



**Sharing the love
of Jesus**

Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter

Issue 25 Sunday 13th September 2020

“Jesus said: I am the bread of life.”

John 6:35

Message from Alistair

Christianity has lots of long words! Here are a few for starters- justification, sanctification, complementarianism, dispensationalism, traducianism, pretribulational premillennialism, and so the list goes on!

And do you know what the longest word in the Bible is? Well, it's Maher-shalal-hash-baz, 18 characters. Maher-shalal-hash-baz was a son of the prophet Isaiah. The name means "speed the spoil, hasten the plunder".

Here's another long word- anthropomorphism. Anthro- what? Anthropomorphism is the showing or treating of animals, gods, and objects as if they are human in appearance, character, or behaviour. The books "Alice in Wonderland", "Peter Rabbit", and "Winnie-the-Pooh" are classic examples of anthropomorphism.

Well, I'm glad that God doesn't choose to use the sorts of words that some theologians use! God talks to us using words that we can understand. And that is exactly what anthropomorphism is. It is the practice of God describing himself in human language. Let me give you a few examples from the Bible.

God describes himself as though he has ears and eyes- 'Give ear, Lord, and hear; open your eyes, Lord, and see.' Isaiah 37:17

God describes himself as though he has hands- 'See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.' Isaiah 49:16

God describes himself as though he has arms- 'The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.'

God describes himself as though he has a heart- 'My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused.' Hosea 11:8

And so anthropomorphism is a way of communicating. A way of choosing word pictures we can easily understand.

Now of course, the Bible makes it clear that God is not flesh and blood like ourselves. Rather, we read that God is spirit- John 4:24. Amongst other things, this signifies that God is in no way limited to a spatial location.

Yet because God is so personal, so active in his creation, because of his great love, he revealed himself in the form of a man. 'Christ Jesus who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.' Philippians 2:5-7.

God took on the form of a human- with a heart, eyes, ears and feet. This means that with respect to Jesus, we can literally speak to God in human form. He invites us to do so when he uses such language himself.

Picture yourself being held by God's everlasting arms today. Speak to him in prayer, using human word pictures. He is so personal with you- be personal with him.

A prayer- Lord, hold me by your hand. Today may I follow in your footsteps, listen to your voice, feel your smile and hear your heartbeat. Amen.

With my love and God bless

Alistair

Sunday Service 13th September

An audio recording of the service for Sunday 13th September, together with some songs, will be available to listen to on the website. The reading is Ephesians 3:1-6 and the title is 'I know a secret.' George Hill is leading. Rev. Alistair Stewart is preaching.

The service will include a short act of communion. Please prepare bread and wine/juice before you listen to the service.

There is no Zoom coffee after the service this week.

Song

'He Is Our God' is a great new song [2017] with words and music by Jon Althoff and Bob Kauflin. It reminds us that God is a great and mighty God and a loving compassionate Saviour.

He Is Our God

VERSE 1

Who can light the fires
Of a thousand burning suns
Blazing in the heavens?
There is only One
He is our God.

VERSE 2

Who commands the nations
Building up and tearing down
Silencing His rivals?
There is only One
He is our God, He is our God.

CHORUS 1

Holy, You alone are holy
Matchless in Your glory, holy God.

VERSE 3

Who would come to save us
When we turned away His love
Conquer us with kindness?
There is only One
He is our God, He is our God.

CHORUS 2

Holy, You alone are holy
Matchless in Your glory, no one is like You.

Worthy, You alone are worthy
We adore You only, holy God.

BRIDGE

Now to the King on the throne
Who was and is to come
And to the Lamb Who was slain be glory.

You can listen to the song here- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmBNn-u2vT4> [Press Ctrl and click].

Prayer

From Evangelical Alliance-

"Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."
John 4:35

Lord, we thank you for the power of the gospel. We thank you for the good news of salvation, forgiveness, hope and a new start.

We give thanks for all those who have encountered you during lockdown, those who met you for the first time and others whose faith has been reignited.

Lord, grant us boldness, grace and love. Enable us to be examples of your good news and help us to point others to Jesus the light of the world.

As we move into a new season may many more discover your love for them for the first time. Come Holy Spirit we pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

News of the Church Family

Cordelia and Daniel Chong have asked for our prayers. Elinor started with a fever 3 days into her reception year at school. All the family has been advised to stay at home, including Sophiellia who is very keen to be in school. They have managed to get a home testing kit for COVID-19, and the results should be back in a couple of days. Elinor still has a slight cough, but the rest of the family seem fine at the moment.

Gill Bell's grandson Connor has been tested for COVID-19. Thankfully the test has come back negative. Gill is very grateful for all our prayers.

Bernie, Lynn and Alistair continue to try and keep in touch with you all week by week. Just to remind you too that they are always there for you. They are always available to pray with you over the phone where it is not possible to meet.

News from the Church Family

From Mavis Watkinson- PASSING ON THE BLESSINGS - SHOEBOXES 2020!

Shoebboxes containing essential supplies and gifts will join thousands of others on their way in December to underprivileged children in Eastern Europe. See the website <https://teams4u.com/> for destinations. There are several ways you can help:

SHOEBOX ITEMS: If you are happy to shop, gifts in kind will be welcome. The usual items are needed: stationery, toiletries and small toys. I can give a full list of suggestions on request. We don't know when Oasis will be open, so please drop them off at 49 Congleton Road, Sandbach. If this can be done please by mid-October, I will have time to buy any extras.

MONETARY GIFTS: If you prefer to make a donation of money, please pass that to Bernie or myself or pay directly into the church A/C 11713855 sort code 16-31-13, indicating the shoeboxes appeal.

SEWING PENCIL CASES AND WASHBAGS: please contact Susie W

KNITTING HATS: contact Mavis W

SORTING AND PACKING AT HOME: Watch this space!

From Ian Parsons- Prayer Walk around Sandbach Saturday 19th September at 2pm - more details to follow from Jennie Wakefield and Melanie Parsons.

From Ian Parsons- The Tear Fund Big Quiz (online) will be on Saturday 14th November at 7pm - join virtually with hundreds of churches and thousands of people in an evening of fun, information and fund raising for Tear Fund. More details to follow from Ian Parsons.

From Sandbach Foodbank- As it is Harvest time, we thought this would be a good opportunity to highlight where the food bank is up to. It's been a busy summer, not just in spite of, but also because of the restrictions we have all had to get used to.

The Sandbach food bank has been blessed richly-

1. That we have had so many willing and dedicated volunteers who have helped to receive, sort and give out parcels
2. That we have received so much in donations, both at the collection point at the Wesley Centre, and especially from the huge collection from the Rotary Club, which filled the Wesley Centre hall, plus financial donations too.
3. That we have had the space to manage all of this- one of the positives, of groups not being able to meet is that we had the space to receive and sort the collection, by using the hall.
- 4, And most of all, that we have been able to support so many struggling people in and around Sandbach, from families highlighted by some of our schools, who have been receiving regular parcels to help them particularly through the school holidays, to specific groups such as the asylum seekers at the Chimney House, and stranded migrant workers at Gandey's Circus, to the many families who have found lockdown particularly hard, because of job losses and other challenges.

So a lot to thank God for, and also to pray that we can continue to be Christ to those in need through this work.

Harvest is a time when we can demonstrate our thanks through the giving of gifts, to share in the plenty we have, to spread Christ's love to the many. This is normally the food banks busiest time, both in receiving harvest donations, and we anticipate, as the effects of the prolonged restrictions bite, of need for parcels and support. We hope that Churches may be able to share in this by supporting the Food Bank in whatever way, you are able, through physical or financial collections, through reaching out to groups or organisations you are involved in, to keep the food bank stocked through the autumn season.

Here is a list of some of the items the food bank is short of;

tinned fruit
tinned vegetables
long life fruit juice
tinned rice pudding
tinned potatoes
tinned spaghetti in tomato sauce
sugar
jam (not homemade please)

tinned meat and meals (stewed steak, pies, etc)
coffee
tea
toothbrushes

It would be helpful if the items could be sorted in to types, and any out of date items removed.

From next week we will be putting the collecting box out on a Wednesday afternoon at the Wesley Centre instead of Mondays, as we have finished with the schools referrals now that schools are all back.

From Mavis Watkinson- The latest prayer letter from SBC's link missionaries Brian and Jackie Chilvers is available at-

<https://www.bmsworldmission.org/people/brian-and-jackie-chilvers/> [Press Ctrl and click].

They have been able to meet up with their family in the UK over the summer and are returning for a final term of language study near Paris before hopefully leaving for Chad in the New Year.

Special Request

It's so important that we continue to pray for each other and support each other. If you have any personal news, prayer requests not already mentioned via the prayer chain, or an encouragement, Bible verse, testimony, thought etc, for inclusion in the newsletter, please send it to me by Thursday of each week. For the sake of space, please restrict it to about 2 short sentences! Please allow me editorial discretion!

Church Groups

The Saturday Prayer Breakfast sends out a series of prayer points on the Friday of each week.

The Tuesday Morning House Group is studying Ephesians in line with the sermons each week. Questions are sent out and people are encouraged to respond.

The Wednesday Morning Ladies' fellowship meets each Wednesday at 1030am using Zoom. They are studying the theme of 'Angels'.

The Wednesday Evening Study Group will re-convene on Wednesday September 16th at 7.30- by Zoom to start with. Susie Warburton and Sue Thompson are going to lead sessions looking at the Apostle Paul under the heading "Paul, the man and his letters, his times and ours".

The Thursday Evening House Group meets fortnightly by Zoom. The next meeting is at 730pm on Thursday 17th September. There will be different reflections each meeting.

If you would like to join any one of the midweek groups, please contact Alistair and he'll put you in touch with the group leader.

CONTACTS

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