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# MRBC

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CHURCH MAGAZINE—MAY 2024



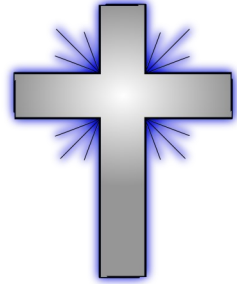
Mansfield Road Baptist Church

# Message for May from Hazel O'Connor

## The Cross

Jesus said: "Father forgive them for they don't know what they are doing." Luke 23:34

Today crosses are worn by some believers, and some are placed on steeples of churches as a symbol of Christianity. But in the first century the sight of a cross drew gasps of horror from those who saw it. Crucifixion was reserved for the worst of criminals who were nailed there until they died by asphyxiation (suffocation) which could take up to a few days. It was so horrible that no Roman citizen could be condemned to such a death.



The sinless "Jesus" was led to a cross to die. The women cried, the religious leaders scoffed, onlookers watched and the Roman soldiers gambled. The thieves who hung on the crosses beside Jesus would soon meet the same end. But they held very different views of the saviour.

Those who sneered at Jesus, asked Him to save them as well as Himself. Others recognised that Jesus was innocent and that He should not be crucified. He said to the Lord: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." Luke (23:42) Despite His own unbearable pain, Jesus told this repentant thief: "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43) Jesus asked his father to forgive all those who were there at the cross. He admitted his sin and received God's forgiveness.

It doesn't matter how many crosses we have on ourselves, or in our homes, to show we're Christians. **What matters is our relationship with Jesus.** He is the only one who can save us. Who have you found it difficult to forgive? Why not call them today?

## CHURCH DIARY for MAY

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

There is a **Prayer Meeting** at 10.15am in the Boulevard Room every week before the Sunday Service All welcome.

For those who would like to **receive prayer**, there will be two people after the Sunday Service at the front of the church offering prayer.

**Shalom Fellowship**—Sunday 5th May at 2.30pm

**Toddler Group**—Mondays 10.00am to 11.45am—13th and 20th May

**Renew Wellbeing Café**— Every Thursday in May— 1.30pm to 4.00pm

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### PRAYER POINTS

- 1) Prayer for those who are finding life extremely trying and difficult at this present time in their lives.
- 2) Prayer for our neighbours and all in this church community and for those we live with.
- 3) Prayer for the newly baptised and their families, and any challenges they may experience in this new phase of their life.
- 4) Prayer for areas where there is conflict, fighting and unrest, that God's holy spirit will sustain them.

As an experiment, I organised a Lent meditation course and even though numbers were small, I feel it proved helpful from a sharing aspect. In the near future I would venture to hold a 6-week video course on "People who met Jesus". If you think you would like to be part of this, would you please have a word with me and maybe we could agree on times and venues. I feel this is a great way of getting to know each other and sharing experiences.

*Ceinwen Harris*

# Some thoughts on Israel

Contributed by John Sheppard

Britain has a unique historical relationship with Israel, going back to the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Christian Church has deep roots in Hebrew faith and culture, and thus has a special relationship with Israel. The Jewish people, and it must always be remembered that Jewishness is an ethnicity not just a religion, have always been vulnerable to the most appalling rejection and persecution. For instance, both in the Holocaust of only around 80 years ago and the current international climate of anti-Semitism. The State of Israel is tiny and is surrounded by wealthy and powerful Islamic states, many of which deny Israel its right to exist. Certain terrorist groups are openly racist, as we presently observe.

Jesus was by birth a Jew, descended from the Hebrew patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and was of the tribe of Judah and the family line of King David. The Gospel was first preached to Jews (Matthew 15:24). Jesus was the expected Messiah, and unequivocally stated “salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22). Only very rarely did Jesus minister directly to a non-Jewish person. At the beginning of the Church, a vital meeting of the Apostles was held in Jerusalem to pronounce that Gentile (ie non-Jewish) believers in Jesus are accepted by God without any need to observe the ancient customs of the Jews. This is all set out in Acts 15, with the key verse being verse 11, “we believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

In Paul’s letters, especially his letter to the people of the Church at Rome, he has much to say on questions around Jews and Gentiles. Romans 11 in particular includes much that is not always easy to understand, since it is the writings of a man born into the traditional Jewish faith, but who was chosen by God to be, initially, the chief preacher of Christ to the Gentiles. It goes without saying that the only way to salvation is by belief in Jesus Christ, a point made by Jesus at various times in his ministry, but probably most unequivocally in John 14:6. It is worth noting that more Jews are coming to Christ in our times than at any point in history, including many in the State of Israel itself. What is notable about this movement is that they do not seem to want to join the Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant traditions, but rather to follow Jesus their way, as Messianic Jews.

This piece was headed “some thoughts”. That is all it could be. ***What we all can do is to pray “Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.”***

## Knitting for others

Contributed by Diane Trusson

My very kind and talented mother-in-law, Lilley, has been busy knitting again! You may remember that over the years Lilley has provided us with an abundance of knitted teddy hand puppets and hats for the shoeboxes we prepared each Christmas.

Now she has very generously been knitting 'fish and chip vests' for babies in other parts of the world who have no clothes when they are born and are sent home from hospital wrapped in newspaper (like fish and chips).

Some of the people at the Renew café started knitting these simple woollen vests that can provide warmth and comfort for babies for the first few months of their lives. And even though Lilley lives a long way from us (on the south coast) she has taken time out from knitting for her first great-granddaughter and namesake, Lily, to join our church family in extending help to babies across the world.

The photo shows just some of the vests that Lilley has knitted. If anyone has any spare wool, then please let me or Clive have it and we will pass it on to Lilley (who, incidentally, will celebrate her 90th birthday this year!)



## Ramblers' Group



This jolly band of walkers were enjoying the Derbyshire countryside around Linacre Reservoirs, near Chesterfield last Easter Bank Holiday Monday. Despite lots of mud, threatening rain and hilly bits, we pressed on and were rewarded with lovely

views and the wonderful sight of God's countryside coming to life once again after a rainy winter.



Not only that, but we talked and laughed and enjoyed each other's company and had a thoroughly good day, so that we are all looking forward to the next adventure. Perhaps you would like to join this merry crew? We get together on occasional Bank Holiday Mondays, usually head towards Derbyshire, sharing

transport and walk about 6 miles at a very casual speed.

Our next walk will be on **Whitsun Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May**. To join us you will need to be able to walk 6 miles including some hills, have comfortable shoes with some grip on the sole (trainers will be fine), have clothing appropriate to the weather (rain jacket or sun hat etc. depending on what the forecast is saying), and bring a packed lunch and drink. For more information ask Alan Davies or one of the folk in the pictures.

**Exciting News**—I plan to organise a monthly, Saturday morning walk group for folk who would enjoy a 3 mile, mostly flat stroll in the Nottingham area. These will be ideal for those of us who want to develop our fitness and discover parts of our area which we may not have seen before. Look out for dates and locations in the next edition of the Newsletter.

*Alan Davies*



## Summary of the April Prayer Letter of Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

[www.bmsworldmission.org/ptvokuhl](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/ptvokuhl)



### COLLECTORS ITEMS

£18,000 achieved at auction for a set of false teeth? ... which once belonged to Winston Churchill, I see on the BBC news! What determines the value of an object?



Our middle daughter has a growing collection of 'precious items'. Stones, pinecones, metal pieces, timber. No value, but to her each item is precious, and deserves keeping and displaying, so I have constructed a display shelf with her.

Where am I going with this? Maybe the message of Easter: Christ died for people of all shapes and sizes, the young, the old, the rich, the impoverished, the clever, the uneducated, the well dressed and the scruffy. There is space on His display shelf for you, for me, for your and for my neighbour.

Our neighbours are here in Nepal where individuals who may be despised by their own communities because of illnesses such as leprosy, are declared precious and valuable.

**Toby updated readers on his work at the Green Pastures Hospital. A project to design a key worker accommodation block is now complete and he asked for prayer that funding will be raised to enable the start of the construction in early summer.**

He also referred to the earthquake suffered last year, asking for prayer that the reconstruction work he has been helping to plan can begin soon.

A more personal request for prayer concerns Toby and Pippa's son, Jakey. He has been in hospital recently and his daily routine has been interrupted for some time. This has affected his schoolwork, with GCSEs coming up.

The Vokuhl's contract with BMS is coming to an end this summer, but they "still have a heart for Nepal". Plans for further Christian service there are coming together, and prayer is requested for all the necessary planning.

**Finishing with Toby's own words:** We will reflect in some more detail on the six years plus of supporting the work of INF in our next newsletter.

*Toby, Pippa, Jakey, Ella, and Millie*

## About our Church

***If you are new to the church or just visiting, you may find this page helpful.***

You can expect a warm welcome and a friendly group of people of all backgrounds and ages gathering to learn more about God.

We meet every Sunday at 10:30am for our Sunday Service. During school term time groups for children and young people from 3 - 18 are held downstairs, with a crèche available for under threes. Stewards in the Welcome Hall will be happy to show you where to take your children.

***The Shalom Fellowship*** meets on the first Sunday every month at 2.30pm for worship and teaching in Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

***Toddler Group*** meets Mondays during term time from 10.00am to 11.45am. Parents, grandparents and carers are warmly invited to bring along the children in their care to enjoy play and activities.

***Renew Wellbeing Café*** meets Thursdays from 1.30pm to 4.00pm. Join us for activities, chat and refreshments.

*For specific dates of the above activities please see the Diary section of the magazine. If you would like to get in touch with someone at the church office please use the contact details below.*

***Room Hire*** Different rooms are available for hire. Please contact the church office for details.

***Phone:*** 0115 9604304 during office hours—Mon-Fri 9.00am-2.30pm

***Email:*** admin@mrbc.org.uk

***Church Address:***

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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 May for the June edition.

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**Website: [www.mrbc.org.uk](http://www.mrbc.org.uk)**