

Church Calendar: February 2012 to April 2012

February

Sunday 26
9.15 & 11.00am David Lawrence: Supper with Jesus
[Mark 14:26-42]
6.30pm Dave Finney: Counterfeit gods,
part 3, Love is all you need

Wednesday 29
8.00pm Reflective service

March

March 4
11.00am Community service. Paul Ferguson: Our
Weakness, his strength [Mark 14:26-42]
6.30pm Communion with prayer for healing, Terry
Wicks

Monday 5
12.30pm Ladies That Lunch

Wednesday 7
8.00pm Reflective service

Saturday 10
8.00am Men's breakfast

Sunday 11
9.15 & 11.00am Mike Levy: Betrayal and desertion
[Mark 14:43-52]
6.30pm Sally Heath: Counterfeit gods part 4,
Money changes everything

Monday 12 to 18
Week of prayer

Monday 12
2.00pm Inside Out: Trip to Wyevale garden
centre at Nailsworth

Wednesday 14
8.00pm Reflective service

Thursday 15
8.00pm Prayer Evening

Saturday 17
6.30pm St Patrick's day charity meal (in aid of
Paraguay Pastor's car fund)

Sunday 18
9.15 & 11.00am Communion. Paul Ferguson: Innocent
Condemned [Mark 14:53-65]
6.30pm Ed Stuart: Counterfeit gods part 5:
The seduction of success

Wednesday 21
8.00pm Reflective service

Sunday 25
9.15 & 11.00am Dave Day: Peter's darkest hour
[Mark:66-72]
6.30pm Mary Groves: Counterfeit gods part 6: The
Power and the glory

Wednesday 28
8.00pm Reflective service

April
Sunday 1
11.00am Palm Sunday
Community meal. Mike Levy: Why, what evil
has he done? [Mark 15:1-15]
6.30pm Communion. Gordon Hindmarch:
Counterfeit gods part 7: The hidden idols in
our lives

Wednesday 4
8.00pm Reflective service

Friday 6
11.00am Good Friday
TCT Good Friday procession: meet at
St Mary's church

6.00pm Good Friday service
4th 8.00pm Reflective Service

Sunday 8
10.00am Easter Sunday
Paul Ferguson: Resurrection [Mark 16:1-8]
6.30pm Terry Wicks

Wednesday 11
8.00pm Reflective service

Saturday 14
8.00pm Men's breakfast

Sunday 15
9.15 & 11.00am Communion. Robert Boros: Nine O'clock in
The morning
6.30pm Robert Boros

Wednesday 18
8.00pm Reflective service

Thursday 19
8.00pm Prayer Evening

Sunday 22
9.15 & 11.00am Paul Ferguson: Death [Mark 15:33-39]
6.30pm Dave Finney

IN HOUSE



The Magazine of Thornbury Baptist Church February 2012

A New Year message from Rob Scott-Cook

On the eighth of January Rob Scott-Cook brought a prophetic message for Thornbury Baptist Church ... '2012 will be a Year of HOPE, bringing God's Protection, Provision and Purpose.' His text was taken from [Psalm 25:3]

'No one whose hope is in the you will ever be put to shame.'

New Year was heralded with firework displays and announcements about the Jubilee and Olympics to try and encourage society to have a feeling of well-being. Yet we are all conscious that this year will be a very challenging year. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between human hype seeking to make the best of things, which is often linked with external events such as good news, and that inner sense of HOPE, which even when everything is dark and difficult makes such a difference to our lives.

Psalm 25:3 "No one whose hope is in the you will ever be put to shame." This is a remarkable prophetic promise for TBC for 2012. For many of us there may be challenges this year in church, work or family life with uncertainties and financial concerns. What is it that makes the difference? Is it someone slapping us on the back, a New Year's resolution, or self-generated human optimism? Or is it a deep inner sense of hope that makes the difference?

We've just celebrated Christmas and that is such a message of hope. A child was born into poverty. He associated with the outcasts of society. His life was cut short at 33 and yet he has brought more hope to people than anyone else in history. His life, death and resurrection bring such HOPE to life. Think of a lighthouse. A lighthouse brings PROTECTION as a safeguard

from the danger of the rocks in a storm. It is a place of PROVISION, as being so remote, it needs to store significant provisions. It is also a place of guidance and direction as we need God's plan and PURPOSE for our lives. HOPE, like a lighthouse, can bring God's PROTECTION, PROVISION and PURPOSE in 2012.

HOPE can make all the difference. In an earthquake a woman was buried for several days and when rescued, she whispered that it was only HOPE that kept her alive. But how can HOPE keep you alive? You can't eat it or drink it. You can't even touch it. And yet there can be a deep inner assurance, which is why the Bible speaks about faith as the substance of things hoped for. So HOPE not only brings protection and provision, but also motivation in discovering God's purpose. It can be the most inspiring thing to bring out the potential in a human life. Helen Keller became blind and deaf at an early age. Her teacher, Miss Sullivan, eventually found a way to

In 2012, when darkness seems to come, we need to look to God as our lighthouse

teach her that objects had names and some basic communications, but life remained a struggle. Miss Sullivan longed for Helen to find a source of inner strength to enable her to get through her challenging life and knew that the only thing to do that was if Helen could find real HOPE. She explained that the Son of God loved Helen and gave his life for her and that his name was Jesus, Helen's response was, "I always knew he was there but I never knew his name". Her discovery of that inner HOPE enabled her to achieve remarkable things, which no blind/deaf person had previously managed. She gave HOPE to many other blind and deaf people. Towards the end of her life she was asked "What would be worse than having not sight?". She immediately responded that it would be worst to have to have sight, but no vision, no HOPE..

In 2012, when darkness seems to come, we need to look to God as our lighthouse and hold that prophetic word 'No one whose HOPE is in You will

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ever be put to shame', as we sense God's PROTECTION, PROVISION and PURPOSE.
Rob Scott-Cook

I never wanted to be a youth worker

Not so long ago I wanted to be a fireman. I don't know what happened to the years that have gone by since I was on the brink of making choices about finishing school and selecting my career which I would be in for the next 50 years of my life, but it's not really panned out the way I thought it would. And I love it! It's a big world out there and I'm currently working with kids who about to be thrown into it.

Working with a young lad who's whole life from 9am to 3.30pm is spent avoiding as much work as possible in lessons by making darts with drawing pins and blue-tack, then bartering the price of half a cigarette at lunch time, there can be difficulties in engaging in conversation about the bigger things like... the rest of his life! There are some things in a youth work job that a youth worker has to just accept – one of these is bad time-keeping. A case in point being the after-school Christmas party that I organised 4-6pm in the TBC youth block. I was disheartened that no one turned up. That was until 6.30pm. (God, give me patience!)

'Never work with children or animals' someone said. I would half agree; I don't much like dogs. Youth work on the other hand is brilliant...



Picture: A young person's final graffiti piece.

Events

As well as the exceptionally unsuccessful Christmas party I've held a graffiti workshop for some of the youngsters I'd had the pleasure of getting to know the best. We had a great afternoon with a couple of well known graffiti artists from Bristol. (Not *the* well known one.) I'm also part way through setting up a skateboarding, BMX and scooter competition at

Thornbury skate-park to be held on 12th May. This should attract a lot of energy to some fundraising that the young people are hoping will be used to make improvements to the skate-park. We are in talks with the Town Council about how best to proceed with this.



Picture: Joel Neal on BMX.

Mentoring

I spend about ten hours a week mentoring young people one-to-one. This is normally with young people who've been referred by staff at school because of consistently difficult behaviour, and many of the young people I work with are on disciplinary stages – seemingly intent on being excluded from school. Whilst some people are put off by the challenges that these kind of young people present, I genuinely enjoy the down-to-earth, no-messing conversations about the issues they face and problems they are dealing with. Most of them truly appreciate the time that they get to spend with someone who will listen to their point of view and help with overcoming some of the barriers they find themselves up against. I'm developing my role in the school's existing mentoring programme to include meeting young people outside of the school context which will give me the chance to get their families alongside too.

Detached

There have been a number of people who have already volunteered to help seek out young people who are hanging around on the streets and spending time with them. This is known as detached work (as it's not connected to any youth centre etc.). By making relationships with these young people, who are perhaps not accessing any other youth provision, we provide opportunity for these young people to spend time with role models, get signposts to other services (such as help overcoming addictions to nicotine/drugs) and to have supportive people around who can help them achieve all they hope to become.

A massive thank you

Since starting at TBC I've felt hugely supported. This is in no small part due to the welcome and induction given by Paul Ferguson and some of the other leaders, and particularly Helen Smedley who has now gone off and left me all alone in the office we used to share. But also to all the people who I see around the church and town from day to day, anyone who's invited us to lunch/dinner, and everyone who is so encouraging to my wife and me when we visit on a Sunday once a month. Thank you so much! I'll keep you updated as the work continues to develop.

Dan Potter

Deepening Discipleship

At the Family Forum recently we began to talk about the challenge of following Jesus and the call to be disciples. Following Jesus is exciting, sometimes confusing and always challenging! Christian discipleship is a call to grow in our love of God and in our love of our neighbour; it is a call to become increasingly like Jesus, both in our knowledge of the Father and in our engagement with his world.

With this in mind we looked at a model of small group discipleship, which has been developed by The [Inspire Network](#). They aim to support Christians on the journey of discipleship and provide encouragement and the resources needed.

People who join an Inspire group commit to a 'way of life' in which they seek firstly, to grow in their appreciation and receipt of God's love; secondly, to develop their use of the spiritual disciplines that draw us nearer to God; thirdly, to seek to share God's love in their everyday lives. Crucially they also commit to meet with a small group of three or four friends to receive support and accountability in following this way of life.

It's simple but profound. It is making your growth as a disciple intentional.

These groups are not seen as a replacement for home groups and will not be for everyone but can I encourage you to at least pray about them and explore whether this is for you or not. I am sure that you will have lots of questions and a good place to start is to take a look at the website: www.inspire-network.org.uk - you will find lots of good material and hopefully some answers to your questions. There are also some leaflets on the welcome desk introducing Inspire.

If this initiative is of interest to you could you let me know and we will, in due course, setup a

meeting with David Lawrence, who works for the Inspire Network, establishing, training and mentoring Inspire groups. He will be able to help us in the process of setting up these groups and in our understanding of their value. I believe that joining together and encouraging one another in groups like these will prove to be hugely significant for us as a church.

Paul

The necessity of prayer

WE NEED TO PRAY: not that much prayer will guarantee that we obtain what we want as a gift from God; more that we will truly want what God gives us when, through spending time alone with him, we begin to understand him and our purpose within his kingdom.

The history of Jesus' prayer recounted in the gospels is sketchy to say the least but we can see there that he made it a priority and ensured that through it, he had a clear vision of his purpose. May we say then that if Jesus found prayer to be such a priority, how much more so should we?

A major obstacle to prayer for many people is our imperfection: our sense of inadequacy with words, our guilt over personal failings, our inconsistency and unreliability; all of which conspire to make us hide ourselves from exposure to the perfect gaze of God. But who is 'your God', the person you understand and feel as that Mysterious Other; is he really such a stern character that you need to hide? Doesn't he keep telling us that when we are less than perfect then he is the best person to talk to about it all?

Here is some good advice then. First of all forget the perfect prayers, it is simply showing up that counts most of all. Secondly, don't try to extend yourself beyond your capabilities; ten minutes of sitting quietly in the presence of God is a wonderful daily discipline; and it gets better and more meaningful the more often you do it – but if you miss a day please don't feel a failure, just do what is possible for you. Thirdly, God is above all else a realist; he wants to know the real you, not the person you think you ought to be.

If you think that praying with others would invigorate your prayer life, why not ask a friend about meeting up to pray together? If you don't know of anyone then contact the church office and we will help you. There are also some regular prayer meetings in the church: before each Sunday service, the AIM group, the monthly Prayer Evening and then, if you prefer a more liturgical format there is the Wednesday reflective service.

Robie