

FAITH MATTERS

Spring's Arrived

For behold the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth again. The time for singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. (Song of Solomon 2: 11-12.) I'm sure we all love the spring when new life is beginning to show on trees, in hedgerows, in gardens and roadside verges it really does make you want to burst out in song! If we feel like that about the wonders of nature how much more will be our rejoicing when new life breaks through in the lives of those who are "dead in sin" (Ephesians 2:1.) Over the coming weeks we shall be praying and working to announce the Really Good News of the new life that's available in Jesus to our city and families. We shall be using the wonders of modern technology to do this. So join with us to see new life break out.

Every Blessing

EPCS Leadership Team

Keeping in touch

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Inside this issue

Current Programme.....	2
The King and The Kingdom.....	2/3
Glorious Day	3
Alpha	4/5
What is Easter?.....	5
Upcoming Events	6
The Church Building.....	6
Breaking News.....	6
Foodbank.....	6
Engage Prayer.....	6
The Church Building.....	6
March Daily Verses.....	6
Finance	7
Children's Church./SYC.....	7
And Finally.....	8





The King and the Kingdom

Week 5 in our The King and the Kingdom series was entitled 'Upside down Kingdom'.

Matthew 8:1-13.

Healing of the Leper. Classed as unclean and imperfect and not allowed to enter the Temple courts or be anywhere near civilisation. But what does Jesus do, turns the rules

upside down and not only speaks with him but touches him! "Go show yourself to the priest." Jesus is in the restoration business.

Healing of Centurion's Servant. An even bigger shock was to come as Jesus helps and heals a Gentile, a powerful prophetic gesture that this kingdom is for all.

*"Love your enemies" and "pray for those that persecute you" - that's **responding** with kingdom life not **reacting**.*

Current Programme

Sunday

11am Published on Facebook and YouTube

12noon After Service Catch Up Zoom.

Wednesday 7.30pm

14th Reflections

21st Alpha Online

Mon to Fri

Daily Devotion from 12th

April (Facebook Page)

Daily Verse (Text)

Saturday

Weekend Worship

Please get in touch for more details

Healing of Peter's mother in law. The shocks keep coming, v14 Jesus heals a woman! Hang on this was a man's world and a Jewish man at that! Jesus in his authority as the anointed one, the King and Messiah, ploughs through the traditions of man to demonstrate the kingdom life he brings.

Matthew 19:13-20.

Blessing of the children. Here we go again. Jesus is cutting across Jewish rules and regulations to bless children and bring to them the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 21:12-17.

Jesus throws the money changers out of the temple. Jesus enters the Temple and turns out those doing business there, money changers, animal sellers and others. With authority, his cry is out! With that cry He is not only condemning the corrupt actions of the sellers desecrating the house of the Lord, he is declaring three things.

- The old ways are finished.
- There is no more need of animal sacrifices.
- He has the authority to do this as Messiah.

The King and the Kingdom

Week 6: Kingdom Citizens. Responsibilities

Judges 21:25 In today's world the individual is king and everyone does 'what is right in their own eyes'. Real kingdom community is very different from the norm since it's what God thinks that counts.

Matthew 7: 13-23

The Narrow Gate. Matthew 7 v 13-14 reminds us that there is more than one gate. Jerusalem has several gates, some wide for traffic, others with steps so that only pedestrians could use, others so narrow pedestrians would have to wait their turn. Jesus warns about going with the flow, don't let the current of life and people take you where it will, or you'll miss the narrow gate. John 14 v 6 Jesus said "I AM THE WAY...."

False Prophets. v 15. Watch out! v 16- 20. Teaches us how to recognise them. v 21-23. Their end!

Matthew 16: 13-19

Jesus' Question. "Who am I" We need to understanding who Jesus is.

Peter's Declaration. Matthew 16: 15-16. Brave statement?

Jesus' Response. 16: 17-20. Kingdom citizens have the power to bring heaven to earth!

Matthew 18 v 21-35

Challenge of Forgiveness. A reminder that if they wanted forgiveness they had to be prepared to forgive.

Jesus uses the teaching technique of 'hyperbole' (extreme exaggeration) in order to convey the absolute importance of key kingdom principles such as forgiveness, and hearing and obeying God's will.

The way citizens of the Kingdom treat one another, and the rest of God's children, takes up so much space in the Bible that it's clearly of paramount importance to God.

What, in practical terms, does it mean to you, not just to have a relationship with Jesus but to be in His Kingdom?

Glorious Day

I was buried beneath my shame
Who could carry that kind of weight
It was my tomb
Till I met You

I was breathing, but not alive
All my failures I tried to hide
It was my tomb, yeah
Till I met You

You called my name
And I ran out of that grave
Out of the darkness
Into Your glorious day

Now Your mercy has saved my soul
Now Your freedom is all that I know
The old made new
Jesus, when I met You

I needed rescue
My sin was heavy
But chains break at the weight of Your
glory
I needed shelter
I was an orphan
Now You call me a citizen of heaven
When I was broken
You were my healing
Now Your love is the air that I'm breath-
ing
I have a future
My eyes are open

'Cause when You called my name
I ran out of that grave
Out of the darkness
Into Your glorious day

Songwriters: Jonathan Smith, Jason
Ingram, Kristian Stanfill, Sean Curran



Alpha is coming.....

Questions, questions everywhere but not a space to think.

So many people have questions regarding spirituality, faith, purpose; especially since the outbreak of a worldwide pandemic.

Alpha is a chance to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment.

Alpha provides a space where people can get together with others, online, to watch a series of short episodes covering some of the big questions

around the Christian faith such as Who is Jesus?, How and why do people pray? And What's the meaning of life?

There is then the opportunity to chat over their own thoughts and opinions.

Alpha is for those who have questions, for those who don't know what to believe, for those who have explored faith before and for those who have never given such matters a thought.

Alpha is for anyone who has yet to find Jesus.

Quotes

Mark 16: 15

He said to them, " Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

1 Peter 3: 15

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

Billy Graham

"Our faith becomes stronger as we express it; a growing faith is a sharing faith"

So how does it work.

Alpha Online: On 21st April at 7.30 pm we will be starting an online alpha course running until 7th July, via zoom. Currently there are over 150 Elim churches signed up to simultaneously run the course. Those we invite will complete the registration form on our website www.sunderlandelim.org.uk

We will then send them a link and password to a dedicated zoom session which they'll join each Wednesday evening. We will also be sending them a welcome pack with resources and some treats.

On the evening we will spend time saying hi and getting to know each other a little. We then watch that evenings video together before breaking into smaller groups for at time of discussion.

This a fantastic opportunity to share Jesus with family friends so



Alpha is coming.....

Each week's topics are shown below

- 21 Apr **Is there more to life than this?**
- 28 Apr **Who is Jesus?**
- 05 May **Why did Jesus die?**
- 12 May **How can I have faith?**
- 19 May **Why and how should I pray?**
- 26 May **Why and how should I read the Bible?**
- 02 Jun **How does God guide us?**
- 09 Jun **How can I make the most of the rest of my life?**
- 16 Jun **How can I resist evil?**
- 19 Jun **Holy Spirit (Saturday morning)**
- 23 Jun **Why and how should I tell others?**
- 30 Jun **Does God heal today?**
- 07 Jul **What about church**

How else can you help.

As well as needing you to invite people we need prayer warriors. For Alpha to succeed, we need it to be saturated in prayer. We would love to have a team of people who we know are praying fervently for this project and the guests we encounter. We would send you prayer points each week and ask you to pray on Wednesday evenings, wherever you may be during each session.

For those with online access, we would then link you with Elim Prayer. Elim Prayer will be working alongside REACH to pray and intercede for Alpha, every church, team and attendee - every week that it is running. We are asking EVERY church who has signed up to recommend a Prayer Leader.

Dave and Sue Hanratty from the Elim Prayer Team will be overseeing this team.

We would like to thank those who responded to our earlier calls to join the team running the online sessions. We have already had 2 planning and training sessions which have been really great.

What is Easter?

It's not about the eggs to hunt. It's not about a bunny, It's not about brand new clothes or candies sweet as honey.

On this day many years ago, a man named Jesus Christ, upon a cross for you and me, gladly gave His life.

Not for sins that He had done or crimes that He must pay. He did it all for you and me, for our sins He died that day.

But that's not the end of Jesus Christ, they put him in a grave. But three days later He rose again, our sin debt had finally been paid.

So this Easter as you hunt for eggs, dressed up in brand new clothes. Don't think about the Easter bunny, think about why Christ arose.

Anonymous

A Selection of March Daily Verses

Blessed be the God and
Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who has blessed us
with every spiritual blessing
in the heavenly places
in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3

The steadfast of mind you
will keep in perfect peace,
because he trusts in You.

Isaiah 26: 3

But you, beloved, building
yourselves up on your
most holy faith, praying in
the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves
in the love of God.

Jude 1:20-21

Upcoming Events:

Visiting Speakers: This Easter we
have ...

Easter Services:

Good Friday 7pm on Facebook/
YouTube

Kids' Service Sat 3rd 2pm in
building

Easter Sunday 11am on Face-
book/YouTube

Easter Sunday 6pm on Facebook/
YouTube Canon J John presents
the Gospel with guests including
Bear Grylls and Graham Kendrick

Alpha Team Training : Sat 10th
April, at 15th May and Sat 12th
June from 10am—12 noon.

Alpha Online: On 21st April we
will be starting an online alpha
course running until 7th July.

Ladies save the date:

Aspire conference Saturday 26th
June, Coventry Elim.

EXCITING BREAKING NEWS....

As Alpha will be taking place on Wednesday evenings, we need to move the prayer meeting to a Saturday morning at 8am. Please look out for the first Zoom link starting Saturday 17th April.

The Church Building

Consultation between the management board at Elim Headquarters and various contractors are ongoing. A big thank you to Tracy, Emma and Lauren who have painted the Porch and Front Entrance.

Foodbank

Once again the Foodbank has been blessed by the generosity of local churches, individuals and businesses. Aldi at Millfield collected easter eggs, only a fraction of which are shown below. A big thank you to David, Margaret, Alyson and Chizenge who are having a well deserved rest next Tuesday.



Finance

March Income £3244 Expenditure £1806.51

Can we please ask that you prayerfully consider your giving? Some of our members have set up standing orders for which we are thankful. If you are a member or regular attender and are not giving currently due to not being able to attend, could please get in touch so we can look at alternatives.

Children's Church and Sunday Youth Church

March has been a month full of blessings from Our Lord. In our Children's Church WhatsApp group and our monthly Zoom lesson, we have studied the Fruits of the Spirit as well as the woman anointing Jesus, the Last Supper and His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied each week with worship videos from Emma and Lauren. Our wonderful parents keep us informed of the amazing ways our children are worshipping and it is a blessing to hear how they are growing in their relationships with the Lord.

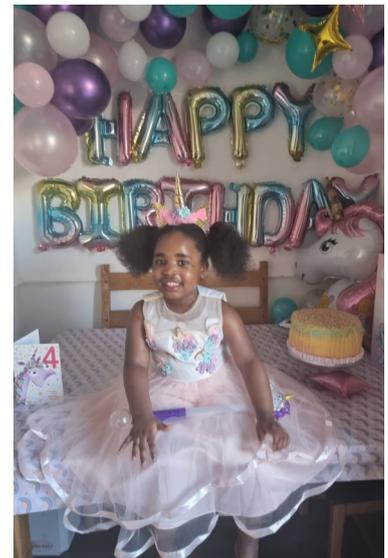
In SYC, we are enjoying our new programme including fortnightly fun-packed Zoom sessions, and study videos from our own Elim Limitless. As mentioned last month, we asked our young people, what changes, if any, they would

like to SYC. They reported they prefer our online SYC sessions which mirror those which we had in the building prior to Covid, as it means they can interact with each other and the leaders. This month our studies have included examining more Fruits of the Spirit and overcoming limitations, including overcoming fear, self-doubt and labels.

This coming Easter weekend, we are praying many of our families will be able to join us in our Children's Service. We will have some socially distant fun, playing games from our seats, listening to a bible story and worshipping our Lord by writing prayers, playing instruments and dancing.

Please continue to pray that our Lord gives them His peace and protection.

"For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?"
Luke 14:28



Elim Pentecostal Church
Sunderland

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..

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my son, Matthew, spoke up from his relaxed position in his seat. "Mom, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant he had been pondering some fact for a while, and was now ready to expound all that his six-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"The rain," he began, "is like sin, and the windshield wipers are like God wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms I was able to respond. "That's really good, Matthew."

Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little boy take this revelation? So I asked.. "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Without hesitation he answered "We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us"

Brenda Hunter

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