

The Bigger Picture

Doing Church Differently

3rd May 2020

Word for the week

Words of wisdom from our Pastor, Mike....

What do you do at 8.00 pm on a Thursday? Have you bought into this new tradition of standing on the doorstep to clap NHS workers? I tried it for a couple of weeks at our end of Longfellow Road but there were very few people joining in. Then, I switched to clapping outside the church in Meredith Road. There were no less than 7 other people with MRBC connections as well as other enthusiastic neighbours.

I grew up in West London but supported a football team in East London. I used to travel from Wembley to West Ham to be 'forever blowing bubbles.' It was a regular occurrence to observe a minute's silence before a match to honour someone who had died. The silence has now been replaced by 60 seconds applause.

It was unheard of to clap during a service in the first church I attended. In stark contrast, at Meredith Road, we need little prompting to burst into spontaneous applause to show our appreciation for a particular item in the service, if not my sermon!



Psalm 47 begins, 'Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. How awesome is the Lord Most High, the great king over all the earth!' God is currently humbling all the nations and we should pray that, increasingly, they will clap to God with cries of joy because of his deliverance from the pandemic.

It is always appropriate for a Christian to demonstrate their appreciation of the awesome God who ultimately controls his world. So, next time you're clapping on a Thursday evening, why not point your hands upwards for a few moments to acknowledge the greatness of Almighty God.

Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of The Bigger Picture.

We hope you are able to use the reflections, worship songs and prayer pointers, during the week, to draw closer to God.

May you know God's love and presence through this week.

Mike & Sharon

Get Involved

Sunday 3rd May

10:30am - *Worship and Praise* - the title of Mike's short talk will be, 'David's Deep Disappointment' based on 2 Samuel 12: 15-23

Mike's sermon for today is now available on YouTube <https://youtu.be/pNTFfA5dnZk>.

Sunday 10th May

10.30am - *Worship & Praise* - a church gathering on Zoom, including, a short talk by Mike, and songs chosen and led by Marinella.

Thursday 7th May – FAST & PRAY

Waiting for God's Deliverance

10.30am - *Encounter* - Mike will lead a Bible study on Psalm 40, followed by open prayer.

2:30pm - *Encounter pt2* - Mike will continue the study of Psalm 40, followed by open prayer.

During the afternoon consider prayer walking your local area, praying for your neighbours.

6.30pm - *Communion* - we break the fast together, with prayer, singing, and Communion.

Prayer Challenge

For those who dare to go deeper with God

Fast & Pray

*"Jehoshaphat resolved to enquire of the Lord,
and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah."*

2 Chronicles 20:3

The Old Testament is littered with examples of the people of Israel seeking God by fasting.

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that few Christians practice on a regular basis.

Fasting is voluntarily giving up food, or something you spend time enjoying everyday, to give more time for spiritual matters.

Anyone who has tried making the sacrifice entailed in fasting, to spend time with God, will know the heightened sense of his presence you experience.

If you haven't fasted before then the challenge for this week is to try it.

[Please only fast from food if it is medically safe for you to do so].

Praying as Jesus Prayed

In this series we look at the prayer Jesus taught his disciples. This week we consider what Jesus meant by.....

Give us this day our daily bread

We may consider bread as representing food but it can be extended to cover all of our daily necessities. God wants us to rely on him and is interested in every part of life, no matter how mundane or small. So in this first petition of the prayer, we are asking God to supply us with our basic needs, expressing our reliance on God to sustain us and provide for us.

We can take this further, to thank God for all he provides, and to pray for people who are struggling to put food on the table and clothe their children.

We must also consider, "...It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matt 4:4)

Is fasting for today?

Matthew 6:16 says, 'When you fast...', not *if* you fast, but *when* you fast.

In Acts 13 and 14 we hear that the Apostles looked for God to guide them in important decisions, through prayer and fasting.

And in Matthew 9:15, Jesus says of his followers, 'Then they *will* fast'. So we believe fasting wasn't just for the Old Testament times, or for while Jesus was on earth, but for all followers of Christ.

*God has called us to pray and fast.
We invite you to join us in a day of prayer and
fasting on Thursday 7th May 2020*

City Prayer and Praise

City Praise and Prayer is going online!

On Sunday 3rd May at 6pm, tune in to join hundreds of believers from churches across Coventry to pray for our city and beyond during this time. Including prayer times lead by Bishop Christopher Cocksworth, Father Tom Farrell and other church leaders, City Praise and Prayer Online will be a chance to worship and pray in our homes whilst being part of a city-wide 'united church'.

Log on from 5.45pm, ready to start at 6pm. You can subscribe to the YouTube channel by following this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7QluipNIFQmZUJOJEpVueA/>

The Bible is the written 'word of God' but God also speaks to us directly and through 'the word made flesh', Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.



A daily input from God is as important to our wellbeing as eating properly. We plan our days around meal times but I wonder how many of us plan our days around times of prayer and Bible reading, or engage with God as often as we eat.

So when you pray at the start of everyday, thank God for all he provides, acknowledge your need for him in every part of your life, and ask him to feed your spirit.

The Lord's Prayer by Bethel

https://youtu.be/ln9Ls_flqe0

Prayer & Praise for the Week

Prayer Pointers

This week let us pray for

- Sunday** people you know who don't know God yet.
- Monday** Sarah and Stuart as they plan their wedding, find the right date, and that the people they really want are able to attend . Pray that they may have the strength and patience needed at this time.
- Tuesday** healing for Sarah, with particular attention to her ear.
- Wednesday** the Girls Brigade, for those who lead the groups, the girls, and their families. This week please pray for the Seniors/Brigaders Maren, Eva, Teagan, Dawn, Carris, Sapphi.
- Thursday** our day of prayer and fasting that God might show us how to wait patiently for his deliverance.
- Friday** the beauty of God's wonderful creation. Let us wholeheartedly thank God.
- Saturday** the nation, for God's forgiveness and healing—pray 'thy Kingdom come'.



Family Worship

On the MRBC website there are resources for families who want to worship together in a creative way.

I have designed it so you can have a service style time with your family. However, if it suits you better, pick out the items which work for your family.

This week the theme is *Being Obedient*.

<http://www.mrb-church.org.uk/children-and-families-on-sunday/>

"We will serve the Lord our God and obey him "

(Joshua 24:24)

Sing Your Praises to the LORD

A week of worship from our worship leader, Helen.

As we see the rainbow pictures in windows, we know that the rainbow also reminds us of God's promises.



Hebrews 10:23

'Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.'

Psalms 145:13

'The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving towards all he has made.'

A blessing written by Malcolm Duncan...

May you be given boldness to lay hold of God's promises. When life seems uncertain, may you be reminded of the hope that is given to all who trust in Christ. May you remember that God is faithful to His promises and has promised to stand with you always. God is near

#niteblessing

From the breaking of the dawn

<https://youtu.be/3l8RVhxndYg>

Goodness of God

<https://youtu.be/-f4MUUMWMV4>

The Lord's my shepherd

<https://youtu.be/pN4tPkX0MG0>

I love you Lord https://youtu.be/9C_x1o8SkyE

Yes and amen https://youtu.be/Cm_u9BjxahA

Christ in me <https://youtu.be/G-oHB5JbmMY>

Faithful One <https://youtu.be/u2QlulksE-E>

YouTube playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMi5DjDeCY9B0hR6p0FUQO6HHUnWqYYSq>

Spotify playlist

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4lV3Pz6O0DCK3lOWV7FpIH?si=vhUaYo6GTUWKH8FYQQnzxg>

