

MOTTINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH MESSENGER March 2020



SEARCH ME, O GOD, AND KNOW MY HEART, TEST
ME AND KNOW MY THOUGHTS, POINT OUT
ANYTHING IN ME THAT OFFENDS YOU AND LEAD ME
ALONG THE PATH OF EVERLASTING LIFE.

(PSALM 139 VERSES 23 AND 24).



THE CHURCH
IN THE MIDDLE OF
THE VILLAGE!



A good time to deepen your prayer life

Lent is a time to take stock of ourselves spiritually. This includes setting aside extra time for prayer. Here are some helpful things to remember as you settle down to it:

People have been praying since Adam had a grandson named Enosh. The Bible tells us (Genesis 4 verse 26) that it was during his days when 'men began to call on the name of the Lord'. They have been doing it ever since.

People have had their prayers answered by God since Genesis, too. But if you want to read some beautiful prayers - and answers to them, browse through the Psalms. Again and again the psalmist writes: "the Lord heard my cry".

So - what do you need to bring to prayer? Just the tiniest amount of faith that God is even there... Jesus assures us that even faith as big as a tiny mustard seed will be effective.

What gives you the right to come before Almighty God? Jesus does. The Bible is clear that "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ". (1 Timothy 2 verse 5)

The Bible makes clear that God does not stand on ceremony - in fact, He prefers our personal, spontaneous prayers. Jesus was very matter of fact about it: "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6 verse 6).

The Bible assures us that prayer will bring us good things: 'Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need'. (Hebrews 4 verse 16)

Above all, prayer must be made with a pure heart. "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." (Psalm 66 verse 18) That simply means that if you know you are doing

something wrong, and intend to keep right on doing it, don't waste your time praying.

Finally, what can be the results of your prayers this Lent?

- Relief from your worry, stress and tension (Philippians 4 verses 6 & 7)
- Strength to persevere when you feel under spiritual attack (Ephesians 6 verse 18)
- A growing thankfulness to God, who is worthy of all glory (Revelation 4 verse 11)

Adapted from John Tyler



THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - MARCH 6TH AT 11.00AM.

Prepared by the Women of Zimbabwe

Theme: 'Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk'

John 5:2-9a

The World Day of Prayer 2020 program is based on Jesus' encounter with a person who, although positioned for healing, had not acted upon the opportunities given. Jesus asked - "Do you want to be made well?" You are faced with this life-changing question. What are you going to do? "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk," said Jesus. Our sisters from Zimbabwe are taking Jesus' encounter to be a call to act in love for peace and reconciliation. "The action verbs suggest that we should not be afraid to act on the word of God. God is offering us the steps for personal and social transformation."

Venue: St Edwards Church - St. Keverne Rd, SE9 4AQ

St Edwards invites anyone who would like to join their community lunch following the service to do so. Please let Eddie know by Monday the 2nd March if you would like a place. Price - £4



The Way to the Cross

'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me.' (Luke 9 verse: 23)

These words of Jesus are spoken at a turning point in the gospel. Jesus challenges the disciples about His identity and their commitment to Him: *'who do the crowds say I am?'* (18). It is at this point that He *'resolutely set out for Jerusalem'* (9:51). On our journey through Lent, as we look to events of Good Friday and Easter, what are our priorities as Jesus' disciples to be?

To deny ourselves: this means to saying *No* to ourselves and *Yes* to God, as we humbly submit our will to His. Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane *'not My will but Yours be done.'* (Luke 22:42). It means putting Jesus first in everything: our work, family, ambitions, possessions, marriage, finance and future. We will not be guided by self-interest, but by allowing God to show us how to live in His way.

To take up our cross: this reminds us that the disciple is not immune from suffering, as we follow Jesus along the way of cross. Just as He carried His cross to Golgotha, we cannot avoid experiencing suffering in a fallen world. Every day we are to live in way that demonstrates to everyone that we have died to ourselves, our selfish ways and ambitions, and seek to live for God. It means breaking old selfish habits and ways of thinking, as we allow God to renew us by His Spirit.

In all of this we cannot lose, because like Jesus, it is only through death that we find God's new life. *'He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.'* (Jim Elliot)

Paul Hardingham



Lent, the Way to the Cross



THINKING ABOUT THE PSALMS

'Most of Scripture speaks to us; the Psalms speak FOR us.' (St Athanasius).

Psalm 84 - a heart for pilgrimage

This psalm is appropriate to think about during Lent, as it was used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem. It speaks of the journey to find the presence of God in our lives.

Where is our heart with God?

A Heart for God's Presence: (psalm 84 verses 1 & 2). For the psalmist, the Temple is the focus of God's presence and the place where he longs to be. *'How lovely is your dwelling-place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.'* How much do we long to know God's presence ourselves? Lent is a time to seek Him through the spiritual disciplines of Bible reading, prayer, fasting, silence and solitude.

A Heart set on Pilgrimage: *'Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.'* (psalm 84 verses 5 & 6). Lent reminds us that the Christian life is a journey of faith, which is not always easy. We pass through the valley of Baka, which is the dry desert place in our experience. Here God can seem remote and silent. However, it also the season when we are refreshed by the Holy Spirit filling our lives.

A Heart that's Undivided: *'Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.'* (Psalm 84 verse 10). We will find a home in God's presence only with an undivided heart, as we maintain our focus on God and trust Him for all we need.

Paul Hardingham



PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN PARTS OF KENYA

Al Shabaab murders three Christian teachers in Kenyan school

"The eye of the storm is on us," said a Barnabas Fund contact after three Christian teachers, all in their 20s, were murdered in an attack by Al Shabaab jihadists on a primary school compound in Kenya on 13th January.

Another teacher was shot twice in the leg, and a fifth managed to escape when the militants struck the school's staff quarters at 2am in Kamuthe, about 30km from Garissa town, on the Somali border.

The terrorist spared a female Christian teacher and a nurse with an infant child, but then looted the dispensary, burned down the nearby police post and bombed a telecommunications mast in the marketplace.

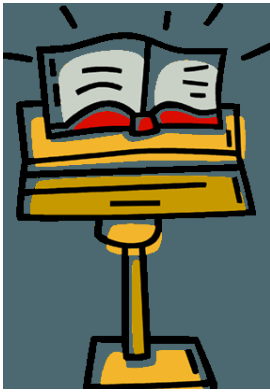
The Al Shabaab raid was the fourth in the area in less than two weeks, claiming a total of ten lives including 4 children. "The intensity of the attacks is terrifying," said our contact. "We appeal to the security agents to double their efforts and devise a security strategy to protect Christians and local Somalis in the region."

One of those killed, Titus, was at the school only because the headmaster was away. The previous day, Titus had played keyboard during a Sunday service at his local church. Anxious because of the recent spate of attacks, he had asked for prayers for safety before leaving for the school. At 11pm on Sunday, he spoke on the phone to his wife Ruth, a teacher at Garissa Academy, and his son, Baraka, wishing them good night. He died three hours later.



...has named Nigeria as key Christian persecution hotspot in 2020. Other persecution hotspots are likely to include Iran, Iraq, China and India.

PRAY FOR THESE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



DIARY OF CHURCH SERVICE PREACHERS MARCH 2020

Sunday 1st March at 10.30am - Messy Church:
Deborah Spinks

Messy Church is preceded by breakfast

Sunday 8th March at 10.30am - *Sue Cope*

Sunday 15th March at 10.30am - *Julie Gardner*

Sunday 22nd March at 10.30am: Holy Communion -*Duncan MacBean*

Sunday 29th March at 10.30am: *David Ball*



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Prayer meeting

Wednesday 4th March at 7.30pm: At the house of Eddie and Dallas Green.

Good Companions

Tuesday 10th March at 10.30am: Shrovetide and Lent.

All Sorts Craft Group

Tuesday 24th March at 10.30am to 12.00md

Community Lunch

Every Wednesday at 12.30pm

Saturday Youth Club for 9-14 year olds - **Cancelled** until Saturday 29th March 7-10pm



Churches together in Mottingham series:

Theme: The Lord's Prayer and Meditation.

Dates: Tuesday 3rd March. Then weekly on Wednesdays until 8th April inclusive at 8.00pm.

Venue: St Andrew's Manse, Court Road

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES IN THE CHURCH

- 1ST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10.30am: Messy Church - This is preceded by breakfast
- 1ST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 7.30pm: Prayer Meeting at Eddie and Dallas's home
- 2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10.30am: Good Companions
- 4TH TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 10.30 - 12.00pm: All sorts craft group
- EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 12.30pm: Community Lunch
- EVERY SATURDAY FROM 7 - 10pm: Saturday Youth Club - for 9 - 14 year olds.

IN AND AROUND MOTTINGHAM AND BROMLEY

MOTTINGHAM LIBRARY IN MARCH

Bromley and Greenwich Councillors' Surgeries:

Bromley: 6.45-8.00pm on the first Tuesday of the month.

Greenwich: 7-8pm on the last Friday of the month.



Coffee Morning

Wednesday 11th March from 10.30-12 noon

Jerry Dowlen will be talking about 'The Art, Literature and Romance' of Dorset



Armchair Walk

Friday 20th March from 6.15-7.30pm

'Beavers, Burials & Bargains'

Join Chris for part II of an armchair walk around Bermondsey



GOD IN THE ARTS

**'He gave us eyes to see them':
woodcut from Cologne Bible of 1478**

The RSPCA was the first national animal welfare society in the world and was founded in 1824 by an Anglican priest, the Revd Arthur Broome. He asked the question, 'Can the infliction of cruelty on any being which the Almighty has endued with feelings of pain and pleasure consist with genuine and true benevolence?'

'He gave us eyes to see them' shows the story of Balaam and his donkey in Numbers 22. Balaam has not heeded God's will, and as he journeys, an angel bars his way. Balaam cannot see the angel, but his donkey can. Three times the animal turns away. Three times he is beaten by his owner, and eventually the donkey asks, 'Why are you beating me when I have served you faithfully?' Balaam's eyes are opened: he sees the angel and his heart repents.

This story is captured in a vivid woodcut from the Cologne Bible of 1478. It was a translation into Low German and enhanced by colourful illustrations. We can see Balaam on his donkey in the countryside. He has raised his hand to strike, unaware that the donkey has seen the angel of God. As we look and ponder this story, we can remember that cruelty and abuse mark out life today with children, vulnerable adults, and all creatures great and small. The donkey calls us to think of how we treat creation around us.

Donkeys can be stubborn, but they are also signs of humility, patience and hard work. In the Gospels, we recall the donkey that bore Jesus into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday which we celebrate next month: the humble donkey sharing in the triumph of that entry. G K Chesterton's poem reminds us that the donkey may be starved, scourged and derided, but he had that special hour of glory. 'There was a shout about my ears and palms before my feet.'

Revd Michael Burgess



ONCE A MONTH CONGREGATION CALLED MESSY CHURCH

FEBRUARY FOCUSING
ON LOVE!

- 1 God is Love!
- 2 God Loves us!
- 3 Love one another!





Bromley Ecumenical Singers

CHARITY CHORAL CONCERT

Programme:

Fauré: Requiem and Cantique de Jean Racine

Mendelssohn: Verleith uns Frieden

Handel: Choruses from The Messiah

Venue: St Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8AT

Time: 7.30pm

Admission £10 - call 020 8697 0759 for tickets

In aid of Friends of Princess Royal University Hospital

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a note book at the rear of the Church for your use if you or someone you know would like to be remembered in prayer by the Church whether anonymously or by name.

If it's easier to leave a note please do leave it in an envelope in the Church.

MOTTINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH NOTICE BOARD FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

From March 23rd for 3 to 4 days work will be carried out on the inside back wall of the church to treat the serious damp.

Our minister, Duncan MacBean, is taking his 3 month Sabbatical starting on the 22nd March We wish you well.

Eddie reminded us that it is almost a year since John Shuttleworth died. He is still missed.

MOTTINGHAM, YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED!

Dorset Road School is threatened with Closure!

Update: The consultation document can be found on the Mottingham Residents Association website.

Dates for consultation meetings are as follows:

Friday, 28th February 2020, 9am,

Wednesday, 4th March 2020, 2pm,

Thursday 5th March 2020, 6pm

(See web site for venues)

CHURCH INFORMATION:

CONTACTS:

The Minister: Rev Duncan MacBean. Tel: 07432 093353

Please Note: The minister's normal day off is a Friday

The Deacon: Maureen Spinks. Tel: 01689 821956

Please note: The deacon's normal day off is Tuesday

The Senior Steward: Dallas Green. Tel: 020 8617 0076

ADDRESS: 62 Mottingham Road, Mottingham, SE9 4QR

THE CHURCH WEB SITE:

Church information is available on the WEB site

Log in to: <http://www.mottinghammethodistchurch.org.uk>.

THE CHURCH AND CHURCH HALL FOR HIRE

Mobile Contact: 07757 717399

We subscribe to **Parish Pump** and the **Association for Church Editors**, two sites which provide material for church magazines.

Our Messy Church is registered with the official Messy Church Site.

We are part of Churches together in Mottingham.