



**Sharing the love
of Jesus**

Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter

Sunday 16 November 2025

Reflection for the week

Not even a Sparrow ... by Hilary Forbes

At the beginning of Autumn I was on my way out of my front door when I noticed what looked like a leaf - one of the many that had begun to fall - but something made me double check. In fact, it was a sparrow, who had sadly died. It didn't look as if a cat had got it, but more as if it had just come to the end of its natural life and fallen from the hedge. I gently got a cloth and took it to my back garden, dug a hole, and had a little burial service, thanking the Lord for his (or her) life. The thing that struck me, was how I almost didn't see this little bird among the Autumn leaves. Then that verse came to mind,

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29-31).

That little bird fulfilled our Father's will, and had His utmost attention, just by *being*.

Even when we feel at our most unseen, unheard, and overlooked, God sees us, hears us and we are of infinite significance to Him. A book I read a few years ago has the title of *The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus*. Isn't that a wonderful way of describing the love of God?

There are approximately fifty billion wild birds on the planet, and God sees when even one of the smallest falls. How much more does He pay attention to each one of the more than eight billion people living today? People, who just by *being*, He loves ... and asks us to join Him in His unfathomable, indescribable, relentless tenderness of Jesus, for all whom He brings to our mind, and who we encounter on our pathways, both near and far.

[Brennan Manning, 'The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus,' Published by Revell (2004)]

Our Service Sunday 16 November 2025

Our service on Sunday 16 November will be at 10:30am at Sandbach Primary Academy (SPA). This will be an all age service, presented by our All Age Team. The theme will be 'Interesting Times' and the readings will be Psalm 98 and Luke 21:5-19.

Our Activities for the week beginning Sunday 16 November 2025

- Monday:** Welcome Bap 10:00am-12:00 Noon at Oasis
Amnesty Write for Rights 6:30pm at Oasis [See below for more details]
- Tuesday:** Tots and Co 9:30am-11:30am at Oasis
Encounter with God 7:00pm-8:00pm at Oasis
- Wednesday:** Ladies Fellowship 10:30am-12:00noon at Oasis
Wednesday Group 7:30-9:00pm at Oasis
- Thursday:** House Group 7:45pm by Zoom [Contact Ian Parsons for further details]
- Friday:** Energize Games Night 6:15pm-8:15pm at the School
- Saturday:** Morning Prayer Gathering 8:30am-9:15am at Oasis

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

A Refrain for the Week

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' [Romans 8:28]

News of the Church Family for your prayers

Betty Stirk's shoulder operation did not take place after all and has been rescheduled for this coming week.

Brian Chamberlain has an arthritic build-up on his vertebrae, causing pain and also numbness in his hip and toes which requires an operation to alleviate it. Please pray for the touch of the Holy Spirit to bring healing to this area without the need for an operation.

News items for the Church Family

From George Hill: Jerusalem & Bethlehem Slides fundraising for Albania Saturday 15 November

All are welcome to a slideshow by George Hill, who is revisiting the images from his tour of the Holy Land in 2014.

The show is free and donations will be invited towards the TEK URA ('At The Bridge') mission project in Albania, supported by Sandbach Baptist Church and directed by Dan and Annie Dupree, formerly of BMS. More on TEK URA can be found via Google or <https://tekura.squarespace.com/en/who-we-are> .

The slideshow will follow George and Christine's five days there, travelling through the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane; Mount Zion, Ein Karem and Emmaus; the Old City, the Via Dolorosa and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; the Shepherd's Fields and the Church of the Nativity; Siloam, the Western Wall and

the original Temple Mount steps; the Garden Tomb; Qumran, Masada and the Dead Sea; Bethany and Jericho. (NB - future instalment: Galilee...).

There is not and perhaps never will be a 'good' time to go to the Holy Land. George and Christine arrived only three weeks after the rockets stopped falling in the Second Intifada. Go if you can! But if not, this might be a good way to gain an early flavour of Christmas ...

The Slideshow will be held at the **Oasis** starting at **3.00pm on Saturday 15th November** (to allow a return home near dusk). No need to book - unless you plan to bring a party!

There will be some finger buffet refreshments. Offers of more contributions to Christine, please.

From Mark Thompson: Amnesty International Write for Rights Monday 17 November 2025

Just a reminder about the Amnesty Write for Rights evening on **Monday 17 November** at **6.30pm** at **Oasis**. Every year around this time, people across the world write letters for those whose human rights are being attacked; people who've been harassed, threatened and unjustly jailed. Amnesty International has been running this campaign – called Write for Rights – for over twenty years now, and at SBC we take part by writing two kinds of letters; one to the authorities to ask them to change things; and one to the victims of human rights abuses to assure them of our concern and support.

We will share a simple meal and then get down to work! All materials will be provided. If you are planning to come **please let Mark know** for catering purposes!

From the Leadership Team: Corporate Prayer Tuesdays

As you know we have been holding a short half hour corporate prayer slot immediately before the Encounter with God meetings on Tuesdays so that we could specifically seek God's heart for our future (including the conclusion of the purchase of Oasis; who we are as a church; and the search for a new Minister). The slot has not been greatly utilised but we hope that those who have joined in have found it a blessing.

Given that only a few people have been joining the slot and given that the evenings have drawn in, we will now be closing this slot as from Tuesday 18 November and we will be discussing other opportunities for corporate prayer at the upcoming Annual Church Meeting.

From the Leadership Team: SBC Special Church Meeting and Annual Church Meeting Monday 24 November 2025

On Monday 24 November at Oasis, 36 Green Street, there will be a brief SBC Special Church Meeting (SCM) at 7:30pm, followed immediately by our SBC Annual Church Meeting (ACM) at approx 7:45pm. Non-members are very welcome to attend but may not vote.

The SCM is necessary for us to approve the letting of the manse during the pastoral vacancy.

The ACM will include a secret ballot to re-elect Bernie Williams as Trustee and Elder.

The following papers for the ACM have been sent by email from George:

1. Combined Agenda, including the names of the candidate or candidates for election.
2. Minutes for approval of the Ordinary Church Meeting on Monday 29th September.
3. Safeguarding Policy statement that will be read at the church AGM.
4. Written Group Reports for the year from the church's various groups and activities

The following papers for the ACM have been sent by email from Ian:

5. Finance Report
6. Statutory Accounts for the financial year ended 31 August 2025 (including the Trustees report for the year).

Please attend if you can, because if this meeting is not quorate we would have to call another Special Church Meeting, which would reduce potential income from letting the manse. Thank you.

From Susie Warburton: **Messy Church Saturday 29 November**

Our final **Messy Church** Event for this year is 'Let's Get Ready ... for Christmas' on **Saturday 29 November 2025 10:30am-12:00noon** at Oasis and there is lots of festive fun to be had as we get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We will be decorating Christmas cookies, making light-up 3D stars, floral table-pieces, woodcut tree decorations, watching the nativity story and having snacks together.

Please bring along your friends and family; this is a great opportunity to introduce them to God. Admission is free. Everyone is very welcome. Activities are for all ages and abilities. We would also really value your prayers for this event.

From Chris Nash: **Shoebox Update**

I'm so pleased to report that the shoeboxes were collected on Tuesday - hurrah! - and the final count came to **182 boxes** which must be the most we have ever done. Many thanks to all who contributed to make this happen, and a special 'Thank You' to the Welcome Bap who constantly filled up their donation box every single week! Amazing!

I'd like to take this opportunity to say that next year I will be taking a break from organising the appeal. This doesn't mean it won't happen - in fact I'm sure it will - it may just be done a bit differently.

Dates for your diary

Christmas is coming ☺ ... so here are some key dates for you to note:

Friday 28 November 9:30am	Decorating Oasis for Christmas!
Saturday 29 November 10:30am	Messy Church 'Let's Get Ready for Christmas' at Oasis
Sunday 30 November 6:30pm	CTiS Advent Service St Mary's Church
Monday 1 December	Welcome Bap Group Christmas Meal
Thursday 18 December 6:00pm	CTiS Carols on the Cobbles
Sunday 21 December 10:30am	All Age Carol Service at the School
Thursday 25 December 10:30am	All Age Christmas Day Service at the School

Church Contact:

Bernie Williams (Elder): 07966 202913 [Church mobile]

If you have any items for inclusion in the Newsletter please pass these to Andrea Jones at andrea.jones200@gmail.com by 9am on Thursdays.