



**Sharing the love
of Jesus**

Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter

Sunday 28th January 24

Message from Alistair-

Psalm 23 is no doubt many people's favourite Psalm. In the first 6 verses, the Lord is described as a shepherd and nothing else. And perhaps it's tempting to think that the whole Psalm is about a shepherd and his sheep. [By the way, who was better to write such a poem than David whom the Lord 'took from tending the sheep to be the shepherd of his people'- Psalm 78:70-71].

The difficulty of this is that in verse 5 the metaphorical sheep seem to have a doubly metaphorical table laid for them. Many Bible commentators believe that the final verses of the Psalm change the picture from that of a shepherd and his sheep to that of a host and his guest. The Message version of the Bible translates verse 5 like this, 'You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies. You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.'

Some days that seems to be our experience. It's as if God brings out more and more courses of food and we end up loosening our belt- a promotion at work, a friendship, a blessing, a gift. A lifetime of grace. An eternity of joy.

And then there are the other days! Those days where we have to eat the equivalent of broccoli, or indeed sprouts! Our daily bread could be tears, or suffering, or heartache. Our portion may include adversity as well as opportunity.

So next time your plate has more broccoli and kale than steak and chips, just remember who prepared the meal. Even Jesus was given a portion that he found hard to swallow. But with God's help he did. And with God's help we can too.

Our Service- Sunday 28th January 24-

Our service on Sunday 28th January will be at 10:30am at Sandbach Primary Academy. Steph Radcliffe will be leading the service and Rev. Alistair Stewart will be preaching. The Bible reading is Mark 9:30-37 and the title is, 'Picture This'.

Tea and coffee will be served after the service.

Our Activities- Week beginning Sunday 28th January 24-

Monday- Welcome Bap- 10:00am-12:00 Noon at Oasis.

Monday- Meeting about 'Messy Church'- 7:30pm at Oasis. See notice later in the newsletter.

Tuesday- Tots and Co- 9:30am-11:30am at Oasis- Alison, Chris F and Judith are on the rota.

Tuesday- Encounter with God- 7:00pm-8:00pm at Oasis.

Wednesday- Ladies Fellowship- 10:30am-12:00 Noon at Oasis.

Wednesday- Wednesday Evening House Group- 7:30pm at Oasis.

Thursday- Knit 'n Natter meets at Oasis on the 2nd and 4th Thursday afternoons of the month from 1:30pm-3:30pm.

Thursday- Alpha- 7:45 by Zoom. Session 1- Is there more to life than this? See notice later in the newsletter.

Saturday- Saturday Prayer Gathering- 8:30am-9:15am at Oasis.

If you would like to join any of the midweek groups, please contact Alistair and he will put you in touch with the group leader.

Passion for Praise- Verses from Scripture that emphasise praise to our God-

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. *2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

Wisdom for the Week- Christian quotes to inspire and encourage- Sinful and Loved-

'I am more sinful and flawed than I ever dared believe while, at the same time, more accepted and loved than I ever dared hope.' *Tim Keller- American preacher and theologian.*

News for the Church Family-

From Ian Parsons and Churches Together in Sandbach- Easter Passion Play is coming to Sandbach-

The Christian Theatre Company: Lamps Collective is coming to Sandbach and will be presenting 'The Passion' at St Mary's Church at 6:00pm on Palm Sunday 24th March 2024. The presentation lasts for approx. 75 minutes with no interval.

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite people along to a moving and memorable retelling of the Easter story through the eyes of Peter, Mary Magdalene and a Roman Centurion called Marcus. Please note that the recommended minimum age is 12+.

Tickets are £5.00 and must be purchased in advance, but we are also offering a "pay forward" service, if you know of anyone who would like to come but can't afford the ticket price. This is also ideal if you are unable to come but would still like to donate to the event.

Tickets and flyers will hopefully be available from early/mid-February. You will be able to get them from me, but please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in attending so we can gauge the response.

We have also been asked to provide accommodation and a meal to the team to help reduce costs and therefore if anyone can support the team in this way, please let me know.

We are all very excited to be able to bring the Easter story to our Town in a fresh and new way and hope you will be able to support the event through prayer and by inviting people along.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

From Alistair and the Leadership Team- Messy Church and Alpha-

Messy Church- At our last church meeting, we talked about the possibility of doing 'Messy Church'. 'Messy Church' is a way of being church for families and others. It is Christ-centred, for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration.

Initially, we plan to organize a one-off 'Messy Church' event at some point during the year. However, these events need a significant number of people and a lot of time and effort to run effectively. Therefore, we have arranged a meeting on **Monday 29th January at 7:30pm at Oasis** for all those interested in being involved in a 'Messy Church' event. We really hope that lots of you will want to be involved and will be able to come along to the meeting.

Alpha- Our Alpha course will start on **Thursday 1st February at 7:45pm by Zoom**. It will then usually continue fortnightly. Everyone is very warmly invited to join us. The study guides will be available at church on Sunday. Or please contact Alistair if you would like one of the guides. Session 1 is called- 'Is there more to life than this?'

Here is the zoom link for Alpha, which will be the same for every session.

Ian Parsons is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Alpha Group

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9074373769?omn=83841564364>

Meeting ID: 907 437 3769

Dial by your location

- +44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 907 437 3769

If for any reason the link doesn't work, you can still join the meeting by downloading Zoom onto your device and entering the Meeting ID - there will be no further password.

From George Hill - Bible Reading Week starting Sunday 4th February-

As Christians, all of us are encouraged to put our roots deep into God's Word, the Bible. If you have attended church for some years, you will hopefully have many Bible verses (probably more than you realise) treasured in your memory.

One verse that you may know is Acts chapter 17 verse 11. The apostle Paul had been telling the Good News of Jesus to the people of Thessalonica, until some troublemakers forced him to flee. As soon as it was night, Paul left for the neighbouring town of Berea, where again he started to share the Good News of Jesus. Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, records what happened next:

'Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.' [Acts 17:11].

During our Bible Reading Week, in the warm spirit of the Bereans, we will invite you to choose and read at least one passage from the list of six Bible passages we offer you daily. Thus, on each day you will be able to choose to read any (or all!) of:

- One chapter from the Gospels
- One chapter from elsewhere in the New Testament
- One chapter from the Old Testament
- One Psalm or chapter from Proverbs
- One famous passage (probably a familiar one)
- One entire Bible book (usually a very short one) - to be read in one go.

We'll provide the list of Bible passages for the start of the Bible Reading Week on February 4th nearer the time. Please watch this space for more info!

I have also recorded some chapter readings that can be provided to folks who have difficulty reading print. Please ask.

From Christine and George Hill- Fund Raising Evening for Albania (Dan and Annie Dupree)-

Our TEK URA fundraising Winter Social Evening is at Oasis on **Saturday 27th January from 6:00pm-9:00pm**. We invite you to support any of the following:

Bring 'n Buy- for your surplus Christmas presents (ones that could sell, please!).

Cake Sale.

Skills and Trades Auction - offer your skills or your DIY time (min. £10 per hour)

Come and have fun on the night!

Make donations directly to our Tek Ura Sandbach Baptist Church fundraising page.

At the end of 2023, the amount shown on our page (i.e., our donations towards our 2023 pledge of £2000) stood at a magnificent £2758 (£2921 with Gift Aid) - well beyond our pledge. We would like to reach a new £2500 for 2024. (NB - on the page as it stands, that will show as £2500 on top of the 2023 figure.)

From Ian Parsons- Easter Eggs with a difference-

Every year SBC provides Eggs or Chocolate Bars from the Meaningful Chocolate Company to some of our Church Groups. The Easter Egg contains a 24 page Easter story/activity book and costs £4.50, and the Blessing Bar contains an image of the resurrection and words of a blessing and costs £3.00. Out of the 80 million chocolate Easter Eggs sold each year, the Real Easter Egg is the only Fairtrade one with the Easter Story in a box.

In addition, if you would like to buy any of these items to give to family or friends (or for yourself!), please let me know by 29th January and I will include it in the order. {You only need to pay when the order is received}.

From Alistair- The Father's Love Letter-

A number of you have mentioned how moved you were by the video shown in church on Sunday called 'The Father's Love Letter'. Vera Chamberlain has very kindly prepared an A4 sheet with all the Bible verses that appeared in the video. If you would like a copy, please let me [Alistair] know. Thank you.

And finally....

Most recipes in French language cook books only require a single egg. On egg is an oeuf!

Contacts-

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