

EYNESHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Newsletter - 26th September 2020

Keeping us connected



Harvest

SUNDAY 27th SEPTEMBER

HARVEST SERVICE in EBC
at 10.30 a.m.

(See important information overleaf)

Leader: Revd Zoltan Biro

Parables of 'Christian' Behaviour

The parable of the Sower

Matthew 13: 1-23

If anyone wishes to bring produce it should be only tinned foods and fresh fruit & vegetables. No eggs please.

**Monetary gifts will be going to
Baphumelele Children's Home**

Donations can be cash or cheque: cheques payable to Eynsham Baptist Church please. Alternatively, you can put gifts through Angie Cox's door at 108 Spareacre Lane. Anyone who is self-isolating, but who would like to give, please contact one of the Deacons to arrange collection.

SERVICE LIVE-STREAM

For those unable to attend, the service will be live-streamed on the EBC YouTube channel - click on the link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXSLz5V86D98t1FqLLAw-Wlg?view_as=subscriber

N.B. you just need to click on the link, there is no registration required: I pads and Android devices have the Youtube application pre-set.

MESSY CHURCH

at 3.00 p.m.

on the Playing Fields.

**Anyone intending to attend must let
Sheila or Zoltan know - by email**

sheila.wood1952@gmail.com

or phone 01993 650263.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
FOR THOSE ATTENDING
SUNDAY WORSHIP

a. Because we are constrained by social distancing limits, we need to know **by Saturday afternoon** the number who wish to attend. This can be by email to the Church Secretary sheila.wood1952@gmail.com or phone 01993 650263. By law, the church has to maintain a record of the names of attendees for 21 days for Track & Trace purposes.

b. The law currently requires **ALL** attendees to wear face coverings unless exempt or under age 12.

c. No-one with COVID-19 symptoms may enter the premises.

d. For the time being, we will not be celebrating communion at any service.

e. Entry to the church building will only be via the side door. People with disabilities may use the Fire-door into the Main Hall, with assistance from a Steward. Exit will be via the Church Main Door (Sanctuary) or Fire-door from the Main Hall.

f. There will be a number of stewards in attendance who be monitoring hand-sanitizing, social distancing, circulation directions, etc.

g. You will be served tea/coffee **IN YOUR SEAT** after the service. Please don't move around as this creates additional risks of spreading the virus.

Above all, please keep a sense of humour at this difficult time. It is a time of heavy responsibility for those who run your church. **Please pray for your Deacons.**

Larry

OTHER SERVICES ON SUNDAY

8.10 a.m. BBC Radio 4

Sunday Worship

1.15 p.m. BBC 1 Songs of Praise

Monday to Friday

9.45 a.m. BBC Radio 4 LW service

DAILY HOPE - 0800 804 8044

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England. The line is available 24 hours a day.

SCBA REFLECTION

'Getting Older' by Dave Llewellyn

https://youtu.be/FTx_DQ1k88U

ZOOM CHURCH MEETING

We apologise that several people had difficulty in connecting to the scheduled meeting, and so it was decided to postpone it until another Sunday, date to be decided. Details will follow.

EBC DEACONS MEETING

11.00 a.m. on Tuesdays. Please continue to pray for Zoltan and our Deacons in these challenging times.

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Thursday 1st October at 11.00 a.m.

Studying Ruth. All are welcome.

Meeting ID: 821 2089 8795

Passcode: 994274

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82120898795?pwd=ejN4RU8rSkp-DRFlxYlJQbEhHUytIZz09>



A Christ centred existence

(Philippians 1:21-30)

For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me ... (but) I have the burning desire to melt away and be with Christ, for that is much better by far (vs. 21&23, Mounce)

When Apostle Paul wrote these lines, he was imprisoned in Rome. So, this theological reflection about death is not a theoretical exercise, but a response to the reality of it, which was a potential outcome of this predicament.

In our reading, he provides a re-evaluation of death. Our modern culture is dominated by countless efforts of making life fulfilling which involves eliminating both the threat and the experience of death. Hence the idea that "dying is gain" sounds bizarre. But we must remember, that from his perspective denying the possibility of mortality would have been foolish. So, he decides to face it head on and argues that death is not a transition into a state of non-existence, but it is the moment when he will be united with Christ. Paul's circumstances and language reminds us of the last message written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer before his execution in a concentration camp in Nazi-Germany: "... for me this is the end but also the beginning."

At this point, however, Paul uses very evocative language. To us, the sentence "I desire to depart and be with Christ" sounds suicidal, but for the Greek natives of 1st century Philippi meant something completely different. Because for them each and every single element of this short sentence evoked the bliss of the union of the bride and groom.

The apostle sets the scene with the term desire – a term often used in the ancient discourse of love. In almost all English

translations Paul desires to "depart" or to "be gone." But these statements do not give justice to the meaning expressed here. Paul's wish is that his body be altered, not removed, hence the Latin Vulgate translates it to "dissolve". This might not mean much to us, but to his ancient audience Paul has just alluded to the dire effects of love. Many Greek poets called *eros* the "Limb-loosener." For example, Cyrino (7th century BC.) describes an intimate moment between lovers like this: "and with desire that loosens limbs, but more meltingly than sleep and death she looks over me..." For his Greek audience sleep, death and love all offer relaxation and an unburdening but at a price: the loss (melting) of self.

Paul wishes to melt *and* "to be with Christ." English speakers are familiar with the idiom "to be with" used of lovers' presence to one another. The Greeks had the same idiom. In fact, the phrase points to that moment in the Greek wedding when the bride and groom were finally left alone to share with each other all that they are and all that they have. So, what Paul tries to capture here is his excitement upon his impending marriage to Christ, where "death is Paul's escort to the bridal chamber" (Chrysostom). This short sentence is full of meaning and highlights that for apostle Paul the reality of Christ is so central that for him in life nothing else matters: *life is Christ*.

Prayer: *God of the first and the last, and all those in between. Your grace reaches out to all of us – life-long believers or newcomers alike. You call us to live as citizens of heaven, to work together with one mind and one purpose, to reach out in love to those in need. Strengthen us so we may build up Your upside-down kingdom, where the last are first, and the first are last, and there is grace enough for all. In Jesus name we pray. Amen*

Zoltan

For the promise of harvest
contained within a seed
we thank you.
For the oak tree
within an acorn.



The bread
within a grain.

The apple
within a pip.

The mystery of
nature
gift wrapped for us to sow
we thank you.

PRAYER

At this time of thanksgiving, Creator God, we thank you for the splendour and beauty of creation; for the ordered succession of seasons; for your love which made the world. We thank you for the good and fertile earth; for the fruits of the earth in their seasons; for the life that sustains our life; for the food that we daily enjoy. We thank you for those whose labour supplies our physical needs; for those who harvest our crops, those who transport them, those who process them, those who sell them.

But loving Lord, we also pray for those who have no harvest to celebrate, no crops to gather, or labour to pursue. We pray for those who have left their homes, driven by war or want, to become refugees, aliens dependent on others. We pray for those with no energy for praise, whose bread is bitterness and whose water is tears.

We especially pray for those we know in our community at this time who are struggling, through bereavement, pain or hardship, that they will find peace and comfort from you.

In all these things we pray that you might grant us a vision of justice as well as charity and strengthen our readiness to help; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ASYLUM WELCOME

Donations still needed. Please speak to Marcus Thompson on 01865 881808.

EYNSHAM COMMUNITY LARDER

Anyone who is finding it difficult to buy the food they need can request help, either a regular or a one-off food parcel. If you, or anyone you know, needs help, call Bob Thiele on 07738 063083 or email eynshamhelp@gmail.com and ask for information. **Donation points** in Co-op, Spar and The Market Garden.

EYNSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

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CHURCH SECRETARY:

Sheila Wood - 01993 650263

CHURCH TREASURER:

Bob Thiele - 01865 426203

DEACONS:

Angie Cox - 880563

Barbara Cook - 375730

Denise Launchbury - 881128

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June Poole - 375130

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Sue Law - 07796 955472

Please make Zoltan or Deacons aware of any pastoral needs.

Contributions to linmiller25@gmail.com or ring 01865 881780 (*subject to space constraints and editorial discretion*).

