

The Making of Us—CREED

The hand that spins the galaxies brought me into being.

The One who holds the stars has made me his own.

I am God's child. My life is rich, my days are sacred.

I am held by a love that's wider and higher than the farthest edges of this expanding universe.

I am a pilgrim in this world, in search of wisdom and wonder.

I will take new adventures.

And follow God into the unknown.

What I achieve is not as important as the person I become.

So I will seek to imitate the Nail-Pierced One.

I will step in the direction of my strengths and talents.

They are Spirit-given tools for my God-given tasks.

I will pay attention to my persistent aspirations.

They could be the whispers of God.

I will serve all I can and walk deeply with a few.

I will aim for great things but leave my legacy to God.

The path is long and the terrain at times hard.

Still:

I will not wish for another's life.

I will take my place, play my part.

Something important will be missed if I don't.

For the hand that spins the galaxies wants me here.

Adapted and abridged from a highly recommended book
The Making of Us: Who We Can Become When Life Doesn't Go as Planned
by Sheridan Voysey © 2019 Sheridan Voysey

A big "thank you" to all contributors this month. To continue monthly we need YOUR news, YOUR pictures, YOUR poem, YOUR story, any articles of interest to others. Please send by email to susan@msbye.co.uk, or phone Sharon Joddrell or Susan Bye and dictate, or by post, to arrive by **15th May** for the June edition.

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Website: www.mrbc.org.uk

MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—MAY 2021



Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for May from our Minister



The time of prayer we shared at the recent Church Meeting was special as we remembered both Rosemary Mangan and Denis MacGregor who have recently died. They each have significantly shaped the expression of church that we are. We are thankful for the characteristics of God they lived in our midst and we continue to lift those that feel the loss

of their presence so greatly at this time.

We are starting back using our church buildings from Sunday 2nd May, when there will be opportunity to begin corporate worship afresh. We are looking forward to then and to the journey that God will take us on in new forms of shaping and experiences that are ahead.

In so many places we are hearing about the “new landscape” that we are facing after the pandemic and this is true for ourselves as church as we seek to be engaging with the world in a meaningful and helpful way. We do this knowing the promise of Jesus that we read in Matthew 28v20:

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Things are going to be different in our life as church and we should anticipate this. This does not mean it will be easy and straightforward. It will be harder for some of us than others. For myself, as one who has served churches as a minister in some form since 1992, things have become very different. For much of that time and the model of church I am most familiar with is one where the minister in essence is seen as the principal person involved in pastoral care, the principal missionary of the church and one that serves for the most part as an events manager as well. I have done this to more or lesser extent in every setting I have been part of. However, the call on me now is to something different, the fundamental role before me is to ensure that Mansfield Road Baptist Church is a disciple making community where we are all growing in maturity and mission.

This will demand change on my part. Please pray for me, that I will be malleable enough to be shaped as God would have me be.

With thanks,

Andy

An extract from the April Prayer letter of Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

Here in Kathmandu the air quality index is '**CURRENT CONDITION HAZARDOUS**', which means staying indoors is strongly recommended.



This is due to the unusually dry and dusty spring, forest fires, brick kilns, and ongoing traffic pollution.

In the UK, as in most developed countries, the one overriding hazard to human health has been Covid-19. In Nepal the death toll from the disease appears comparatively low, probably because the average age of the population is much lower.

Covid-19 is only one of many ongoing hazards which include air pollution and traffic and farming accidents, leprosy and fevers.

After a spell in the UK we are now back in Nepal. We are here because we relate to a God who sent His precious son into a world where the '**CURRENT CONDITION (was) HAZARDOUS**'. He still sends people today to speak and act His love into hazardous contexts. So we are applying for a further visa to continue our work supporting the local BMS partner, the NGO INF.

We will be based in Kathmandu to enable our children to attend school. Toby will continue to support INF with advice on the development of Green Pastures Hospital and other INF health and community facilities whilst also continuing research for his doctoral studies. **Do pray** for good time management skills, and for the required work visa to be granted, without which we will have to leave Nepal again in July when our visas expire, and can then not re-enter until 2022!

Pippa is looking forward to engaging with new opportunities to serve in Kathmandu. **Do pray** that she will have wisdom in deciding where to invest her skills and energies, given the many opportunities in Nepal's capital city.

Please also pray for our children as they suffered from a very disrupted 2020, that 2021 will allow them the stability and friendships they need.

Finally, do pray with us for the staff and leaders of the INF.

We want to share Psalm 27 Verse 5: “*For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock*”, reminding us that whatever the hazard, God protects us, even when the **CURRENT CONDITION** is **HAZARDOUS**.

With much love from us all,

Toby, Pippa, Jakey, Ella, and Millie



Travels with God

Some of you might remember the Giant Romanian who arrived at Mansfield Road Baptist Church back in 1991. Marian, my husband, didn't speak much English when he arrived, but he was understood, loved, cared for with brotherly compassion in total acceptance. What a wonderful example of Christian love for the refugee!

Soon after, as a beautiful answer from God and through much work and prayer from the faithful MRBC, our daughter Alice and I were able to be reunited with Marian and were received with arms wide open (literally) in our new spiritual home in Nottingham. A truly joyous, miraculous time for us, the Copilets.

In 2008 God guided us to Bonnie Scotland, where we found another church family in Kintore to love, teach and comfort us in days when we felt too lonely or too faraway from what we knew about life. We learned to understand the Scottish accent, to enjoy a wee dram to keep away the dreich Scottish weather and got even richer in beautiful Christian friends to study God's word with in dark Scottish evenings.



When the oil and gas job took Marian away to Malaysia, God opened yet another unexpected opportunity for us to learn about ourselves, about the world and our incredible God-given ability to learn, adapt and embrace new experiences. We left behind the dark winters and welcomed the never-ending summer paradise we found in Asia and joined our new spiritual home, the St. Andrews International Church in Kuala Lumpur. God's touch was present in a miraculous way again, in happy and sad times and it is clear to me that it was in God's plan to bring us here to go through His refining fire.

After six years, the interaction with the Malay, Indian, Chinese Christian friends as well as with expats from all around the world has enriched

and inspired us enormously. Asian culture is amazing and beautifully rich. Existence as a jobless expat wife seemed strange in the beginning, but church life filled it with joy and purpose and the friendships created proved invaluable when the going was tough.

Looking back now I can see clearly the red thread all throughout our life tapestry: It was God's amazing grace, His people, His big and small daily miracles keeping us close to Him and the knowledge that His faithfulness is never ending, keeps me smiling, singing and praising Him. No matter where we end up traveling on our way to heaven, I know that God is in control so whatever happens why and what should we fear and be anxious about?

Peace to you all. Yours, in His service,

Julia Copilet

DIARY FOR MAY

From **Sunday 2nd May**, there will be a 10.30am service in the Church buildings each week. (We are asking people initially to phone the Church Office and book in so we can be confident that we have the space for everybody who wants to be there)

Each Sunday a pre-recorded service will also be available on the church website at the same time.

It is anticipated that the **Youth Group** will themselves be meeting in the Church Hall weekly.

The **Young Disciples** are remaining as a Zoom Meeting at 3pm on Sunday afternoons (Meeting ID 7032705653 and Password mrbc)

Sunday 16th May @ 10.30am – Joining with other Baptist Union churches for a joint service as part of the Baptist Assembly. This will be by video link in church but also accessible from homes as well. Details can be obtained from the Church Office in the week prior. (There will be no pre-recorded service this week)

DEACONS MEETING Wednesday 19th May at 7.30pm, remotely via WHYPAY

FUTURE DATE—CHURCH MEMBERS AGM – Notice is being given that this will now be held on Wednesday 21st July at 7.30pm in the Church Buildings

CHURCH OFFICE

The regular hours for the opening of the Church Office are from 9.30am to 1.30pm on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday.

Please note the Office is CLOSED ON A TUESDAY.

Tel: 0115 9604304 or Email: admin@mrbc.org.uk



Our church in KL and the tall building behind is where we live now

A unique opportunity to join in worship, prayer, Bible study and consideration of current issues with others from our Baptist family. A world-renowned keynote speaker,

Shane Claiborne, will be giving the address at the Sunday service which will be viewed in church. See: www.shaneclaiborne.com for details of his life and books.

To register for the Assembly— See www.baptist.org.uk for details.

(If you attend any sessions —consider writing a review for the June magazine!)

#BaptistAssembly
BAPTIST ASSEMBLY ONLINE2021
Thursday 13 - Sunday 16 May
equip
inspire
connect
BAPTISTS TOGETHER

A further look at the History of our Church

In the February edition of our magazine we took a look at the history of our now closed sister Church on Woodborough Road, following the transfer of their former building's war memorials to our own premises. We did see how both MRBC and Woodborough Road had roots in the old Stoney Street Baptist Church in Nottingham City Centre, and we now look a little further back to the times when the story started with the establishment of Stoney Street Baptist Church back in 1799.

Stoney Street Baptist Church (1799 – 1887)

This Church grew from a congregation of 'General Baptists' which formed in Nottingham in 1775 with William Fox, their first Pastor, being appointed in 1776. Seven years later, in 1783, the congregation purchased the old Nottingham Methodist Tabernacle before going on to build a new Chapel in Plumtre Place in Nottingham City Centre in 1799. This building was also known as 'Stoney Street Chapel' and their work with children and young people merited the building of a separate Sunday School building in 1811. However, all was not well and in 1817 a young Minister by the name of Catton was dismissed by the Trustees for 'inappropriate' behaviour whilst serving a trial period with the Church. This caused great unrest with the congregation who took sides, and eventually the Trustees advised the Minister, Robert Smith, to take possession of the buildings. This move faced some resistance, causing Robert Smith to be ousted and leave to form a new congregation in Broad Street, taking around a third of his flock with him. The Church went on to recover from the upheaval of 1817, before a further split in 1849 led to a part of the congregation leaving to form Milton Street General Baptist Chapel, the first MRBC building, under the leadership of the Rev. Robert Syme. The Stoney Street Church eventually closed its doors in 1887 when more of the congregation moved to the now well established Milton Street Baptist Chapel. Upon closure the Stoney Street buildings were converted by the noted local architect T. C. Hine for use by St Mary's School but later were converted again for commercial use, which is the situation today, but their once proud appearance has been neglected somewhat as will be seen from the recent photograph when a new tenant was being sought.



Gordon Jeffrey

Next month—Broad Street Baptist Church (1817 – 1901)

Pauline's Story

Have you been doing anything special or different during these times of lockdown? I know some "key-workers" have worked so hard, but for others it has given opportunity to take life at a different pace. One thing Pauline Jeffrey did was to finish a **life story** she had been working on for a few years. Her sons had asked her to write down details of her childhood in Africa where she grew up as daughter of mission workers. Pauline finished her story, selected photos to illustrate and I had the great privilege of putting it all into a book format for her to get copies printed. I found the story so interesting and Pauline has given me permission to share part of it here. She writes:

I was born at Chibambo, Belgian Congo which was a Mission Station. We lived at Samfya Mission which is in the Northern part of Zambia. Samfya stood on the edge of a large lake called Lake Bangweulu and there were Swamps over on the other side which were accessible by boat. When my parents began their ministry, they started a small Dispensary. They also took medical supplies when they visited the Swamps across the lake. Their first means of transport across the lake were dug-out canoes, then a metal



one with an outboard engine and finally, when I was about 4, a cabin cruiser called the Galilee which was a very generous donation given by some churches in Norfolk. I have some very happy memories of being on that boat as a family. The Swamps had channels cut through them meaning there were Papyrus plants lining the route. The water was very clear and it was like looking into a large aquarium. There was also a lot of wildlife notably Crocodiles and Otters. We

sometimes fished off the side of the boat using worms as bait which we had dug out from the mud earlier.

There were always pets around at home including a dog and a cat or two. The dog was very necessary as a guard dog but was still a pet. The cats were useful for keeping down the mice. My favourite pet was a Vervet Monkey called 'Jacko'. He could be a bit naughty and had to be tied up sometimes but he was a great character and I loved him.



Samfya was a lovely place to grow up as we had a lot of space to run around, make dens and climb trees. There was also a path down to the lake with a small beach where we were free to go swimming and so that was a regular pastime in the school holidays.

My school life started at the age of 5 and a half when I joined my sister and brother at a boarding school for missionaries' children at Sakeji, situated on the Zambian/Angolan Border near the source of the Zambezi River, about 600miles from Samfya.

If you would like to borrow a copy of *Pauline's Story* to read in full, do ask her.

Susan Bye