

MOTTINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH MESSENGER JANUARY 2019

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29 verse 11





THE QUESTION IS...

**What does
Christianity teach
about the possibility of
making a new start?**

The Christian faith teaches that a new start is endlessly possible. It is provided by a personal encounter with the risen and living Jesus Christ. He offers us the opportunity and the resources to make a new start, despite all our circumstances or failings.

The Bible records many encouraging examples of people who were able to start again after encountering Jesus. These include a woman caught in adultery who was facing execution by an outraged community, a hated tax collector named Zacchaeus who had been collaborating with the enemy, and Peter, the close friend of Jesus who publicly disowned him.

God's provision of a new start liberates people from the powerful hold that guilt, fear and memories of failure can have over a human. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus have made a way for humans to find God's forgiveness. A Christian is someone who has

accepted God's forgiveness and now has the freedom to reject the old habits of bitterness, anger or revenge, like disposing of a 'shabby old coat'. Many Christians describe this as such a new beginning that they feel like a different kind of life.

Forgiveness, however, is not the same as perfection. Although many Christians can look back to a specific time at which they made a decision to make a new start as a follower of the way of Jesus Christ, living up to a new way of being is an ongoing struggle. There is a frequent need to revisit and remember the new start. Church services almost always include a point at which worshippers are encouraged to think about recent failures, confess them, and ask for the mercy of God in absolute certainty that He will forgive.

The Bible describes God's promises of mercy as 'new every morning'. It is in the gracious nature of God that mistakes and failures are not a stick to be beaten with, but an opportunity to change into something better.



PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH.

HIS GRACE REALLY IS SUFFICIENT

Paul says in 2Corinthians 12:7-9 'To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."'

We cannot identify for certain the nature of Paul's 'thorn in the flesh'. It may have been a physical illness like malaria or problems with his eyesight. It could refer to the constant opposition to his ministry from those Jews who hated what he was doing. What we do know is that whilst Satan used it to give Paul a rough time, God used it to keep him humble in the midst of the wonderful revelations that had been granted to him.

Paul's instinctive response to the thorn is to ask God that it be removed. He persisted in prayer too, showing that he really expected God to deliver him. Prayer should also be our first response to crisis. Our belief is that God is able and willing to rescue us from any attack of the devil. However, in this case God in His wisdom chose not to deliver Paul from the thorn, but instead to pour His grace into his life in such a way that he could cope with the situation and continue to minister effectively.

Grace has been defined as 'God's strength in our weakness.' Whether or not God chooses to answer our prayers for healing or deliverance, we can always count on the daily supply of His empowering and enabling grace. There is no situation outside of His protective care, no need too big for His resources to match. Let your weakness be the opportunity for God's all-sufficient grace to sustain you. His power is waiting to strengthen you.

A Prayer: Lord, today I choose to lean on you, and to receive again your grace into my life.

DIARY OF CHURCH SERVICE PREACHERS

JANUARY 2019

Sunday 6th January at 10.30am – Messy Church New Year

This is preceded by breakfast at 9.30am.

Sunday 13th January at 10.30am – *Sue Cope*

Sunday 20th January at 10.30am – *Ralf Brandhorst*

Sunday 27th January at 4.00pm – *Songs of Praise*



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Prayer meeting

Wednesday 2nd January at 7.30pm: At the house of Eddie and Dallas Green.

Messy Church

Sunday 6th January at 10.30am: Theme - New Year

This is preceded by breakfast.

Good Companions

Tuesday 8th January at 10.30am: Sales table and raffle.

All Sorts Craft Group

Tuesday 22nd January at 10.30am for one hour.

Community Lunch

Every Wednesday at 12.30am **COMMENCING ON THE 16TH JANUARY**

Saturday Youth Club

Every Saturday from 7-10pm for 9-14 year olds

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES IN THE CHURCH

-  **1ST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10.30am:**
Messy Church - This is preceded by breakfast.
-  **1ST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7.30pm**
Prayer Meeting at Eddie and Dallas's home.
-  **2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10.30am**
Good Companions.
-  **4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10.30 - 11.30am**
All Sorts Craft Group.
-  **EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 12.30pm**
Community Lunch.
-  **EVERY SATURDAY FROM 7 - 10pm**
Saturday Youth Club - for 9 - 14 year olds.

SUNDAY 13TH JANUARY

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service:

This will take place at 3.00pm in St Edwards Church, 35 St Keverne Road, with Kimmeridge Road, Mottingham, London SE9 4AQ

! *Looking ahead*

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council will meet in the church building on Thursday 21st February at 7.30pm.

FRIDAY 1ST MARCH

Women's World Day of Prayer: 11.00am in St Edwards Church followed by the Community Lunch.



ONCE A MONTH CONGREGATION CALLED MESSY CHURCH

Our Christmas themes:

Where is Jesus? and Who is Jesus?



1. Where is Jesus? is asked three times in the Christmas story - the shepherds asked the question, the wise men asked the question and Herod asked the question. The answer to all three was 'In Bethlehem'.

GOD
ROCK
SAVIOR
MESSIAH
IMMANUEL
HOLY • CHILD
MIGHTY • GOD
LORD • OF • ALL
LAMB • OF • GOD
CHRIST • OF • GOD
KING • OF • KINGS
THE • WORD • OF • GOD
ALPHA • AND • OMEGA
PRINCE • OF • PEACE
LIGHT • OF • THE • WORLD
HEAD • OF • THE • CHURCH
SON • OF • THE • HIGHEST
EVERLASTING • FATHER
RESURRECTION • AND • LIFE
JESUS

2. Who is Jesus? The Angels told the shepherds that He was Christ the Lord. The wise men called Him the King of the Jews. We looked at the many other names the Bible gives to Jesus and chose names to put on stars for the Christmas tree to remind us who Jesus is and made lamps as a reminder that He is called the light of the world.





THINKING ABOUT THE PSALMS

Paul Hardingham continues to look at one of the best-loved books in the Bible.

PSALM 139 - God knows you better than you know yourself

Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space in 1961, reportedly said 'I looked and looked but I didn't see God.' Psalm 139 sees things from a very different perspective, in which God can be found everywhere in the universe.

GOD IS ALL KNOWING: 'You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.' (verse 1). God knows my thoughts, habits, moods, words and choices, including the things done in secret. He knows me better than I know myself, and yet still loves me, despite my faults and failings! 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me.' (verse 6).

GOD IS ALL PRESENT: 'Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?' (verse 7). In whatever circumstances we face, God is present with us, especially in the dark and difficult times. If we know the path to God, we can find it in the dark!

GOD IS ALL POWERFUL: 'For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.' (verses 13 and 14). Both the vastness of the universe and the wonder of the growing embryo in the womb speak of the power of the creator God. We can trust Him because He knows our beginning and end and everything in-between: 'all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.' (verse 16).

How do we respond to what this psalm says? Are we prepared to constantly expose our inner life to God and consistently yield our whole life to Him? 'Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' (verses 23 and 24).



PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN NORTH KOREA

It is estimated that around 70,000 Christian believers are in North Korean prison camps. North Korea remains at the top of the Open Doors World Watch List as the country where it is most difficult to be a Christian. The sanctions imposed on North Korea were as much to do with human rights as their nuclear programme

**'BLESSED IS THE NATION
WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD'
(PSALM 33 VERSE 12)**

During the coming New Year, let these words form the basis for our daily

personal prayers for our country... and for the political leadership in the wake of all that has been taking place in the closing weeks of last year. Expand the prayers to take in the conflicts, dilemmas and disasters that seem to engulf the world. For, as the French philosopher Jaques Ellul once observed - "It is prayer, and prayer alone that can make history."

Try to take in the stupendous influence of a Christian's prayer! It lies out of all proportion to that residing in any other belief-system. It is the supremely God-given appointed way by which we co-operate with heaven's will. A single family of believers can touch an entire street. One praying church can ignite the surrounding township.

In 'England covering the years 1870-1914,' RCK Ensor commented that no one will understand 19th century England who ignores the influence exerted by a small group of lay business people from the Anglican church of Holy Trinity Clapham. The 'Clapham Sect' (as they were dubbed) were a

single group of believing men and women from whose alliance stemmed the formation of the East India Company, the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and others.

Ensor comments, 'If one asks how 19th-century English merchants earned the reputation of being the most honest in the world (a very real factor in the prominence of English trade), the answer is: Because hell and heaven seemed as certain to the Group as tomorrow's sunrise, and the Last Judgment as real as the week's balance sheet.' Ensor continues: 'All the Clapham friends rose early to meet the Lord through Bible study and prayer. Perhaps here is the final secret of their achievement.'

Indeed it certainly must be - if God is ever once more to occupy centre place among us all.

Adapted from Richard Bewes

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a note book at the rear of the Church for your use if you or someone you know would like to be remembered in prayer by the Church whether anonymously or by name.

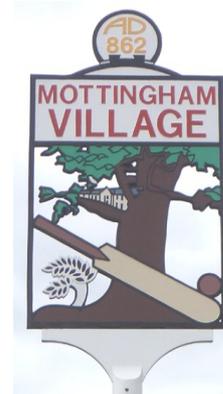
If it's easier to leave a note please do leave it in an envelope in the Church.

WE PRAY FOR

Terry Wright
 Maureen and her partner, Roy
 and the family
 James
 Janet
 The Community Lunch
 The Children's Saturday Club
 Messy Church
 Good companions and the Craft
 Group

IN AND AROUND MOTTINGHAM

MOTTINGHAM LIBRARY IN JANUARY



Bromley and Greenwich Councillors' Surgeries:

Bromley: 6.45-8.00pm on the first Tuesday of the month.

Greenwich: 7-8pm on the last Friday of the month.



COFFEE MORNING

Wednesday 9th January 10.30-12 noon

Camilla Goddard of Capital Bees will be joining us to talk about the fascinating world of bees



ARMCHAIR WALK WITH CHRIS

Friday 18th January 6.15-7.30pm

Giraffes, George IV and a Chinese Junk! Come for an armchair walk in Regent's Park



NEW ELTHAM METHODIST CHURCH, INVITES YOU TO ACTIVITIES IN THEIR CHURCH:

435 Footscray Road, London SE9 3UL; 020 8850 2960;
www.necp.org.uk; necpneweltham@yahoo.co.uk;

Trolls - A 'SATURDAY FAMILY FILM

19th January 2019 at 3.00 pm

Running time: 1 hour 32 minutes. Films are for children and families, so all children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. The film itself is free, and refreshments will be available for a small charge.

Seven Pounds A FILM NIGHT Starring Academy Award Winner

Will Smith

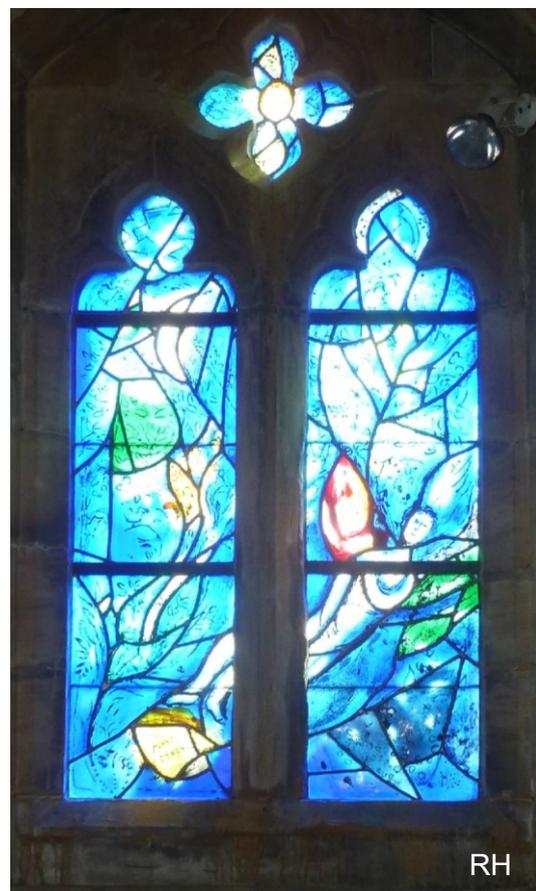
Wednesday 9th January at 7.00 pm

BEAUTY ON OUR DOORSTEP – A SECRET TREASURE IN KENT

On a narrow road between Tonbridge and Five Oaks Green in Kent is a beautiful little Church called All Saints' Tudeley. It is the only church in the world to have all its twelve windows decorated by the great Russian Jewish artist Marc Chagall. The Tudeley windows are inspired, said Chagall, by the words of Psalm 8, especially verses 4-8: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas."

The only other Chagall glass in Britain is a window at Chichester Cathedral, which is based on the theme of Psalm 150: 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord'

Examples of two of the windows:



MOTTINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

CONTACT:

The Minister: Revd. Terry Wright

Telephone: 01689 822518

Please Note: The minister's normal day off is a Friday

ADDRESS: 62 Mottingham Road, Mottingham, SE9 4QR

THE CHURCH WEB SITE:

Church information is available on the WEB site

Log in to: <http://www.mottinghammethodistchurch.org.uk>.

THE CHURCH AND CHURCH HALL FOR HIRE

Mobile Contact: 07757 717399



We are members of Parish Pump and The Association of Church Editors, two groups which provide material for Church Magazines.

Our Messy Church is registered with the Official Messy Church organisation