

MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—MAY 2020



Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for May

Dear Friends,

I'm sure we've all had the experience of having a song in our heads that just won't go away. It's sometimes referred to as a brain worm. At the moment, the chorus of the Christian song writer

Graham Kendrick song "**For this I have Jesus**" comes into my head over and over even though I have neither heard it nor sung it in church for a long time.



I looked up the song to remind myself of the verses, and was amazed at how appropriate they are for the time we are in. Kendrick was prompted to write it after recalling a conversation with an elderly Christian he knew. This friend had a *"simple but profound saying that he would apply whatever came his way, whether challenge or tragedy: **for this I have Jesus**"*.

The song encapsulates perfectly what Jesus offers. No matter what comes our way, good or bad, **Jesus is only a prayer away**. If we let him, through his grace he will help us make sense of every emotion. So when I am reflecting with sadness on how life has suddenly changed; when I lie awake wondering and worrying about my family; when I'm missing my grandchildren; when I read or hear the stark reality of the latest news - I have Jesus to turn to.

May we all know the love, encouragement, comfort and reassurance of Jesus.

With love and best wishes to you all,

Sharon Joddrell



PS If you have access to the internet, I would really encourage you to look up this song. You'll find the words and be able to hear them sung.

Iceland - a unique combination of the Northern Lights (powers in the heavens above) and the glow from an erupting volcano (powers in the earth below)

Tony Peace also found the words of a Graham Kendrick hymn come to mind as he thought of his time in Iceland:

"I will build my church - And the gates of hell— Shall not prevail against it. So you powers in the heavens above bow down! - And you powers on the earth below bow down! - And acknowledge that Jesus - Jesus is Lord."



Hazel looked through her window and wrote this reflection

Like most, I find isolation so trying, for I am a person who likes to be out and about, visiting, speaking and seeing people. With this Coronavirus, I can't. I feel trapped, but one thing I learn from this isolation, I have more time to read my Bible, more time in praying, singing and listening to God. I can talk to Him, and I know He hears my prayers.

Even though we are not in a church service, we can still give God praise and thanks in our homes. When we all return to church, we will have a better understanding of God's power, and not forgetting the cross, and that He died for us, because every hour we need Him. We cannot do anything without God's help, because with Him all things are possible.

I am praying for all the medical and health professionals, and researchers, that they will find a breakthrough for this virus. I pray that God will give them wisdom and understanding, as they work through this virus.

As the song says, we are tested and tried; He will give us the faith to fight the fear of this virus. The Psalmist said: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

THE CAMINO EXPERIENCE

In September 2016, Anne and I decided to walk the 500-mile pilgrimage path, the Camino de Santiago. The route starts in St Jean-Pied-de-Port on the northern slopes of the Pyrenees in France, and ends in Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain. The pilgrimage has been walked for hundreds of years and is currently growing in popularity so that in 2016 almost a quarter of a million pilgrims collected their 'compostelas' at the cathedral in Santiago.

In this age of secularism and scepticism about anything concerning religion, why do people walk it? The pilgrims we met gave many different answers: to lose weight; to meet other youngsters; for the challenge. But also, many who were at a transition point in their lives – a significant bereavement, a divorce, change of jobs or searching for a new direction in their lives – all hoping to find enlightenment on the Camino.



Did they find it? Let me tell you about three pilgrims we met. The Mexican couple we met in the early days of the journey. The wife usually looked truly miserable, as if she had been cajoled into this trek by an over-enthusiastic husband. We discovered they had lost their son the previous year, killed in a road accident. We bumped into them in Santiago, their faces were shining with joy at the completion of their pilgrimage. What had transformed them?

Then there was Patrick, a Dubliner who had spent the past 8 yrs. as full-time carer for his wife. She had had a stroke leaving her almost completely paralysed. "I've done this pilgrimage several times, I have to, it keeps me sane. If I didn't have the thinking space, I'd go crazy."



What was the 'magic ingredient' these pilgrims were discovering? I'm afraid you will have to go on the trek yourselves to find out. Everyone walks their own camino – it's very personal. Some finish wondering what all the fuss is about, many have deeply meaningful conversations with strangers, others come face-to-face with their God. You walk your own camino. Were we changed by the experience? Well, yes. How? Where? When? It's hard to explain, but it did. Perhaps we'll be able to tell you about it one day. And perhaps you'll be able to listen.

Alan Davies

Recollections of Mansfield Road from Muriel Briley

I became a member of Mansfield Road Baptist Church over fifty years ago. I was involved with many of the activities that were taking place at the time. There was a "Wives Club" every Thursday, a summer coach trip for older people, with tea provided for us in various churches in Derbyshire and a Christmas tea party with entertainment for over one hundred. During Bernard Green's time, we had a Samaritan Society and I was part of the group which went out and decorated rooms for people who needed support. On Tuesday there was a keep fit and country dancing class.

When I retired, I joined the "Women's Fellowship" on a Monday afternoon. I took over the Thursday luncheon club for ten years. For most of our guests it was their Sunday lunch; we were a really happy team. It goes without saying there were very uplifting Sunday services.

Do you know when the photograph was taken?
Do you recognise anyone in the photograph?

(We are reliably informed that the occasion was a Saturday evening Youth Group fancy dress party circa 1964 and Ina, Gordon, and John Shepherd can be spotted!)



Shalom Fellowship at MRBC – by Neelam Sidhu

I just want to share some background. I gave my heart to Jesus in 2011. I repented and was baptised. As I was praying in one meeting, one man of God prophesied that: “You will serve God in coming years, but you will not serve alone.” You will serve as a couple. So I waited and kept praying. Then I came to MRBC where I found love, respect, care and support. I participated in church activities on a small basis and then I had the opportunity to serve as a deacon. I accessed training, especially leadership training. I think that was God’s plan. He was preparing me and he was preparing my husband Ravi Sidhu as well. By the grace of God, the day came, Ravi repented and was baptised.

Amazingly after that God opened doors. The minister blessed us and prayed with us and the name “Shalom” came from this. Finally we started the ministry – a place for people who understand my language. We worship in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and English on Sunday afternoons. We have felt the Holy Spirit’s presence as we worship, bring praise and testimonies all within a family atmosphere of comfort, peace and support. Yes, we have pastors in our congregation, but we work as a family with different skills. Everyone encourages each other. Even children participate to share a bible verse. And we put everything in God’s hands first.



I really want to share what is now happening now we can’t meet. When Covid 19 came, we started praying on Skype as a small group, which grew, so we started praying in 2 groups, and now we have 4 here with a 5th in India. So personally, I am approaching my non- Christian friends, my close family, my relatives in India and sharing the gospel in these difficult times. The most beautiful thing - we have one young man whose background is Sikhism. He is enjoying the Shalom Fellowship and is growing. He was going to be baptised at Easter but because of lock down he couldn’t so he spends more time learning with the Lord. Every night at 8-9 pm he is with us in online prayer. He is growing, he is happy which is encouraging all our Shalom family.

May God bless us and guide us through his wisdom, and whatever we do, we don’t seek to be glorified, only Jesus my saviour will be glorified.

Children's Craft Corner—A Concertina Book idea from Mary

You need: 2 long strips of card measuring 14cm x 43 cm (I used a cereal box), ruler, pencil, photos or pictures you have drawn, crayons, glue stick, selotape or double sided tape if you have it.

Mark each strip into 10cm divisions. You should get four divisions and a 3cm extra portion on each strip. Then slightly overlapping the strips (using the 3cm tag) join the two together. Fold along the lines you marked out, first towards you, then away from you to make a long zig zag piece of card. Slightly cut down your photos or drawings and then stick them onto each partition. You will have space for 15 drawings and photos on the front and back and still have a top title page.

Why not make it into a prayer book? You can use each image as a focus to pray for important people or to give thanks for special places or things. You can tie a ribbon around the special book to keep it together. Or you can prop it up in your room to display it.

Please send your craft pictures in to show us!

Here is mine!



THOUGHTS FROM A BOOK!

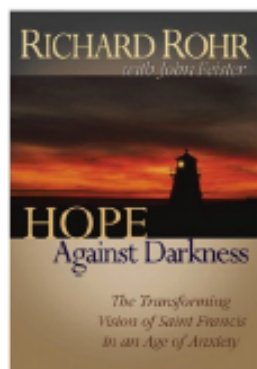
I, (Andy), have just finished a book titled, HOPE AGAINST DARKNESS, written by a Franciscan Priest, Richard Rohr. It has been quite stretching for me to read. I have been doing so with the backdrop of Easter and some of the words being said by Justin Welby and others, that as we come through this time of Coronavirus we will come into a new experience of “normal”. All churches will look very different. Rohr writes:

“The wonder of the resurrection stories in the Gospels is that Jesus has no punitive attitude toward the authorities or his cowardly followers, and that the followers themselves never call for any kind of holy war against those that killed their leader. Something new has clearly transpired in history. This is not the common and expected

story line. All Jesus does is breathe forgiveness. ...

When I was a little Catholic boy, I thought forgiveness was for the sake of obtaining some kind of possible or supposed moral purity and re-achieved worthiness. Now I believe that forgiveness in the teaching of Jesus is not for the sake of moral purity; it’s quite simply for the sake of a future.”

Quite simply, these words have stayed with me that I, (we), need to exercise forgiveness, like breathing, quite simply for the sake of a future. Will this be part of the “new normal”?



Examining your Day

One way I have found of drawing nearer to God is to practise a very simple spiritual exercise called "The Examen". All you need is a place to be quiet before God. It helps if you can set aside about 20 minutes at about the same time each day, preferably in the evening or just before going to bed. Just sit quietly and go back carefully and slowly over the last 24 hours. Ask yourself two questions. For what moment today am I most grateful, and for what moment today am I least grateful? You could also ask what has blessed me today, and what has not blessed me today.



When you have gone back over the things you are most grateful for hold them up before God, and say a big thank you . When you have considered the things which you are least grateful for ; maybe a harsh word you or someone else has said, or an anxiety which has welled up inside you, lay these at God's feet and leave them there. He will deal with them. This exercise helps us to remember that God has blessed me today and that he will bless me tomorrow, and I can then sleep peacefully. It helps me to remember with the writer of Lamentations that "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases".

Anne Davies

This newsletter is being distributed by email wherever possible, and is also available to view or download and print from the Resources section of the church website: www.mrbc.org.uk . **If you have received this by post, it is because we have no email address for you.** If you do have an email address, or someone in your household does, could you let David Mangan know – secretary@mrbc.org.uk ? It would help to save postage and printing.

A big "thank you" to all contributors this month. To continue monthly we need YOUR news (photo of your garden?), YOUR poem, YOUR testimony (from now or from the past), YOUR input (articles of interest to others). Please send by email to susan@msbye.co.uk, or phone Rosemary or Susan and dictate, or by post, to arrive by **18th May** for the June edition.

Edited by: Susan Bye, Rosemary Mangan

© Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham NG7 6JN