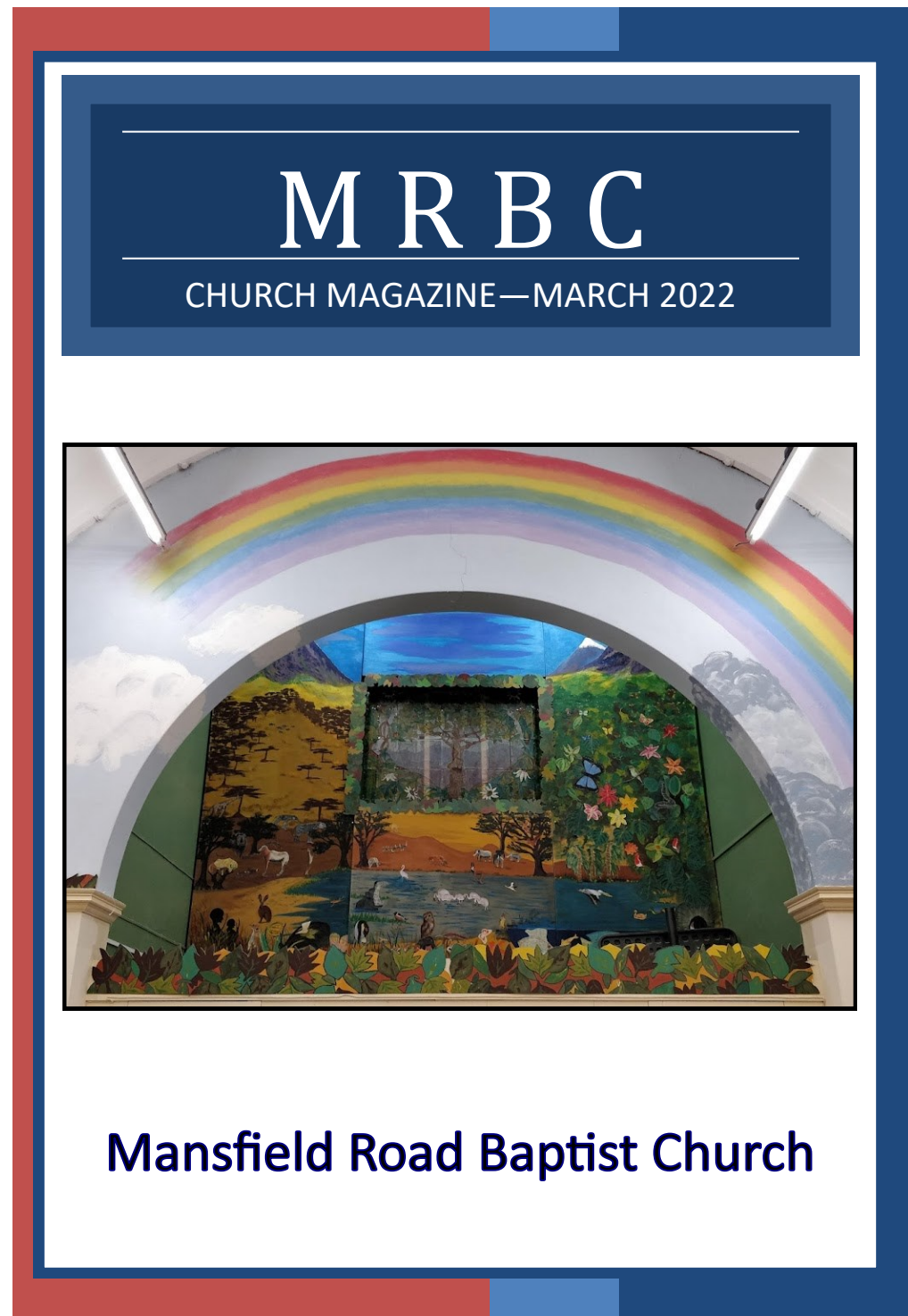




A big "thank you" to all contributors this month. Please continue to furnish us with YOUR news, YOUR pictures, YOUR poem, YOUR story, any articles of interest to others. Please give to Susan Bye or Sharon Jodrell at church or post or send by email to susan@msbye.co.uk, to arrive by **15th March** for the April edition.

© Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham NG7 6JN
Website: www.mrbc.org.uk



Message for March from our Minister

1Corinthians 12

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

This passage of Paul’s writing to the Church at Corinth is relevant and meaningful to us here in March 2022 with the Government making the decision to end all restrictions in relation to Coronavirus while advising us to stay cautious.

I want to encourage us all and say well done for keeping our identity and purpose as a church through these last two years. It was Sunday 15th March, 2020 that we first did not meet on a Sunday in the church buildings. Something we would not have comprehended or thought possible, but the last two years have seen so much happen with great difficulties for many. Yet the largest challenge of the pandemic in a corporate sense is ahead of us. We are coming afresh to the possibility to take our place as a part in Mansfield Road Baptist Church, a local expression of the body of Christ. In the next few weeks we have at least five people entering formal Church Membership, individuals knowing that God is placing them to express themselves being their “part” in the body.

Can we all take up the challenge to live afresh and so know the health, vibrancy and life as the body of Christ. It maybe a new part of the body that God is placing you as two years have brought many changes, but can I encourage you to exercise the part you are being called to as you will see the majesty of God in new ways as you live this out.



Lent is the six week period leading up to Easter. Because Lent follows the liturgical calendar, the exact date changes each year. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is always held 46 days (40 fasting days and 6 Sundays) before Easter Sunday. It has been a traditional time for fasting or giving something up. Ash Wednesday gets its name from the traditional blessing of the ashes taken after the burning of Palm branches or crosses made from Palm leaves from the previous year’s Palm Sunday celebrations. In some churches the ashes are used to draw a cross on the head of people to mark the beginning of Lent.

Ash Wednesday this year is 2nd March. It is the day after Shrove Tuesday, more commonly known as Pancake Day in the UK. Elsewhere in the world Shrove Tuesday is known as Mardi Gras (meaning Fat Tuesday in French). Shrove Tuesday originally comes from the word shrive (meaning to absolve). As the last day before Lent this was a day of self-examination where Christians would consider what sins they needed to repent of and what changes to their life or spiritual growth they would focus on during the fast.

Many from more orthodox denominations will still strictly observe the fast, beginning with the wearing of ashes on Ash Wednesday and abstinence of meat, fish, eggs and fats until Easter Sunday. Others will choose to give up just one item for Lent, maybe a luxury such as chocolate, meat or alcohol. For many Christians, Lent is a time to make space to pray, read the Bible and reflect on God’s love. Historically, in preparation for Lent, those observing the fast would use Shrove Tuesday to also purify and remove from their house any of the items that they were foregoing for Lent. This included meat, fish, eggs, fats, milk and sugar so Shrove Tuesday became the final feast before Lent began. These ingredients combine easily to make pancake batter, hence why in the UK Shrove Tuesday is now synonymous with the making, tossing and racing of pancakes.



A summary of the February prayer letter of Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

LEPROSY WORK IN NEPAL

In 2022 the International Nepal Fellowship (INF), BMS's local partner organization, is celebrating 70 years of Christian ministry in the country. A great opportunity to look back, reflect, look ahead. Christian medical work in the 1950s began with addressing the plight of leprosy affected people. Now in 2022, INF is once again focusing on leprosy through the construction of a new ward.

Tom Hale, in his book "Light shines in Nepal" (2012) describes the situation in 1950's Nepal where the general public was totally ignorant of both the cause and treatment of the disease, and sufferers were "forced to live as animals in the wild or imprisoned without treatment in 'leper asylums'..."

However, when Christian medical missionaries entered Nepal from India, they brought treatment, dignity, physical and spiritual hope. Land was purchased in Pokhara for a first treatment facility. Since then, on the same land, the work has been ongoing for 70 years, with 20 leprosy beds as well as outpatient facilities. The current wards are in a 1960's stone building with outdated facilities.

In 2021, I was delighted to hear of a funding promise for the design and construction of a 30-bed leprosy ward. It was my pleasure to create and develop the concept design. The construction work will begin soon. The new ward has the potential to communicate an ongoing Christian concern for sufferers from this disease and the associated stigma. Now there are staff who can address physical challenges and assist patients toward living integrated lives within their home communities.

Please pray

- that any challenges during the construction can be overcome
- for Toby managing his time
- for Pippa, again home-schooling our children
- for a quick return to school
- for Dr Arun who has just started as Hospital Director

With much love from us all, Pippa and Toby, with Jakey, Ella, Millie

You can read their full letter here:

<https://www.bmsworldmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/0222-Vokuhl.pdf>



We have been looking in recent weeks at how much of our purpose of being church is to resource us for the 110 hours each week we are living in the world as Christians. We all need to be spurring each other on and it is within our expression of church that we can exercise and test out the parts of the body we are being called to.

God is calling us all into aspects of serving, hospitality and worship. It can be a big step if you have not done something before – but be encouraged, it is a safe place to try.

With love and greetings, Andy

CHURCH DIARY for MARCH

Sunday Service each week at 10.30am with groups for the children and young people. A recorded version of this service will be available on the website during the Monday following.

Shalom Fellowship – Sunday 6th March @ 2pm

Toddler Café - Mondays 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th March from 10am to 11.45am

Pastoral Care Group – Monday 14th and Monday 28th March at 1pm

Prayer & Bible Meeting – Wednesdays 2nd, 9th, 23rd & 30th March @ 7.30pm

Deacons Meeting - Wednesday 16th March @ 7.30pm

Bible Study – Thursdays 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st March 10.30am – 12 noon

EVENING MEETINGS Lifts home will be arranged for everybody attending evening meetings in the church buildings

COMMUNION There will be Communion at the service on Sunday 20th March.

CORONAVIRUS There will be further updates during March in terms of social distancing, the serving of drinks after the service and how it is suggested we go forwards concerning mask wearing. The latest information will be announced on a Sunday and is available from the Church Office.

PRAYER POINTS

- 1) The building of community through the Gospel Lounge on Saturday evenings
- 2) Our Link Missionaries, the Vokuhl family, as they prepare to visit the United Kingdom from Nepal this summer
- 3) For all involved with the Nottingham Winter Shelter

Prayer, Prayer, Prayer

*What a friend we have in Jesus
All our sins and griefs to bear
And what a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer.*

Over the past two years we all have suffered from some form of crisis in our lives—sickness, anxiety, bereavement, depression, fear, loneliness— but most of all the deadly Covid virus, which has destroyed so many lives, especially loved ones. So who do you turn to for help?

For me, I turn to God. In prayer, singing, reading the Bible, and asking God to strengthen my faith to carry on. Philippians 4:6 tells us to pray about everything. Tell Him what you need and thank Him for all He has done, and pray without ceasing. Prayer is a cooperative exercise. It establishes the basics of your relationship with God. Prayer is an integral part of all Christians' lives. Some ask the question, "Can this virus restore one's faith in religion?" Yes it can.

Religion strengthens your faith by praying, talking, singing, encouraging, listening, caring for one another. You don't have to be a religious person to help others. Jesus said "Love one another, as I have loved you." A neuroscientist named Dr Andrew Newberg stated that we were designed physically and mentally to interact with God through prayer and scripture, meditation and hymn singing. So prayer is important. It strengthens our immune system, and enhances memory.

Prayer for me is like a telephone to talk without interruption. So talk to God today. He will hear your call.

God Bless you all, Hazel O'Connor

Our Bible verse for 2022:

Be on your guard;
Stand firm in the faith;
Be courageous;
Be strong.
Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16: 13-14

Have you any wool?

Every year at MRBC we have made up shoeboxes to send to children around the world. In every box we have been able to include a handmade teddy glove puppet and hat which have been knitted by my lovely, generous, and talented mother-in-law Lillian. Over the years Lillian (who is 87 years old) has knitted hundreds of hats and teddies; these pictures show just a few months' worth.



It would be great if you could look to see whether you have got any leftover wool that you no longer need and, if so, please bring it into church. We will then pass it on to Lilley so that she can carry on knitting and helping us as a church to contribute to the shoebox appeal each Christmas.

Thank you.

Diane Trusson

Are you a gardener?

Do you use labels when planting seeds?

Here is a natty idea for up-cycling those used plastic lateral flow tests!

Take apart, throw away the middle bit of what looks like litmus paper, then re-assemble thus:

All ready for spring planting!

