

MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—DECEMBER 2022 / JANUARY 2023



Thanks to Ivy for excellent displays each week in church

Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for December from our Church Secretary

Our Gift from God

Dear Friends, Brother and Sisters, At this time of the year we are in the process of thinking and preparing to give gifts to family and friends. I am thankful and happy that our Heavenly Father reached out to us with the most wonderful gift we could ever receive, the birth of Jesus Christ.

God wants us to be part of his life and be near to him. He wants heaven and earth to unite. Jesus was born of God's love for the human race. He came into our world a humble baby born into poverty with ordinary parents in a divided and broken world.

His life was of love and peace amongst the lowest and ordinary folks in society at that time. His life was our loving and special gift from God, so that we can have a path to follow in reaching for a heavenly life. God wants to meet with us. *Isaiah 9 v6-7* Our Lord Jesus was born in a stable where wise men of the world laid gifts. They came from distant lands in their finery, with



gold, frankincense and myrrh. They worshipped him and were overjoyed.

Jesus born in Bethlehem in Judah was taken to Egypt to escape the rage of Herod, there Joseph had a dream to return home after a while but he did not return to Judah but to Nazareth.

Matthew 2 v19-23.

Jesus lives in our broken and human world so that through him we can have a way to his father in heaven. Jesus' life and death is a divine and special gift to us all. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. He offers his life freely for us. *Isaiah 11 v3-5.*

Before Jesus died he asked his heavenly Father for a helper for his followers as a forever gift in their spiritual lives. This gift is the Holy Ghost also known as the Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost is our helper. He empowers us and gives every believer at least one special ability to serve the common good of believers. We all need to be good stewards of the gift of gifts that he has given to each and every one of us. *Acts 2 v1-4.*

Our Church family is also a special gift for us to be thankful for. Let us all look to the Father in Heaven and thank him for all the gifts we receive from him in our daily lives.

Jean Taylor

CHURCH DIARY for DECEMBER

Sunday Service each week at 10.30am with groups for the children and young people.

Christmas Day at 10.30am—family service.



Shalom Fellowship—Sunday 4th December, 25th December

Youth Service and Children's Christmas Party—Sunday 11th December

Carol Service— Sunday 18th December 10.30 am

Toddler Group—Monday 5th, 12th and 19th December—10.00am-11.45am

Deacons' Meeting—Wednesday 7th December at 7.30pm

Thursday Fellowship—Thursday 1st and 16th December—10.30am-12 noon

Renew Wellbeing Café — Thursday 1st, 8th, 15th December—1.30pm-4.00pm

Men's Group—Thursday 8th (further dates contact the church office)

Men's Group Christmas Dinner—Friday 16th December in the Church Hall.
6.30 for 7.00 pm. Tickets £20 from Roy or Dennis

Advent Coin Collection (Charities to be announced) During each of the Sundays in Advent (27th November, 4th, 11th and 18th December) and on Christmas Day buckets will be available at the front of church. Please put your coins in one of them before or after the service.

CHURCH DIARY for JANUARY

Sunday Service each week at 10.30am with groups for the children and young people.

Shalom Fellowship—Sunday 1st January

Toddler Group—each Monday in January—10.00am-11.45am

Men's Group—Thursday 5th and 19th January

Thursday Fellowship—Thursday 5th and 19th January—10.30am—12 noon

Renew Wellbeing Café—each Thursday from 1.30 to 4.00 pm

Deacons' Meeting—Wednesday 25th January at 7.30pm

Church office contact details: admin@mrbc.org.uk or Tel 0115 9604304

PRAYER POINTS

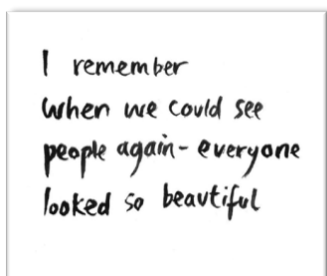
- 1) Prayer for all our members at this time who are in hospital or home in ill health.
- 2) Continued success of the Renew Wellbeing Café.
- 3) Families struggling this year as they are experiencing financial worries through the Christmas season.

Remembering

A few weeks ago, I had a meeting with Sir Mark Walport who is a member of the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration. The commission's goal is to recommend ways in which the nation can remember the loved ones who were lost, honour the heroism and skill of those who have saved lives, the courage of frontline workers who have kept our country going, and commemorate the small acts of kindness and the daily sacrifice of the millions of people who stayed at home during the pandemic.

In preparation for that meeting, I looked at different ways that people from around the world had remembered and commemorated the momentous events of the last few years. One of the most moving and powerful was Scotland's memorial. Its power lay in its simplicity. People were asked to write a sentence that started with "I remember".

People's memories and reflections covered a whole range of experiences. Many remembered the way that people's relationships with others changed or the way that they experienced the natural world in a new way. There are some that are very personal and heartfelt, most display a hope for the future and a desire to move forward without forgetting the past. The sentences inspired a series of sculptures which are now installed in a park in Glasgow.



I gave our church community an opportunity to record their memories and reflections in a similar way in the Sunday service on the 20th November. This resulted in over 80 sentences being written. It was a very humbling experience to read through people's memories and reflections. In the future I will be creating a booklet as a permanent record of our experiences.

If you would like to contribute a sentence, then please contact me in church on a Sunday morning.

Dave Mangan

Seen it all before

The Bible teaches us, in Ecclesiastes Ch 1 v 9: ***“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”***

Some of our church community can recall life in the 1970's and 1980's and were bringing up and providing for our children amidst the chaos of those times.

In Britain the annual inflation rate rose from 6.5% in 1970 to 22.7% in 1975 and did not fall below 5% until 1983. From time to time there were sudden and unpredictable shortages of basic supplies, such as salt, bread, sugar and toilet rolls.

In the autumn of 1973 Arab nations attacked the people of Israel and Israel's desperate struggle for survival was supported by help from the USA and its allies. In revenge for this help to Israel, the Arab nations quadrupled the amount they charged for oil virtually overnight. The economic damage was huge and our government's response included a drastic reduction in speed-limits on the roads, and the printing and issue of petrol-rationing coupons (although these were never actually put into use).

Another problem, the cause of which was nearer to home, were the strikes by miners, which led to lengthy periods of electricity blackouts. Coal was, in those days, the mainstay of the electricity generating industry, as well as having considerable use as domestic fuel.

Finally, as for wars near to us in Britain, there was nothing much to be concerned about except the daily knowledge that a Soviet (ie Russian) nuclear attack could reduce this country to huge deaths, casualties, and utter ruin, with only 4 minutes warning! This constant, background threat persisted to the end of the 1980's.

So, in conclusion, take two other pieces of guidance from the Bible. Firstly Matthew Ch 7 v.34: ***“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough troubles of its own”***, and secondly Psalm 56 verses 3 & 4, but you can look that one up for yourselves.

John Sheppard

Hearing Christ not Chaos

John 10:27—*My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me.*

I read about a man who was watching TV news for hours each day. He became agitated and anxious, worried that the world was falling apart and taking him with it. Perhaps we all feel like that sometimes?

His daughter begged him to turn it off and stop listening. However, he carried on, and also began to spend an excessive amount of time reading news on social media and other sources.

What we listen to matters so much. We see this in Jesus' encounter with Pontius Pilate. Responding to criminal charges brought against Jesus by religious leaders, Pilate had summoned Him and asked, "Are you the King of the Jews?" (John 18:33).

Jesus replied with a stunning question - "Is that your own idea or did others talk to you about me?" (v 34)

The same question tests us in a world of panic. Are we listening to Christ or chaos? Indeed, Jesus said "My sheep listen to my voice. I know them and they follow me". He also said, "But they will never follow a stranger, they would run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger's voice".

As our good shepherd Jesus bids us to hear Him above all others. May we listen well and find His peace.

How can you give more time to hearing the voice of God?

Prayer

Loving God, in a noisy world, when you speak to my mind, heart and spirit in and through the scriptures, may I hear you over all. Not chaos - but your voice. Amen.

Hazel O'Connor

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long,
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong.
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.



(Do you recognise? - Third verse of "It came upon a midnight clear" written in 1849!)

Congratulations to Eunice

Eunice Campbell-Clark won a Lifetime Achievement Award in October for outstanding contributions as a local Councillor.

This was in recognition of her thirty three years of service to local government and representing the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Eunice has championed three joint service centres Clifton Cornerstone, Mary Potter in Hyson Green and Bulwell Riverside. She has also set up three day centres in the North and East of the City including the Martin Jackaman Centre which caters for people with special needs. She is very much committed to the ethos of inclusive services. One of her passions is to ensure that services are provided for the citizens of Nottingham and therefore benefits all residents.

She ensured that Nottingham was one of the first Local authorities to implement the Changing Place toilets and there are now nine changing place facilities located across the city. She is very committed in ensuring that all services provided are inclusive to all needs. She is also the council's Older Persons Champion and has held four Executive positions within the Council. She is a very active Member within her constituency as well as representing the LGA on the CoE representing the Regions.

Her commitment and faith has sustained her during her journey and she feels very honoured and blessed to have been considered for the Award.



A café style space
where all are
welcome

Renew @ MRBC

Renew Wellbeing Café Each Thursday, from 1.30pm to 4.00pm, the Church Hall becomes a meeting place to share conversation, try a new hobby or join in with a jigsaw or game. The aim is to nurture and care for each other's wellbeing and that of the community around us by offering a friendly, warm and welcoming space. There is an optional quiet area where a very short and simple prayer exercise is offered. All are welcome.

Hope amid the doom and gloom

As we are currently surrounded by the increasing cost of living, many of us are finding it extremely challenging and making adjustments in our lifestyles and with our personal challenges.

It is certainly not easy, but we are all trying to survive. Even when we put the television on, the news is just doom and gloom. There is absolutely nothing in the news to give us any sort of hope. Instead, it makes us feel more upset and down.

However, I put my faith in the Bible reading God's word. You might think: "Well that's up to you, if it works for you that's good, but it's not really for me."

That's your right to say that. The Bible verse which gives me hope and strength is in Romans 15 v 13: ***"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*** In this scripture I found **"hope"** which in return does give me peace and comfort and a certainty for the future which will be bright. This is not a false hope but a hope of stability, knowing that if God has said these words, making such a powerful statement, He will surely live up to it, providing that I believe these words and remain firm and looking for better days ahead.

Or I have a choice and focus on the news and put myself in doom and gloom, which is enough for anyone to feel continuously sad.

Sometimes it's good to give something new in your life a chance.

I am only talking from my own experience as the Bible verses have given me **hope and strength** once I meditate on them.

Sarbjit Gill

Faith Article—as published in the Nottingham Evening Post in October

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, to arrive by **15th January** for the February edition.

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Website: www.mrbc.org.uk