

MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—NOVEMBER 2024



Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for November from John Sheppard

Freedom!

Let us begin by taking a brief look at personal freedom. This could be written about at great length, and many people have done so. However, I will use as an example one current, thought-provoking matter. The government is promising to end the practice of “no-fault evictions” from privately rented dwellings occupied under short tenancies. Whatever each of us may think about this emotive proposal, there is no doubt that this change will be a radical and dramatic shift of power from an owner’s freedom to an occupant’s rights.

Secondly, let us briefly consider political freedom. I don’t think that any sensible person would disagree that the peace and security from foreign invasion of western countries including Britain has, to a great extent, been provided by the multi-nation alliance known as NATO. A recent former Prime Minister has publicly called for Ukraine to be admitted into NATO on the basis of its present part-occupied state. The object of this is, of course, that Ukraine would thus receive full and effective support in pushing back the Russian aggression and would then be restored to her proper boundaries.

The above paragraphs will no doubt have produced feelings of division and even provocation in some readers’ minds. Indeed, such matters are debatable. However, I set out below a brief Biblical guide to freedom.

In John’s gospel, Jesus himself says: *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will really know the truth and the truth will set you free. (John 8:31-32) and “So if the Son sets you free, then you will be free indeed.” (John 8: 36 NIV)*

In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, he says *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1 NIV)*

In Peter’s first letter to the Christians of Asia Minor he says *“Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.” (1 Peter 2:16 NIV)*

These comments and teachings on freedom are beyond debate. They are the written Word of God on the subject.

CHURCH DIARY for NOVEMBER

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 3rd November at 2.30pm

Remembrance Sunday—10th November



Toddler Group—Every Monday – 10.00am-11.45am

Renew Wellbeing Café—Every Thursday — 1.30pm to 4.00pm

Reflective Prayer Meeting—Thursday 7th & 21st—11am to 12 noon in the Forest Room

Deacons Meeting—6th November at 7.00pm

Church Members' Meeting—Sunday 17th November after the morning service

PRAYER POINTS

- 1) Prayer for all world leaders in all nations to reflect on values to be responsible and caring, to have integrity and compassion so that no individual or minority group is abused or left in need.
- 2) Prayer for a vision of a loving and peaceful world for all people to strive especially in the Middle East.
- 3) Prayer that all disputes and misunderstandings will be brought to a settled peace based on mutual respect, honour and the concern for each other's grievances.
- 4) Prayer that every home in this church community may be enfolded in your love, brightened by your joy and calmed by your unbroken peace.

Memorial Service

On the 22nd September we held our first memorial service here at MRBC since 2019. Despite terrible weather, over 100 people braved torrential rain to attend, with one woman travelling from Sheffield and another from Manchester.

When people arrived they were able to write the names of their loved ones on leaves which were placed on the 'tree of life' (see photo). The tree was then put at the front of church as the focus of remembrance.

After lighting four candles to represent our grief, our courage, our memories, and our love, Dave gave a thoughtful and comforting address based around the Bible passage John 11:35 'Jesus wept'.

Before the service, everyone had been given a small bag containing 3 stones and they were invited to reflect on their loved one using the stones to symbolise various memories. The smooth stone represented ordinary, everyday memories; the rough stone allowed us to remember the painful and difficult memories we might have about the person or circumstances around their death, and the final, shiny stone, represented precious memories. People were invited to hold all three stones together as we prayed.

After the service, people stayed to enjoy the lovely food that Jennifer had so kindly prepared. It was a valuable opportunity to meet friends old and new and share memories.

We are very grateful to everyone who helped to make the Memorial service happen including Andrea, Edward, Graham, Jennifer's catering buddies, Eileen, Ceinwen and Sadie (sorry if I've forgotten to mention anyone).

From the feedback that we have received it seems that the memorial service was very much appreciated, and we are encouraged to continue this important part of our ministry here at MRBC.

Diane Trusson, Dave Mangan, Jennifer Maxwell



Funeral Ministry

Why is there such a large funeral ministry at Mansfield Road Baptist Church?

MRBC is a very welcoming church, opening its doors to a number of different communities. MRBC has become part of the local communities' heritage, as different family members over many decades have attended for Sunday services, weddings, children dedications and funerals. It has become part of many families' tradition to continue having these important family celebrations and thanksgiving services at this church.

The Funeral Ministry has enabled us to build relations and connections with other churches and ministers have returned to do Sunday services here. Funerals can be active, vibrant, yet demanding services.

There are many people who have returned to our Sunday Services from attending a funeral. One particular person went on to become a member through baptism and has married another member of our congregation. (How amazing is that!) There have been weddings of couples who have met at funerals here. Often people attend funerals, experience the atmosphere of being in the church setting and return to book other special services, dedications and weddings.

We have a special group of volunteers, who give their time and services to make it a welcoming place. Namely our stewards who are attentive, welcoming visitors, ministers and musicians. We are blessed to have a dedicated technician, Chris Douglas, whose journey to church is over 1½ hours one way! He also puts in much preparation when dealing with musicians and their requests.

The size of our church, its beauty and location are other practical reasons we are so popular in the community. MRBC has been blessed with this gift and it is a privilege to be able share this with the local community and many other Christian churches within Nottingham. It has meant we have built many great relations with our brothers and sisters in Christ from other churches. This church's welcoming warm atmosphere leaves a lasting impact on peoples lives at a difficult time.

Jean Taylor & Andrea Dowdie

Picture at the front of the church

As we mark Remembrance Sunday in November, here is an extract from the book *"Building for the Future"* written by Alan Wilson for the church centenary in 2013:

"Until the early months of 1940, the war had failed to impact upon the lives of most people. It was known as the "phoney war". Then, in May, came the Battle of Dunkirk when 330,000 troops were rescued from the beaches of Northern France. This was followed by the Battle of Britain when the RAF kept the skies clear over Southern Britain forcing the German Luftwaffe to change its strategy. Both of these events served to buoy the spirits of the population. The German decision to invade Russia in 1941 took the pressure off activities in the West, although, by that stage, all countries of Europe were either neutral or under German control—as was much of North Africa. Then, in December 1941, the United States entered the war following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. At a stroke, the balance of power had shifted.

The war dragged on through to 1944 when the D-Day landings heralded the beginning of the end, but it was not until the following year that everything concluded following the dropping of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

During the course of the conflict, many German prisoners of war were in camps throughout the country. One such was in Wollaton Park. As soon as peace had been declared, our minister, Mr Baker, offered them a peaceful hand of friendship and held services there and some were able to attend services at Mansfield Road. At that time, the church possessed a small organ and agreed to loan this to the camp. Before the prisoners were repatriated, they presented the church with a framed picture painted by one of the prisoners."



BOOK REVIEW

RESILIENT—Your invitation to a Jesus-shaped life

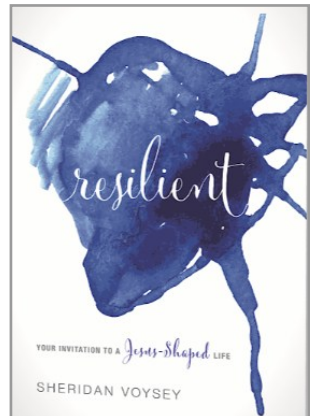
by Sheridan Voysey

Some background taken from Sheridan Voysey's website: "Some days we wake to a world of crystal skies and bright possibilities. And other days it's to rain pelting our windows and thunder rattling our roofs. How can we stay strong when the storms of life hit—when a spouse leaves, a client sues, unemployment strikes, or our dreams fail to come true? Is it possible not just to weather these trials, but bound back even stronger through them?"

After facing his own fierce storm, author and broadcaster Sheridan Voysey tried an experiment—he would read Jesus' Sermon on the Mount every day for a month. That experiment continued a second month, then a third, as he discovered Jesus' astounding invitation for weak people to become strong, little people to become great, and for all of us to find resilience by putting these radical teachings into practice.

Rich with stories and deep with insight, *Resilient* is a journey of 90 readings designed to recalibrate your callings, relationships, spiritual practices, and life choices—helping you to find resilience."

I found this book a very good series of reflections based on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. It is easy to read with short sharp chapters, and lots of helpful insights and sound advice for any stage of a Christian's journey. I first read it a couple of years ago and am currently dipping into it again.



Contributed by Susan Bye

Have YOU read a helpful or interesting book lately you would like to recommend? DO let Sharon or I know.

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: Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Corner of Sherwood Rise/Gregory Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 6JN

Car Parking is allowed on a Sunday in the Page Kirk/ Jarodale House car park along Gregory Boulevard. On weekdays the Sports Car Park opposite should be used. Disabled parking only on the church forecourt.

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 November for the December/January edition.

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Website: www.mrbc.org.uk