



Sharing the love of  
Jesus

# Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 21

## Message from Alistair

At every point in the story of Jesus, you come across miracles. The miracles began at his conception and birth. According to Mark, Jesus was God's Son. According to John, Jesus was the Word who became flesh. According to Matthew and Luke, Jesus was the one who came into the world without the agency of a human father.

The miracles continue in the ministry of Jesus- miracles of knowledge, miracles of healing, miracles of exorcism, miracles over nature, and even some miraculous cases of raising people from the dead. In fact, miracles are so important that John chose 7 of them, called them 'signs' [i.e. pointers to who Jesus really is] and wrote his Gospel around them. By telling us about them and by talking about them, John shows us what Jesus' real significance is and what he can do for all people.

For instance, the one who fed 5,000 people can certainly feed the hungry soul. The one who opened the eyes of the blind can certainly open the eyes of people blinded by pride and prejudice. The one who raised the dead can certainly give new life to someone who is spiritually dead. The miracles were never done for selfish purposes. They were never to show off. They were evoked by the compassion of Jesus for all people in need, and they were intended to show that the long-awaited Messiah had indeed arrived and he was the liberator who could set people free.

I wonder if you know what the last miracle Jesus performed was before he went to the cross? It wasn't raising Lazarus from the dead, or healing someone who had leprosy, or driving out a demon. No, the last miracle that Jesus performed was returning an ear to the head of Malchus, a servant of the high priest- an ear that his disciple, Simon Peter, had cut off with his sword. [Luke 22:47-51].

When Judas, the temple guard and the detachment of Roman soldiers arrived in the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus, the disciples thought about armed resistance. Seeing the trend of events they asked Jesus whether they should use force. But Peter didn't wait for the question to be answered. He pulled out his sword and took a wild swing. And off came Malchus' ear. I wonder if Peter was aiming at the head of Malchus? But being a fisherman rather than a swordsman he missed!

Perhaps if we were Jesus, we would have said to Malchus, 'Sorry mate, you got what you deserved. You had it coming to you! And it jolly well serves you right!' But instead Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. It was kind of an unnoticed miracle- a miracle that falls beneath the radar. But this last miracle of Jesus covered up the blunder of a disciple.

I'm always so encouraged to know that God is good at cleaning up our messes. And we all have our messes don't we? If you want to cut off your connection with God, then refuse to acknowledge your sin, and leave it unconfessed. I'm not talking about cutting off your relationship

with God, but you can spoil your relationship with him. And the way to get your relationship with God back on the right track is to acknowledge your sin, turn away from it, and ask the Lord to forgive you.

And so when we've sinned, we need to say, 'All right, Lord. I've sinned, I've failed, I've let you down. I messed up. I'm sorry, and I don't know how to fix it. But Lord, I'm asking you to intervene in my life, and forgive me through the finished work of your Son on the cross, and turn this around somehow for your glory.' Then, just watch what the Lord will do.

God can even use a mistake we've made to bring honour to his name. He can turn our mess into a message.

With my love and God bless

Alistair

## Word for the Week

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." *Matthew 16:16*

## Sunday Service- 2<sup>nd</sup> May

An audio recording of the service for Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, together with some songs, will be available to listen to on the SBC website. Dave Murphy is leading and Rev. Alistair Stewart is preaching. The sermon is entitled 'Children of Light'. The Bible reading is Ephesians 5:5-17.

Please note that the sermon contains adult themes.

There is Zoom coffee after the service. Details later in the newsletter.

## Worship for the Week

A blessing written by Clare Hooper, Regional Minister with the Southern Counties Baptist Association-

May you see opportunities to bring hope, healing and peace where others do not.

May you have the courage to speak up for those who get overlooked.

May you be aware of God's Spirit at work in the words you speak, the safe spaces you create and the relationships that you build.

You are loved By God. May those who you encounter know that they are loved too. Amen.

## Wisdom for the Week

'We modern people think of miracles as the suspension of the natural order, but Jesus meant them to be the restoration of the natural order.

The Bible tells us that God did not originally make the world to have disease, hunger, and death in it.

Jesus has come to redeem where it is wrong and heal the world where it is broken. His miracles are not just proofs that he has power but also wonderful foretastes of what he is going to do with that power.

Jesus' miracles are not just a challenge to our minds, but a promise to our hearts, that the world we all want is coming.' *Tim Keller- American pastor, theologian, and Christian apologist.*

## News of the Church Family

The funeral service for Cynthia Bowker will be held at Crewe Crematorium at 10:45am on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April. Rev. Jennie Wakefield will be conducting the service. Current restrictions mean that a maximum of 30 people can attend the service. This means that attendance at the service is by invitation only please. Please continue to remember all Cynthia's family and friends in your prayers at this very sad time.

Donations in memory of Cynthia will be for Welcome Bap. Please make any cheques payable to Sandbach Baptist Church [with a note to say that the donation is in memory of Cynthia] and give them to our church treasurer, Ian Parsons.

Mana Llewellyn is delighted to announce the arrival of a new great grandson. Judah David was born on 18<sup>th</sup> April and weighed 8lbs 1oz. Mum and baby are doing well. Our warmest congratulations to all the family.

Alistair and Lynn 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 for the Church Family

**From Churches Together in Sandbach-** "Chance Changing Lives"- a story of help for homeless and disadvantaged people. Presentation on Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>- 7:30 p.m. on Zoom.

Those who are involved in projects like the Sandbach Foodbank and Lifeline are well aware of poverty and other difficulties locally. We may not be so aware of how things are in Crewe, which is quite close to home.

Over the past 3 years the charity "Chance Changing Lives" has been working to help tackle poverty and deprivation in Crewe. The Sandbach Justice and Peace Group has arranged for them to talk about their work on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

All are welcome at this meeting – to join us please email [wmarkthompson@gmail.com](mailto:wmarkthompson@gmail.com) and you will be sent the Zoom link.

**From Churches Together in Sandbach-** Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. A family quiz to raise money for Christian Aid. This will be a team-based quiz, with teams going in to 'Zoom break out rooms'. All are welcome. Ask your friends and family from around the country or even the world to make up a team with you.

To join the fun please email [karen.unitymc@gmail.com](mailto:karen.unitymc@gmail.com) with your team 'name' and an email address for the team captain, for sending the Zoom link. If you prefer we can put you in to a team. Donations for Christian Aid.

## **From Mark Thompson- Christian Aid Week 10<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - Sponsored bike ride**

As part of the Sandbach Christian Aid Group's fundraising this year, Mark Thompson plans to do a virtual bike ride in his garage at 81 Forge Fields, Wheelock, CW11 3<sup>RD</sup>.

He will ride one classic French mountain climb each day, starting at 9:30 am. (2:30 pm on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>). Total distance 170 km, climbing 8581 metres.

Spectators will be welcome on his drive (suitably distanced!) and refreshments will be available.

To sponsor him, scan the QR code on the poster attached to the newsletter or [use this link](#) to his fundraising page, where you will find more details.

This year the collection will help communities tackle the effects of the climate crisis.

## **From George Hill- Church Walks-**

We will announce more local Church Exercise Walks in due course. But to start with, we will take up a longer range suggestion by Mavis Watkinson that those who remember Brassey Green camping days will enjoy!

Meeting Point - the Shady Oak pub, 1 mile north of Beeston Castle. Park on the lane.  
Distance - about 20 miles from Sandbach.  
Date - Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May (the Bank Holiday weekend).  
Time - 10-30am, to walk at 11am after tea or coffee. Also bring a packed lunch.  
Distance - up to 7 miles, but several shorter options.  
Facilities - only at the pub.  
COVID - carry MASK & GLOVES. Walk in groups socially distanced. Do not gather.  
Directions - ask George Hill (07843 742512) for a traffic free route.  
Please tell George if you plan to go.

### **From BMS World Mission- Further update concerning the situation in Chad and our Church Partners, Brian and Jackie Chilvers.**

As you may be aware from the news, Chad experienced significant unrest over the weekend of 17/18 April resulting in the death of the President. The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has strongly advised that all UK personnel should leave Chad immediately and gave assistance in doing so.

We continue to be in touch with all BMS World Mission workers remaining in Chad, and all British Mission Personnel have left the country safely. [Brian and Jackie Chilvers arrived safely back in the UK a few days ago]. They would value your continued prayers for them and particularly for the hospital and the country in the coming weeks. You can get an update on the BMS website [here](#). [Press Ctrl and click].

Thank you for standing with us in this challenging time — and please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your generosity as a BMS Church Partner.

You can access the latest prayer letter from Brian and Jackie received a few days ago here- <https://www.bmsworldmission.org/people/brian-and-jackie-chilvers/>

### **From Alistair and the Leadership Team-**

Zoom Coffee - another chance to have coffee and a chat together online

DATE- Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May- 11:30 am

You are invited to join us at Zoom coffee for 45 minutes of fellowship, both all together and in smaller breakout groups. We start at 11:30 am and you can usually join from 11:20am. We really hope you can join us.

You can find details of how to join the meeting in the email newsletter.

If you have any questions, you can call Ian Parsons on 01270 759718 or 07711 995016, or Mark Thompson on 01270 750431 or 07522 628921.

### **SBC Recipe for April**

**From Lynn Mynett and Laurie Northam-** Having not been overwhelmed with enough recipe submissions to make up a book, we thought we would include a recipe in our newsletter once a month. Here's the first one for April-

Apple Cake- By Mavis Watkinson-

Ingredients:

2 eggs

100 ml veg oil eg sunflower

175g sugar  
275g plain flour  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
1 teaspoon bicarb  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
500g prepared diced apple

Set oven to 180 degrees.

Grease loaf tin.

Beat oil and eggs until foaming.

Add sugar, flour, cinnamon, bicarb, salt and vanilla.

Stir in apples.

Bake. Test with skewer after 45 min, may take up to 1½ hours.

Eat cold as a cake or warm with a dollop of crème fraiche.

### Church Groups- Week Beginning Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May

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

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

**Wednesday-** The Wednesday Morning Ladies' Fellowship meets by Zoom at 10:30am. They will consider some of the teaching of Jesus on The Kingdom of God - plus looking at Thomas and Peter - observing their self-disappointment and the way Christ lifted them and placed their feet on solid ground, to give them hope.

**Wednesday-** The Wednesday Evening Study Group meets by Zoom at 7:30pm.

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.

### And finally.....

'Feeling pretty proud of myself. The jigsaw puzzle I bought said 3-5 years. But I finished it in 18 months!'

### Contacts

Rev Alistair Stewart (Pastor): 01270 753663- [home] 07966 202913- [Church mobile phone]



## Sponsored bike ride

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\*\*\*\* Spectators welcome - refreshments served! \*\*\*\*

To sponsor him use the QR code or this link

<https://cutt.ly/NvnRBYP>



Rose walks 6 hours every day  
to collect water.  
What's a a little bike ride?

This year the collection will help communities tackle the  
effects of the climate crisis.