

# FAITH MATTERS

## Are we ready to advance

As we've studied the early church in the book of Acts we've learnt of a church 'unleashed'. The church was unleashed as family, as servant, in power, as herald, as organisation, as sign and as disciples. We've considered how we compare to the early church and how we fulfil the mission that we have been given.

Paul Hudson has shared 'The Sounds of Life' pg4, sounds that led to transformation and mobilisation. Are we ready for the advance? We have been called by name. Are we ready to say 'Yes'? My prayer is that we take up a new position and advance.

Pastor John.

## Keeping in touch

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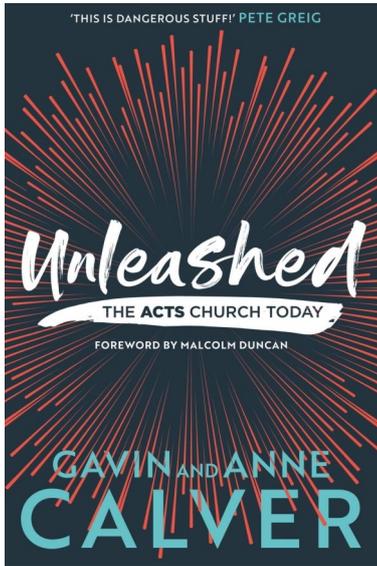
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## Inside this issue

The Church Unleashed ..	2
The Church Unleashed cont. ....	3
The Prayer of a New Sound .....	3
Saturday Smiles .....	4
Throwback Thursday .....	4
Elim Family Festival—Paul Hudson .....	4
Leadership Update.....	5
Children's Church/SYC....	5
And Finally.....	6





## The Church Unleashed

Last month we looked at the Church unleashed as family and we have continued the study throughout July at our Wednesday reflection.

Unleashed as Servant - Jesus gave us the model not just of one that preached the Good News, but also one that lived and demonstrated it. After returning from the wilderness, whilst in the synagogue, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 as an ex-

ample of what his mission was. The Church is called to follow the example of Jesus, unleashed to be a servant to the world, and minister to those around us in their brokenness and pain. Jesus himself said that he had come not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 13:1-17).

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*“When the Church was formed in the book of Acts, it was designed to be unleashed on society to make God’s kingdom known.” Are we still that Church today?*

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### Current Programme

**Sunday 11 am**  
Sunday Stream on Facebook

**Tuesday 7.30pm**  
Prayer Meeting via Zoom

**Wednesday 7.30pm**  
Reflections via Zoom

**Thursday**  
Throwback Thursday

**Saturday**  
Saturday Bible Smiles

**Mon to Fri**  
Daily Devotionals

Unleashed in Power - In both Jesus’ ministry and the early Church, the occurrence of miraculous events and signs was a key characteristic. God uses the miraculous to bear witness to himself. This had a twofold effect. First, the miracles point to Jesus’ divinity and his power over the natural order of things. Secondly, these signs demonstrate heaven meeting earth as the Kingdom of God comes in Jesus and the power of the Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost on all the apostles and disciples and has continued through the years and is still evident today. The Gift of the Spirit is promised to all who believe (Acts 2:38-39). This isn’t a ‘one time only’ experience but we are to keep on being filled. The power of the Holy Spirit is given to us for witnessing to others through signs and wonders done in the name of Jesus. It’s not to be confined within the walls of the church but to be ‘unleashed’ in society.

Unleashed as Herald - The Church has a message to proclaim and in Acts the early Church proclaimed and preached the good news of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. The apostles and disciples spoke about Jesus, proclaimed the Gospel and invited others to come and worship him. We are called to do the same.

## The Church Unleashed cont.

Unleashed as Organization - The early Church soon realized in Acts 6:1-7 that structure and organization was required to meet the needs which were presented to them. The Church unleashed as organization isn't about confining and limiting the dynamic nature of God but about creating flows and systems that allow the Holy Spirit to do His work.

Unleashed as Sign - The Church can be a sign of the love and grace of God in the world. This is more than just talking about it but demonstrating it within the work and life of the Church as a witness to those in the world who don't know what God is like. Where the Church shows holiness, love, grace and forgiveness, and compassion the world sees the love of God in action.

Unleashed as Disciple - In Jesus' time there were many rabbis who gathered disciples around them to teach them the scriptures, help them to understand what they meant and how they were to live them out. There was a phrase within the Jewish tradition that talked about the disciples being covered in the dust from the shoes of the rabbis they followed. Today's Church should also be a community of disciples, a group of people who are committed to journeying alongside one another, learning from each other, encouraging and challenging one another. We are called to follow Jesus so closely, learning from all that he has shown is in his life, death and resurrection that we would be 'covered in the dust from his shoes'.



### The Prayer of a New Sound

Our Lord Jesus Christ we want to move not drift.

We want to step into purpose and not be stuck in the default.

Renew us for radical mission. Reform us to unlock the possibilities.

We commit to the pathway of the Gospel. We commit to carrying the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We come down from the victorious mountain to the valley of compassion and as we do we ask for the renewal of the five fold ministries so the lives of men and women, young and old, are equipped and the body of Christ is built.

We are in times of clarity so open our eyes. Urgency so open our doors. Flexibility so open our stubborn hearts. Opportunity so open our understanding.

This is your time,

This is harvest time.

This is the Spirit time.

This is our time and we are ready to change, ready for a new kingdom positioning and we are ready for the advance. You call us by name and we say Yes to your call. Amen

Paul Hudson

## Saturday Bible Smiles

Q. Who was the fastest runner in the race?

A. Adam. He was first in the human race.

Q. Why didn't Noah ever go fishing?

A. He only had two worms.

Q. Who is the greatest babysitter mentioned in the Bible?

A. David — he rocked Goliath to a very deep sleep.

Q. On the Ark, Noah probably got milk from the cows. What did he get from the ducks?

A. Quackers.

## Throwback Thursday

During July on Facebook we have cast our minds back to our church trip to Preston Park in 2018. It was a great time of fun and fellowship. The kids enjoyed the play park and we all loved the museum. Temi and Christabel both showed off their skipping prowess.



## Elim Family Festival—Paul Hudson



From 24th to 26th July Elim's Family Festival moved online. The weekend was action packed with worship, stories, bible studies, challenges, quizzes, devotionals and even an open mic night. Speakers included Mike Reid, Mark Greenwood, John Bullock, Tim Cobham and Lynda Heron.

Paul Hudson (our regional superintendent) spoke on Sunday morning on 'The Sounds of Life'. He quoted John 18 v 27. Did the sound of a rooster always remind Peter of his impetuosity? Was it to be forever a sound of denial?

The sound of the rooster can also signal a new day, new beginning. Jesus took Peter's brokenness and transformed him into a great leader.

Genesis 3 v 8&9, the sound of the Lord calling man to intimacy with Him. Long before we sought Him, he called to us. Ezekiel 37, Ezekiel prophesied leading to the sound of dry bones coming together. We need the sound of the prophetic over our church to change it's atmosphere. Come oh Breath of God, transform our post lockdown church.

## Leadership Team Update

We thank God for His financial provision and for your continued financial support. July Offerings £3355.09 Expenditure £4222.58. The work on the roof can begin in 4-6 weeks although we still have a significant shortfall. Please pray into this.

Progress has been made towards recommencing gathering together on Sunday 6th Sept. Numbers will be limited with a new format but we eagerly look forward to seeing people face to face, albeit behind a mask. Thanks to those that helped clean so far. There is still work to be done which is continuing throughout August. Serving opportunities are numerous and varied, please get in touch: stewards, cleaners, pastoral support, online ministry, sound room etc.

Holiday season is upon us, even if most of us are staying at home. Pastor John is away from Sunday 9th to Sat 22nd Aug. Please use the Church mobile number 07387775011 if you need to get in touch.



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*“God loves each of us as if there were only one of us” – Augustine*

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## Children’s Church and SYC

It’s been great connecting with our children and young people through audio, pictures, videos and Zoom calls.

Children’s Church has been learning about Joshua leading the Israelites and the fall of Jericho. We have been learning some new songs during worship time. We have also been sending out to Children’s Church, activities and reflections mid-week for the children to join in with.

July saw SYC looking at God’s power at work in the book of Acts, from Paul’s conversion to the miraculous ‘jail break’. The weekly ‘Comfy Chair’ feature has continued, including amazing contributions from our young people and the congregation. We are looking forward to the amazing opportunities available to us online such as Limitless Festival and Couch Kairos (for Kairos Christian Youth Camp 2020).



Elim Pentecostal Church Sunderland

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We passionately believe that God has a plan and purpose for you He loves you and wants you to come to know him through Jesus. We are a Christian community for all generations and nationalities.

We would love to hear from you too, so please send in any news, stories, prayer requests or praise reports.

Thank You..

## And Finally...

Kindness provides a house, but love makes a home. Kindness provides an adequate lunch. but love puts a note of encouragement inside. Kindness sends a child to bed on time, but love tucks the covers in and provides a goodnight kiss. Kindness cooks a meal, but love lights the candles. Kindness writes a thank you note, but love includes a bookmark or similar gift. Kindness keeps a house clean and tidy, but love provides a bunch of flowers. Kindness pours a glass of milk, but love leaves a biscuit.

Kindness is doing what is decent, basic, courteous, and necessary for an even, smooth and gentle flow of life

Love is taking the extra step to make life truly exciting, creative, and meaningful. Love is what makes things special

Elim Pentecostal Church  
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