

## Happy Candlemas!

February is, perhaps, not a month to look forward to. The weather is miserable and it's still weeks until Spring. There's Valentine's Day, and often Pancake Day, but perhaps it's a pity that nowadays **Candlemas** (February 2nd) isn't more widely celebrated.

**What is Candlemas?** One of the oldest Christian Feast Days, originating in 4th century Jerusalem. It commemorated the Presentation of the Infant Christ in the Temple and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, taking place - as was the custom - 40 days after the birth. The tradition spread to many Christian countries around the world.

**How was Candlemas celebrated?** Christmas greenery was taken out of the house. Extra candles were lit around the home, and one candle would be taken by procession to church for a blessing, a tradition still observed today by some. Special foods were eaten, and in some places still are. Pancakes and round cakes were said to represent the absent sun.



Some weather lore is associated with the day - if Candlemas is sunny and bright, there is more winter weather yet to come; but if cloudy and wet, then Spring is on its way.

The lighting of a candle reminds Christians that before Jesus, the world was in darkness, its people lost and lonely, afraid and without help. Jesus brought a message of love, hope and comfort. He is our guiding light in the darkness, the Light of the World. Surely, a truth enough to brighten the dreariness and chill of any February afternoon.

Sharon Joddrell

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 Joddrell at church or post or send by email to [susan@msbye.co.uk](mailto:susan@msbye.co.uk), to arrive by **15th February** for the March edition.

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# MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—FEBRUARY 2022



## Mansfield Road Baptist Church

## Message from Jean Taylor, our Church Secretary

### Faithfully loving us

#### What is mankind that you are mindful of them, Hebrews 2 v6

Brothers and sisters, there will be a time in all our daily lives for all things. We will fall, fail, laugh, cry, hurt, suffer, love and lose. We as God's children are not expected to be perfect. Jesus is the only perfection in the life of Christians. He told us that we should come to him, all who are weary and carrying a heavy load. Take his yoke and learn from him because he is gentle and humble in heart, and we will find rest for our souls, for his yoke is easy and his burden light. The Lord made us with his hand and put everything on earth under us. He moulded us to his likeness, fed us with manner and never turns away from us when we fail him. I was made to consider how God did not give up on his people when cooking fried dumplings one morning.



This is something I am not good at! Sitting at the kitchen table my head in a book, I was distracted and not giving the dumplings much attention. The cooker was on much too high and they got burnt on the bottom. My first instinct

was to throw them away and start again as I considered them to be imperfect, but then I realised that they were still edible and could be saved. As humans that is our behaviour. It struck me sometime later how God must feel about his world not being perfect as I was expecting my dumplings to be. All the love and time he puts into us, he forgives us over and over. He is not looking for perfection from us; his son and our saviour Christ Jesus was made perfect and took on our sins by the shedding of his blood on the cross.

Let each and every one of us stand firm in the love of God, use the tools of prayer in our daily lives. This is a very powerful weapon at our disposal. Let us praise and worship him with all our hearts and minds and give thanks for his love.

### As far as our family is concerned:

The kids are really benefiting from being back in and so far there have been no known cases of Covid. **Please pray** this continues! Toby has juggled several construction projects as well working on his PhD. **Please pray** for God's strength and stamina at this busy time. Pippa has a few potential ministry roles for the New Year - **please pray** for wisdom and that school will remain open so she can serve outside the home. **Please pray** for us as we plan home leave in June and July.

#### **Please also pray:**

- for the leadership and staff at KISC
- for non-Christian pupils, that they may meet the living God
- for KISC **Equip**, supporting education
- for other BMS staff working in education around the world
- that **all** Nepali children would be able to access a high quality education

With much love from us all,

Pippa, Toby, Jakey, Ella, and Millie

### Would you like to borrow a good book?

**Susan Bye has a copy she would be happy to lend you.**

This is an excellent biography of the Kanneh-Mason family, written by their mother, Kadiatu. Her own story of being born in Sierra Leone, brought up in Wales and growing up as a mixed-race child in the Britain of the 70s, is itself so interesting. But the main story is her account of the daily struggle to manage the musical educations of her family's seven talented children. It is truly amazing, including of course Sheku's journey as BBC Young Musician and his performance at the royal wedding.

I found the book inspirational. Perhaps especially interesting because the family live locally in Mapperley Park!



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

www.bmsworldmission.org/  
ptvokuhl

December 2021



## EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

In 1996 new Prime Minister Tony Blair's top three priorities were "education, education, education", highlighting the significance of giving all young people the opportunity to fulfil their academic potential. We would love to see that here in Nepal, where receiving quality education has always been a challenge. Nearly 3/4 million children aged 5-12 years are out of school, and 38% of children do not complete primary school. Government funded schools often suffer from a severe lack of funding and resources, with buildings often not fit for purpose and remoteness, disability, poverty, child labour, gender and social norms all reducing a child's chance of receiving an education at all. The quality of education received is often very low with only 12% of children from the poorest families on track in literacy and numeracy.

When our own children were recently allowed back into the KISC school building they were so happy, demonstrating the significance of socializing and the high quality learning environment. The KISC **Equip** (Education Quality Improvement Program) vision is to share top teaching methods with Nepali teachers. KISC works with Nepali schools around the country to improve this objective.

Many children come to school unable to learn as they are so hungry. **Equip** staff set up a feeding program aiming to give students a proper meal at school, one of the most effective ways of improving school attendance and motivation in deprived communities.

Please **celebrate with us in prayer** the good things that are happening here for children.

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## CHURCH DIARY for FEBRUARY

**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 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> February @ 2pm

**Toddler Café** - Mondays 7<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> February from 10am to 11.45am

**Pastoral Care Group** – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 1pm

**Prayer & Bible Meeting** – Wednesdays 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> February @ 7.30pm

**Church Meeting** - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February @ 7.30pm

**Bible Study** – Thursdays 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> February 10.30am – 12 noon

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

**COMMUNION** There will be Communion at the service on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February

**CORONAVIRUS** We anticipate that during February there will be changes to our policy and information will be available through the Church Office and the Website.

### PRAYER POINTS

- 1) For Neelam as she takes on a broader remit in her work as Toddler Leader (With Ministry Support)
- 2) For those living with long term conditions that have come upon them through the time of the pandemic.
- 3) For the Toddler Café for it to be a place of belonging for those that attend

### TODDLER LEADER (WITH MINISTRY SUPPORT)

Currently Toddler Café is operating solely on a Monday and as such there has been a need to broaden the Leader's role for a period so as to keep the position. The situation will be reviewed in the coming months as the Toddler ministry develops. The Toddler Leader will use their excess hours to facilitate other activities working out of the Church buildings and in the life of the Church. The role operates for 16 hours a week in term time only.



## A letter from the Treasurer

Dear Friends,

The end of the church financial year is the perfect time to review our finances. There will be no spreadsheets here, just some reflections on 2021 and thoughts about 2022.

At the beginning of 2021 we set ourselves a target for voluntary giving which, under the circumstances, was very challenging. I am pleased to be able to tell you that this target was surpassed. This achievement is a testament to the faithful, regular giving by members and friends. Even when unable to attend church because of the pandemic, people have continued to give freely in different ways. Standing orders are largely unchanged whilst other amounts are transferred directly into the church bank account on a regular basis. Packs of envelopes have been brought to church or collected by diligent staff and volunteers. As a church, we have so much to be thankful for even in these difficult times.

Other regular sources of income have been rent from Church House and government grants to cover payments to staff on furlough.

As a church, by no means have we stood still. The past year has seen progress on the heating project and refurbishment of the Welcome Hall, both major works overseen jointly by staff and church members. Other essential work to the emergency lighting and the lift has been completed. Much of this was funded from the generous legacies and gifts received prior to 2021. Our giving to Baptist and other causes has continued throughout the year.

Looking ahead to 2022, we anticipate a slow recovery in opening up our buildings. We must seek God's will in this and not expect everything to be as it was before the pandemic. The building survey undertaken last year will be used to prioritise future work. A budget has been prepared and accepted by deacons, but unfortunately the church meeting in December was not quorate so decisions about this have been deferred.

The most disappointing piece of news has come from HSBC where we bank. Until recently the church has had a Community Account which incurred no charges as long as we did not overdraw. From November, however, Community Accounts were phased out and replaced by Charitable Accounts. These will incur a monthly charge of £5.00 plus charges on all cheque and cash transactions.

In conclusion, please thank God for the faithfulness displayed by members and friends last year and, as we move forward in 2022, pray for wise stewardship and prayer-led decision making.

Alan Jodrell

January 2022

## A Reflection contributed by Eunice Campbell-Clark

### Praying Effectively - By Dr Charles Stanley

1 Kings 18:17-39

God answers the prayers of a transformed heart that seeks His will.



God has given us the privilege of coming to Him with all our requests and concerns. And His Word tells us the prayers of a righteous person can accomplish much (James 5:16). Isn't that what we all desire?

Elijah is a good example of someone who prayed effectively. He entered into a spiritual conflict with Baal worshippers to prove to Israel that the Lord is the one true God. Elijah's petition was based on his knowledge of the Lord's supremacy and an understanding of His will. When the prophet prayed, God responded by powerfully answering the request.

To have an effective prayer life, we must first be righteous through saving faith in Jesus Christ. Before redemption, we were sinners under God's condemnation (Eph. 2:1-3). But in Christ, we are made new and declared righteous in His sight (Eph. 2:4-6).

For our petitions to be effectual, they must be in agreement with God's will (1 John 5:14-15). Getting to know our heavenly Father's character and priorities is the key to a powerful prayer life. As we grow in our knowledge of Him, our requests will increasingly align with His plans.

*Prayer: I thank you God that you give us assurance through your word that you not only hear us but you are attentive to our cries. The prayers of a righteous man avails much and on these promises, we stand.*

*Help us to discover and experience the privilege and power of effective prayer. Help us to be a people that know our God and do extraordinary exploits. In Jesus precious name. Amen*