

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

In this issue:

Page 1

- *A thought.*
- *Verse for the week.*
- *BUofS Prayer calendar.*

Page 2

- *Holy Week Services*

Page 3

- *BMS Prayer Guide.*
- *Bible Reading Plan.*

Page 4

- *A thought from Charlie.*
- *Preachers and Duty Rota*
- *Church this week*

Page 5

- *'How to survive almost anything' 10*

Page 6-11

- *Journey to Jerusalem (Readings for Easter) – Scottish Bible Society*

Page 12

- *To colour and consider.*

Page 13

- *The Prayer Wall.*



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No. 201 23rd March 2024

'We are ambassadors for Christ'

Some thoughts.....

I know it says 23rd at the bottom of this page – but I usually start thinking about what I should say much earlier – as you get older things seem to take a bit longer – anyway it's Monday morning and I've started putting the newsletter together. I'm listening to Lauren Daigle singing 'I Believe' which has just popped up on Youtube...just changed to 'Goodness of God' – could be a playlist I've made myself, hope it keeps on in this vein.

It's my time for peace and quiet and an Americano. It's a time for thinking- I'm thinking of:

- *church yesterday morning and Donna's inspiring sermon on Elijah (sorry Donna I'm not a hands in the air prayerer),*
- *the contact from The Lighthouse who came to church and brought her visitors*
- *fellowship communion last night where a group of us met to share time together, to serve each other with communion and to watch "The Cross" which looked back at the life of Billy Graham.*
- *Our discussion about our memories of his visits to Scotland and those who became Christians and part of our fellowship through his preaching – well, through the work of the Holy Spirit.*
- *Holy Week coming up and the opportunity to meet with Christian friends from other denominations to share what unites us rather than dwell of what divides us.*
- *Friends who have passed away recently and those who will miss them most.*

....well that was Monday today is Tuesday morning and I'm thinking of what we did yesterday – a drive down to East Lothian, a walk at North Berwick and seat in the sun at the harbour, a lovely lunch at The Old Aberlady Inn then a walk through the nature reserve.

God knows the benefit of periods of reflection, rest and refreshment – check out Genesis 2:2-3. Relax for a few minutes today.

Robert

23rd March 2024

Baptist Union of Scotland Prayer Calendar 2024

Here are the subjects for prayer this week..

W/c 25th March

Cornton Baptist Church
Cowal Baptist Church
Cowdenbeath Baptist Church
Ali Laing - BUS Younger Generation and Digital Church Lead



You can sign up for prayer points via Facebook at

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



Matthew 11:28-30 ²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

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



BMS Prayer Guide 2024

Jesus said, “As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples...” (John 13: 34-35). Jesus demonstrated this in his value and love for the most vulnerable in his society. Keeping each other safe is a fundamental way that we can demonstrate and share Jesus’ love.



SUNDAY 24

At BMS World Mission we work alongside some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Please pray that we would ensure all those who come into contact with us feel safe and valued, whether that be overseas, in the UK, online, in person, or by telephone.

MONDAY 25

Safeguarding is an English word not easily translated into other languages. Pray for our mission workers as they seek to support their partners in safeguarding, that they would find the right vocabulary in the local language for mutual understanding.

TUESDAY 26

Please pray for the development of awareness and good safeguarding practices. Ask God to provide the right people and resources to increase the knowledge and skills of BMS workers and partners.

WEDNESDAY 27

Pray for safe spaces where conversations about safeguarding can happen. Pray for those who have something they need to share, and for wisdom for the safeguarding team.

THURSDAY 28

Pray for the European Baptist Federation as they support displaced people – one of the groups most at risk. May these people find physical safety and spiritual rest as the love of Christ is shared with them.

FRIDAY 29

We remember today that for our sake Jesus experienced humiliation, pain and even death on a cross. He showed compassion and forgiveness to the end: may all who work for and with BMS follow his example.

SATURDAY 30

Give thanks for our Asia safeguarding champion Louise Lynch, who supports safeguarding in different cultural contexts.

Bible Reading – the whole Bible in 2 years.

24 th	Exodus 30:26-38; Exodus 31:1-18; Exodus 32:1-12
25 th	Exodus 32:13-35; Exodus 33:1-14
26 th	Exodus 33:15-23; Exodus 34:1-30
27 th	Exodus 34:31-35; Exodus 35:1-35; Exodus 36:1-7
28 th	Exodus 36:8-38; Exodus 37:1-21
29 th	Exodus 37:22-29; Exodus 38:1-31; Exodus 39:1-6
30 th	Exodus 39:7-43; Exodus 40:1-15



A Thought from Charlie

*“Furious, squalls came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him: “Teacher, don't you care if we drown?”. He rebuked the wind and said to the waves: “Be quiet!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.”
(Mark 4:37-39)*

Had we been in the boat, our faith would have had an advantage over the disciples. Unlike them, we have the Bible.... We have 2000 years of church history.... We have the testimony of the resurrection.... We have the indwelling Holy Spirit. The disciples had none of that.!


So, what would have been our response when the squall hit the boat? I like to believe I would have held on to the rigging and leaned over to whisper in Jesus ear. “Don't wake up from your sleep, Lord. Rest easy, and our Father's grace will see us through the storm. **I trust you're in control no matter what you're doing**”. Mmmmmm I wonder!!!!

Oh, for the chance to show Jesus that, Yes, I can trust Him! It would be wonderful, wouldn't it?

Well I have that chance every day. And so do you!!!

“May my trust in you be complete, Oh Lord. May my confidence never waver and my hope never falter. When stormy trials beset me, may I rely on you finally and fully. Amen.”

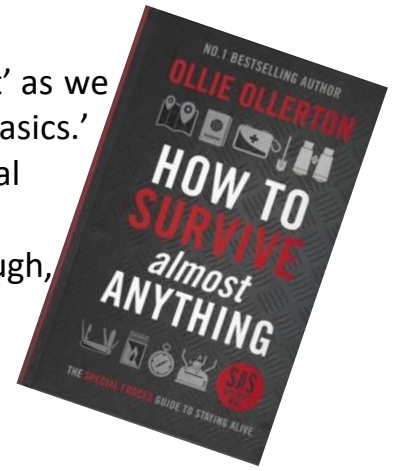
<u>Duty Rota</u>		Preaching	Door	Vestry Prayer	Communion Prayer
PALM SUNDAY	24	Robert	Mark	Donna	
EASTER	31	Donna	Kevin	Mary	
April	7	Archie	Isobel	Jen	Jim B.
	14	Archie	Phyllis	Eddie	
	21	Donna	Linda	Linda	
	28	Andy	Bill	Bill	



<u>Church This Week</u>	
<u>Sunday 24th</u>	11.00am Worship Service – Robert To join on zoom just click the link below. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85227893884
Thursday	10.30 Coffee & Chat @ BBC
Friday	No Lighthouse this week

'How to Survive Almost Anything 10.'

Today we reach the end of the chapter on 'The Survivor's Mindset' as we come to the section headed 'Embracing Risks and Going Back to Basics.' Now, if anything should describe the church in the present spiritual climate it could be this – this is the time for taking risks and going back to basics. There is a tendency in all of us, when things get tough, to want to 'coorie doon', to feel safe and comfortable, even hibernate, until things are better. Most of us might subscribe to the sentiments of Billy Ocean's song of 1986...but only if it applied to someone else!!



When the going gets tough

The tough get going, tough, tough,

When the going gets tough, the tough get ready

The writer begins this section with these words..... '*In the west, we have fallen into the trap of always following the trodden path and, as a result, we have become sheep.*' Now I have a problem here with this metaphor because, as Christians, Jesus is our Shepherd so we are sheep – '*all we like sheep have gone astray.*' But Jesus as Shepherd and we as sheep is the basics – we go where he leads us, we follow him. But he doesn't always lead us the same way or through the same gentle experiences, the same 'trodden path'. He sometimes takes us to places and experiences which are new and different and exciting and scary. Following Jesus is about taking risks, indeed embracing risks but knowing that – '*Even though I walk through the darkest valley, you are with me your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*'

Well sheep - what risks are we going to take today?



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.

Sunday 24th

READ MATTHEW 21: 1-11

There would be two parades entering Jerusalem on Passover Sunday. The first coming in great military strength rode in from the west: row upon row of Roman soldiers with the finest horses, their armour and banners shining in the sun, a bold political statement of pomp and glory announcing the arrival of Pilate, Roman Governor of Judea, as he made his annual trip to Jerusalem from Caesarea. The second parade from the east was in every way the opposite, an absence of military splendour with the central character riding on a donkey.

Until this point in his ministry Jesus had always maintained a relatively low profile. This makes it all the more striking that he gives the disciples instructions that will generate a degree of notoriety and guarantee him an audience. For the first time Jesus wants to be seen. He intentionally sets out to draw a crowd around him as he makes the Journey to Jerusalem. Jesus knows that this time he must enter the city as the Messiah, prophesied in Zechariah 9, riding on a donkey. Passover was an important religious event and every year Jerusalem would be thronging with 'tourists' who had journeyed together to celebrate the Hebrew festival.

The passage appears like a celebration, a procession with crowds lining the street, cheering and waving palm branches. They cry out 'Hosanna', a Hebrew plea for salvation, 'Please deliver us!' It would seem they have recognised, at least in part, who Jesus is. We read this passage with hindsight, ever aware of the death that is to come, but for those celebrating outside Jerusalem on that first Psalm Sunday they simply welcomed their King, the one they hoped would save them.

- ***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?***



Monday 25th

READ MATTHEW 21: 12-17

Yesterday's passage tells us that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, "the whole city was stirred and asked 'Who is this?'" It is no coincidence then that the first act Matthew records Jesus doing in Jerusalem was guaranteed to cause a stir!

Once again we are aware of Jesus making no attempt to keep a low profile – quite the opposite. His show of frustration, even righteous anger as he clears out the temple, is a direct challenge to the Hebrew authorities.

But when we look at his overturning the tables we should never underestimate the degree of offence the traders caused him. This was his Father's house, set apart for worshipping the one true God and yet Mammon is the god being worshipped here. And so he sets about clearing the outer courtyard of everything that was not of God, the cheating, the selling, the profiteering from the temple rituals and ultimately the violation of holiness caused by greed. How can the people truly worship God when the way into his presence is marred by man's sin?



Imagine the umbrage of those who had been so publicly put in their place when the children begin shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Recognition from the youngest in society that the promised Messiah has come to their temple – and worship will never be the same again. Do you find yourself wondering if the Hebrew authorities knew, if they even suspected, that the events of this week would forever change how mankind approached God?

- ***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?***

Tuesday 26th

READ MATTHEW 22: 15-22

There is an underlying layer of deceitfulness and intrigue in the actions of the Pharisees. They are trying to discredit Jesus and are not afraid to use manipulation to do so. In the midst of a week when the crowds are awakening to who Jesus is, when Jesus himself is revealing all of his authority, the Pharisees still believe that he is the enemy rather than

their saviour. By aligning themselves with the Herodians, hated supporters of Roman rule, their actions were not only devious but desperate. No answer could be the right answer – one would offend the Hebrew and the other the Roman. On the face of things Jesus couldn't get this right. But one of the things that is wonderful about the ways of God is that he is never restricted to our limited understanding of justice. "Give to Caesar what is ' , and to God what is God's."

Jesus is not so much answering the Pharisees' question as condemning it. This is not a question of to whom tax should be paid. Instead the answer questions where a person's true devotion lies. If Caesar should be paid that which belongs to him then what is it that Jesus says should be given back to God?

- ***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?***

Wednesday 27th

READ MARK 12: 41-44

In Mark's account of this incident Jesus appears to intentionally sit down opposite the offering depositories in the temple court – he is deliberately watching the crowd. In our



Church culture today it would be the equivalent of watching the offering plate being passed along the row and taking note of who puts what in. It's an uncomfortable thought. Jesus then calls the disciples to him and uses the offering boxes as a teaching aid. Compare and contrast: some give only what they ought to but the widow gives everything she has; some give large amounts from fortunes and one gives everything from nothing. Who has been more generous?

Affluence is not necessarily a blessing, for it brings with it a temptation to become less reliant on God and increasingly reliant on resources we count as our own. Conversely those who have very little find dependence on Gods provision a daily act of worship. How often do we long to have more money believing that it will give us greater comfort and security? What would it take to live each day simply desiring more of God and less of wealth?

As Jesus reaches the last few days he will spend with his disciples we might assume that every lesson taught to them had critical significance. We must ask ourselves what it is he is trying to teach them here at the temple offertory that they will need in the days to come.

- ***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?***

Thursday 28th

READ MATTHEW 26: 17-30

In many ways Jesus' Passover meal with his disciples is a very ordinary occasion. It was an annual meal. Presumably they had shared it together before since they had been following Christ for three years. But this is in fact an extraordinary occasion. It is the night Jesus will be betrayed. The Jewish leaders have finally worked out a way to arrest Jesus and, they hope, have him put to death. If Judas thought this was a carefully kept secret he must have been shocked when Jesus openly tells the disciples that one of them is going to betray him. Later that night Jesus will reveal to Peter that he will deny Christ three times. And before that moment comes the other ten will flee, deserting Jesus in his hour of need. Yet knowing all of this, Jesus gathers his friends together for this one last supper – the one who would betray him, the one who would deny him, the others who would desert him. And into this context of human failure and sin Jesus transforms the Passover meal that spoke of God rescuing and saving his people Israel from slavery in Egypt. The ordinary bread and wine are given extraordinary meaning through what Jesus will accomplish on the cross. And having begun to expose and confront their very human failures, Jesus speaks of God's salvation. A body given, blood poured out, forgiveness offered and a new covenant sealed. In this extraordinary moment God himself offers them salvation and the invitation is for all. Jesus gives bread and wine to them all; his invitation is, "take and eat ... Drink from it, all of you."



Two thousand years later a table spread with simple but profound symbols of salvation speaks of that same open invitation, from the same incomparable and unchanging Saviour, who offers us forgiveness for our very human failures. An ordinary occasion made extraordinary because of Jesus.

- ***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 29th

READ MATTHEW 27: 27-56



The trial, with all the false accusations and injustice, is now over. Jesus, condemned, passes into the hands of the Roman soldiers who set the pattern for what is ahead, inflicting cruel suffering and ridiculing his claims as they conduct their own mock coronation. On the final journey to Golgotha Jesus is given brief respite from the physical weight of the cross as Simon of Cyrene is conscripted to help. Condemned and crucified as the king of the Jews, Jesus is put to death alongside two other “rebels”. In the midst of the insults two sarcastic requests are repeated, “Come down from the cross” and, “Save yourself.” Yet Matthew records two statements that, despite their intent, are prophetic in nature and which correctly interpret what God is doing in the midst of human injustice and cruelty: “He saved others ... but he can’t save himself!”, which speaks of Christ giving himself over to death on the cross that others might be saved, and, “You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,” which looks forward to the fulfilment of that claim on a bright resurrection morning.

Christ’s cry of dereliction from the cross speaks of how much it cost God to bring about our salvation. For all that humanity had been doing against God in those awful hours what is advanced and accomplished is the plan and purposes of God to bring salvation to humanity. When Christ dies the temple curtain is split in two and the barrier to God is torn down forever, while the resurrection of many holy people prefigures Christ’s coming resurrection, and the resurrection of all who believe and are made holy through him.

- ***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 30th

READ MATTHEW 27: 57-66

At the moment when those disciples who had publicly associated with Jesus desert him another disciple who had believed privately steps forward. Joseph of Arimathea’s devotion is recorded in all four Gospels. Joseph boldly asks Pilate for Jesus’ body, wraps it in a linen cloth, and lays Jesus in his own tomb before rolling a big stone across the tomb and going away. But Joseph is not alone. Sitting opposite the tomb are Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of

James and Joseph. They witness Jesus' burial, just as they had witnessed Jesus' death, watching from a distance. Their faithful vigil and testimony would be vital to the Gospel writers as they recorded the story of Jesus.

On the Sabbath day, which God commanded Israel to remember and keep as a holy day of rest, the chief priests and the Pharisees are active. Even after they had secured Jesus' death they cannot find rest. Aware of Jesus' claim that he would rise again on the third day they enlist the might of the Roman Empire, and with more than a hint of irony, Matthew records Pilate's command, "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know." But once again, as so often in this story of Jesus, after humanity has done its worst God will act and accomplish his plans and purposes.

- ***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?***

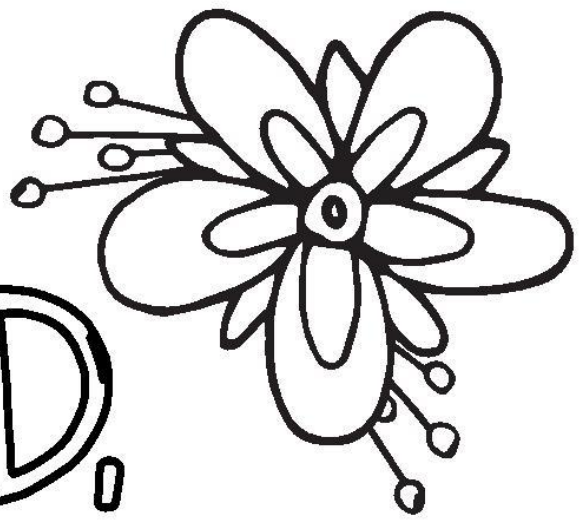


Matthew 27:63-66

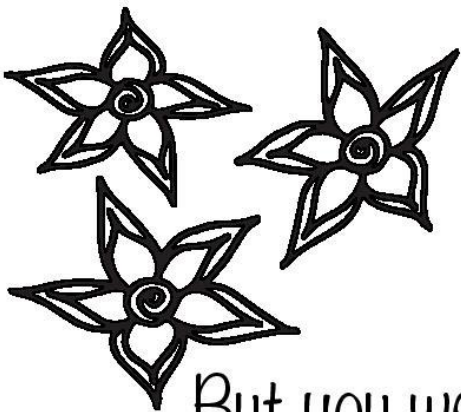
⁶² The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

I AM
CLEANSED,

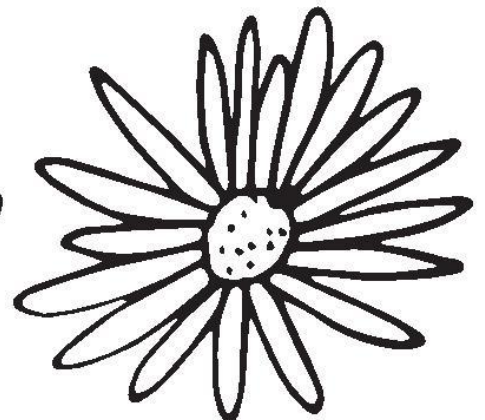
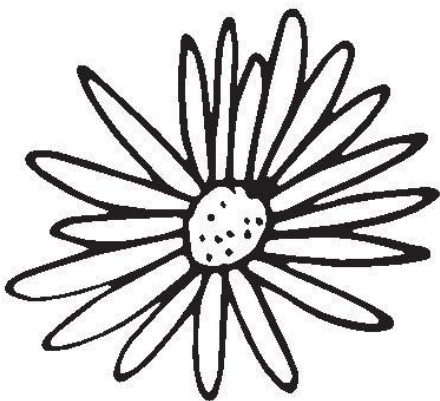


HOLY, MADE RIGHT
WITH GOD.



But you were washed, you were sanctified,
you were justified in the name of the Lord
Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11



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

Sunday

Lord, I think of that day when you rode into Jerusalem on the donkey's colt and I praise and worship you as Lord of my life. May I be faithful in all I do and say.

Amen

Monday

Lord, when I think of your anger with those who traded in the temple courts guide me in all my actions and interactions that I might put you front and centre of all I am.

Amen

Tuesday

Lord, help me to be honest in my financial dealings, paying the taxes I should, giving to Caesar what is his but also making sure I give to you what is yours. Thank you for your goodness.

Amen

Wednesday

Lord, you recognised the sacrifice that widow made when she gave from her poverty. Help me to be generous in all ways from the riches you have given me.

Amen

Thursday

Lord, every time I eat and drink remind me of your last meal with your friends and your sacrifice for me.

Amen

Friday

Lord, thank you that you hung on that cross in my place.

Amen

Saturday

Lord, when you say 'wait' give me the patience to do just that certain that you know the end from the beginning.

Amen

Wonderful grace that gives what I don't deserve, pays me what Christ has earned then lets me go free.

Wonderful grace that gives me the time to change, washes away the stains that once covered me.

And all that I have I lay at the feet of the wonderful Saviour who loves me.

<https://youtu.be/gbba75KLE1A>

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