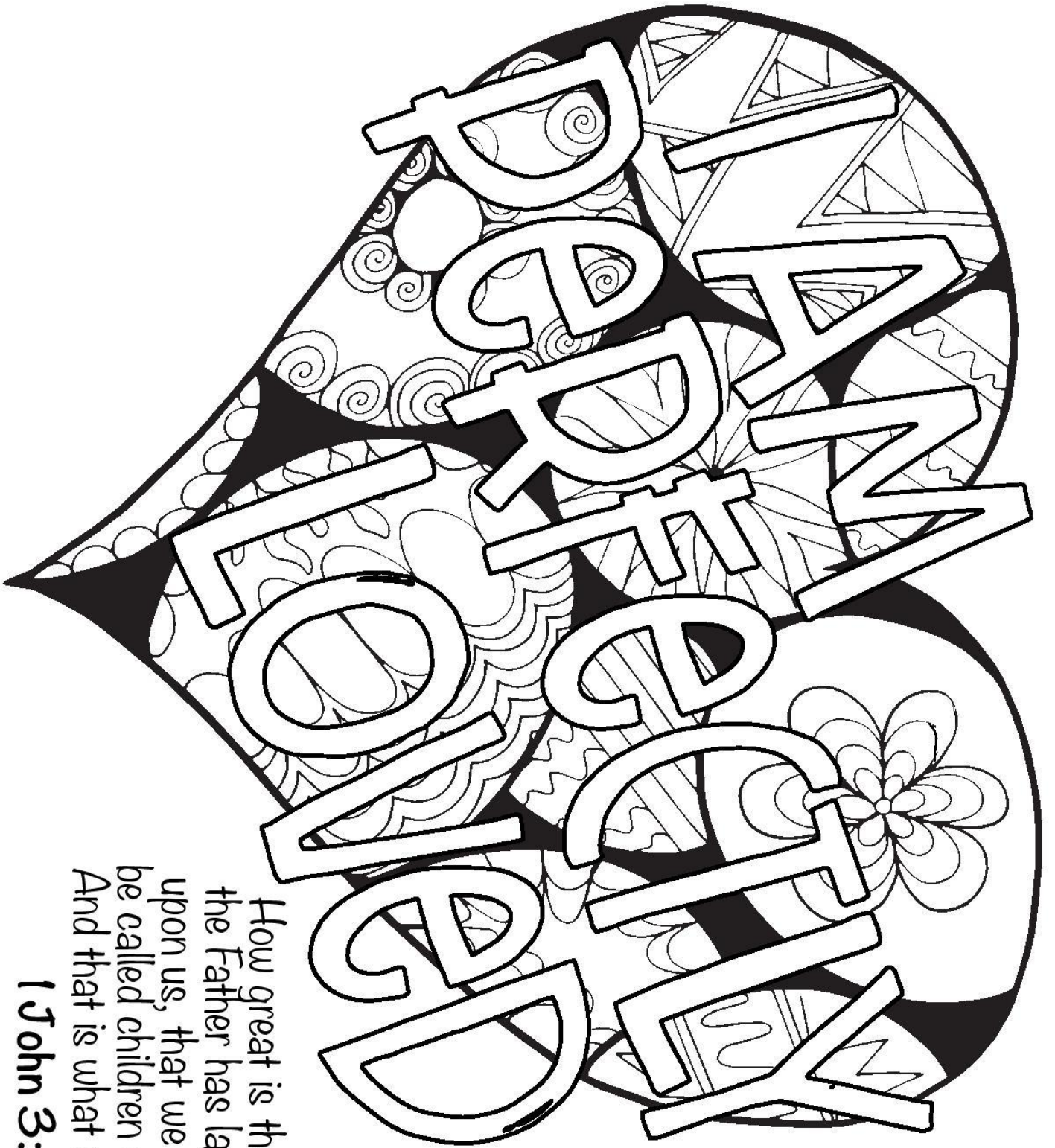
Bethany was a small town on the eastern side of Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives. It sat on the main road from Jericho and would have been a busy route for travellers at the time of Passover. Jesus arrives to spend the Sabbath with his closest friends at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. It would have been a place where he felt able to relax and refresh himself before what would become a traumatic week for all those present at Bethany.

Mary, the more reflective of the two sisters, breaks a jar of perfume over Jesus feet. The jar would have been worth about a year's wages (£26,500 today) and tradition would dictate that it was kept for the burial and anointing upon the death of the head of the household, in this case Lazarus. What is intriguing about this event is that for four days Lazarus was dead and yet the jar was not used, being kept instead for Jesus. If we consider the cost of the perfume and the decision to save it for Jesus, what kind of challenge does that present to us about how much we are willing to sacrifice for him today?

Jesus replies to Judas' criticism of Mary's anointing, "You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me." It is a troubling statement but Jesus does not say it as a dismissal of poverty. Instead, Jesus means to point Judas and those listening back to the true value of Mary's actions. She is not wasting money, she is worshipping the King. True worship is a costly endeavour; the others would discover this, except perhaps for Judas Iscariot.

In dealing with the more troubling aspects of Mary breaking the jar we can overlook the true purpose of Jesus stopping at Bethany: this would be his last Sabbath here on earth.

- ***What did you like and dislike about this passage?***
- ***What did you notice about humanity and what did you notice about God?***
- ***Which part impacted you most?***
- ***Who do you know that needs to hear about this today?***



How great is the love
the Father has lavished
upon us, that we should
be called children of God!
And that is what we are!

1 John 3:1

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

Father, we no longer live in a Christian country. Show us how to be salt and light in a multicultural, multi-faith society. Make us ready to face the challenges and to grasp the opportunities the new normal offers.

Amen

Lord, as church attendance and faith have decreased, we have seen a corresponding rise in mental health issues in society. Galvanise the people who comprise your church so that we might show the difference that relying on you and not ourselves makes to everyday life.

Amen

Lord – I bring those of my family who don't know you before you. I name them _____ and ask that you would step into their lives and confront them with their need of salvation.

Amen

Lord, thank you for those who have recently come to faith. Guard them from the evil one. Open their minds and hearts to your word. Grow them in a way which will astonish us and let us love and cherish them.

Amen

Lord, may everything I say and do today be to your glory.

Amen

Lord, thank you for the beauty of the stars in the night sky.

Amen

I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips

(Ps. 33:1)

Father, this is the person I want to be but sometimes, in the difficult times, I find praise difficult. Forgive me.

Amen

Who has weighed the dust of every mountain?

Who has walked the mysteries of the deep?

Who has laid the earth on its foundation?

And who conducts the waves upon the sea?

I stand in awe of You

I stand in awe of You

So glorious and true

I stand in awe

I stand in awe

<https://youtu.be/2BLNNyKAicQ>

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