

IN HOUSE



The Magazine of Thornbury Baptist Church January 2011

Happy New Year!

THIS NEW YEAR we look forward to God's continued and gracious work amongst us. It is fantastic to see so many people involved in the work of the Kingdom, bringing the love and blessing of God to our community – so thank you all. We continue to seek God over future leadership appointments so please join us in praying. We also want to restate and recommit ourselves to the vision of walking with Jesus as His disciples. With this in mind can I encourage all of us to think about joining and sharing in one of our really good small groups. These groups help us fulfil our goal of becoming better disciples and are also the first port of call for pastoral care.

Can I also encourage you to pray. We organise regular opportunities to pray corporately but perhaps more importantly can I encourage you to make prayer a greater priority in your life. We all know that it is one of the most difficult aspects of Christian life and one we feel most guilty about. But as we face up to a New Year with all its challenges let prayer and drawing near to God be a means of experiencing His grace and love.

I wonder how you feel about this year that lies before you? From my angle 2010 has been a difficult year and I am not at all sorry to wave it goodbye. I also realise that it has been an uncertain time for us as a church community and my illness and Lis and Andrew's departure have contributed to this. Yet despite these challenges God has been at work amongst us proving Himself to be faithful and His promise is that He will never leave us or forsake us. The writer to the Hebrews reminds these early Christians to: *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid".* (Hebrews 13:5-6) Many, if not all of us have times of physical need. All of us are in need spiritually and will remain so as long as we live in this tent of a body – to use the apostle Peter's words (2 Peter 1: 13). But despite our frailties and even our failure God does

not abandon us. Never! The word *never* used in this passage is emphatic so *never* means NEVER!

It is at times of difficulty when we are most likely to be tempted into thinking that God is somehow absent - I have been tempted this way. A member of the church came to me one Sunday morning and said, "I think I have a word from God for you." This person is not given to doing that sort of thing but I am very glad they did. The word they gave me was one verse from Psalm 46, verse 10 to be exact - "Be still and know that I am God."

That verse, in fact the whole psalm, has been a source of great help to me this past year. Psalm 46 is a beautiful expression of confidence and rest in God whilst in the midst of very difficult and uncertain circumstances. Although there is some debate over the exact

historical event referred to, it was obviously a period of history when Jerusalem was under attack. It could well refer to the occasion when Hezekiah, king of Judah, refused to bow the knee, metaphorically speaking, to Sennacherib king of Assyria. As a result of this rebellion Sennacherib and his vast army swept down upon Jerusalem with frightening power and laid siege to the city. Sennacherib boasted that he had imprisoned Hezekiah "like a caged bird". In view of this perilous situation verse 10 seems somewhat strange - "Be still and know that I am God." Surely a better answer would have been: "Don't worry because I'm about to destroy this terrible army." When we are in the middle of difficulty our prayers so often implore God to take away whatever it is that causes distress. Yet God's answer to Hezekiah was to reassure him that He was present; this is also the case with us.

Hardship, failure, sickness, loss, whatever, doesn't signal the absence of God, in fact this is where He is found. The apostle Paul expressed this thought in this way: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12: 9) Ken McGreavy said to me on his last visit, that in our culture when suffering comes we ask the question,

God is with you;
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"Where is God?" But in cultures more akin with suffering, when suffering comes, they confess, "There is God."

God is with us! God is with you; and whatever challenges you face this year know that He will NEVER forsake you.

With love
Paul

NEW BEGINNINGS

Our church is an organic community with new people joining us all the time. This magazine introduces three new faces.

HELLO from Gordon and Rachel Hindmarch.

We've been asked to share something about ourselves as two people who are new to TBC. Our home is in Easter Compton where we moved just over a year ago after living for a while in Leeds. We both attend Bev and Helen Hope-Bell's housegroup on Tuesdays and Rachel sometimes plays the keyboard during Sunday services. We met at church in Macclesfield when we were both working in Cheshire. Shortly afterwards we were married in the Wiltshire village where Rachel was brought up and have three children: John Mark (26), Rosalyn (24) and Thomas (21). We've decided to introduce each other.



Let's begin with Rachel, who is the younger partner in our marriage. As Head of Music at a school in Bristol, she teaches through to GCSE and A-level, and manages all the visiting instrumental teachers. Rachel has just arranged a school production called The Four Elements, based on the themes of Fire, Water, Earth and Air. Her role was to conduct the orchestra and choir in this multi-media show which also involved dance, drama and film. In December she directed the music for the whole school Carol Service in Clifton Cathedral and went out with her friends in the Music Department for a staff Christmas meal.

On the theme of food, Rachel is a brilliant cook – one of the things that made me first sit up and notice her. She relaxes by reading, completing sudokus and engaging in gentle retail therapy. On Mondays she watches University Challenge

when she can't believe how knowledgeable many of the young people are. She's usually the quiet, calm and reflective member of the team.

Next there's Gordon who is the senior partner but only due to his greater age and height. As Regional Minister for the West of England Baptist Association, among various things, he has responsibility for the pastoral care of the ministers in the 120 member churches. Most Sunday mornings he is visiting the different congregations but tries to attend evening

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worship at TBC whenever he can. Prior to becoming a Baptist Minister, Gordon worked as a Chemical Engineer which gave him great experience of working alongside people in heavy industry.

Since his childhood Gordon has supported Manchester City, the richest and most underperforming football team in England. A few times each year, this takes him back to the North where he returns to his family roots and tries to regain his accent. People usually reckon he is the more vocal and activist one of us.

Together we share a passion for serving God in the church and community because of our faith in the Lord Jesus. This has led us to ministry in a church plant in Reading and a multi-congregational church in Leeds. We love coming to TBC because of the warmth of fellowship, the riches of worship and Paul Ferguson's gentle sense of humour, all of which make us smile.

Please feel free to introduce yourself to us.

HELLO FROM JOAN COLWILL

AS A CHILD I was brought up in Wiltshire, so when I moved here, the Gloucestershire accent made me really feel at home.

For many years we lived happily in Thame, near Oxford, as a family; John my husband and our sons Alan and Brian. Unfortunately John died suddenly in 2000. It was like losing a half of me and of course I still miss him but we have many good memories. John would be so proud of all his family.

Last year, Emma (my daughter-in-law) and I were chatting and she said she felt God was wanting me to move to Thornbury. I had been

feeling the same way and it really confirmed to both of us that God was definitely directing my path.



I sold my house and hoped I could move to a new one straight away. However, I had to rent first and God asked me to be patient. It was the first time I had moved on my own. I must admit I haven't always found it easy. In fact at some point it felt as if the

carpet had been pulled from underneath me. However, I never doubted about moving, even when things were hard. I realise looking back how much God has helped me. I find it so reassuring that when we are hanging on, God is holding on to us!

God has given me many blessings; my family, Bri, Emma and grandchildren, Anna, Ben & Ellie and also Alan and Bee and my two teenage grandchildren Jack and Sasha in Sidmouth. I have also received God's love and care from everyone at Thornbury Baptist Church – such a welcome and also from neighbours too.

When we are going through new beginnings God can teach and encourage us in many ways. I have been praying for guidance for the future as it is so easy to go our own way. This next Scripture passage shows of Christ's great love for us. If we are new here or well settled, let us reach out with God's love to others:

Ephesians 3:16-19:
I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. AMEN

Joan

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

January 18th – 25th 2011

THIS YEAR we are expressing the unity of the Christian community in Thornbury in a number of ways. On the Sunday preceding the start of the Week, leaflets will be available for use with prayer needs from around the churches. There will be two opportunities for us to meet together during the Week. On Wednesday 19th Dr David Wenham from Trinity College, Bristol is speaking to us about the parables in Luke's Gospel, at 7.30pm at St Paul's Church. On Monday 24th there will be a Prayer Event in the Parlour at Christ the King Church, starting at 8.00pm.

NEW ALPHA COURSE

On 17th January we are starting an Alpha course. This has proved to be a very effective form of evangelism over many years. It takes the form of a meal, followed by a talk by Nicky Gumbel on DVD and a discussion in a non-judgmental environment. The meal enables people to relax and get to know one another which helps build trust to enable honest discussion. Please prayerfully consider whether you could invite a friend to join you on this course, which lasts for eight weeks. Invitations will be available.



Alpha

HOLY SPIRIT SERMON SERIES TO BEGIN

We will be starting two new sermon series in the near future. Both are concerned with the Holy Spirit as we believe that it is important for us as a church to consider his position in the Trinity and his work in our lives. In the mornings this will include looking at various aspects of this, from Jesus' promise to the disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to empower them, his work in creation and in our lives as he reveals God to us and enables us to live the lives God wants for us both individually and as the church community. There will be teaching on the gifts he has for us and prayer that we will experience all that he has to offer us.

In the evenings we will be working through the different aspects of the fruit of the Spirit as set out in Galatians 5 – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control - considering how he shapes and changes us so that the fruit becomes evident in our lives.

Church Calendar: January 2011 to February 2011

Prayer is vital. The following regular prayer events take place at TBC:-Prayer before each service in the Prayer Room; AIM on Mondays at 7pm each week in the Crèche; 8 am on Saturday mornings in the Crèche.

January			Revelation		
2 nd	11 am	Community service - Promises	6.30pm		Dave Finney - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Patience
	6.30pm	Service of healing & commitment for 2011	14 th	2.30pm	Inside Out - Sylvia's Favourite Gardens
8 th	8am	Men's Breakfast - Community Police	17 th	8pm	Prayer Evening
	10.30am	Beanies Dance Group	20 th	9.15 & 11 am	All age service - Mike Levy
9 th	9.15 & 11 am	Rob Scott-Cook	6.30pm		Alan Butler - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Kindness
	6.30pm	Mary Groves	24 th		Welcome Evening
10 th	2.30pm	Inside Out - Stuart's story	27 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - The Power of the Holy Spirit
16 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - The promise of the Holy Spirit	6.30pm		Terry Wicks - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Goodness
	6.30pm	Ian Taylor - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Love	March		
17 th	7.30pm	Alpha course starting	5 th	10.30am	Beanies Dance Group
18 th - 25 th		TCT Prayer week for church unity	6 th	11 am	Community service & meal Speaker: David Lawrence - The Community of the Holy Spirit
20 th	8pm	Prayer evening	6.30pm		Dave Ling - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Faithfulness
23 rd	9.15 & 11 am	Sam Yeghnazar - ELAM	12 th	8am	Men's breakfast - men's walking weekend reunion
	6.30pm	Sam Yeghnazar - ELAM	13 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - Holy Spirit, the Giver of Gifts
26 th	8pm	Family Forum	6.30pm		Sally Heath - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Gentleness
30 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - God The Holy Spirit	15 th		Inside Out - Oakham Visit
	6.30pm	David Staley - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Joy	17 th	8pm	Prayer evening
February			20 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - The Function of Gifts
5 th	10am	Beanies Dance Group	6.30pm		SNG - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Self Control
6 th	11 am	Community Service & meal Speaker: Philip Jinadu - Philip the Evangelist	27 th	9.15 & 11 am	Dave Day - Gifts & Meeting Together
	6.30pm	Neil Mobbs - Fruit of the Holy Spirit - Peace	6.30pm		John Moseley
12 th	8am	Men's Breakfast - ALL invited - ladies too! Valentine giveaway			
13 th	9.15 & 11 am	Paul Ferguson - The Holy Spirit &			