

Precious Scriptures



The Mag in June

2023

The monthly magazine from Adeyfield Free Church.

From the Editor.....

At a recent Friday Prayers one of those present believed they heard the Lord speaking to them about precious scriptures that, over the years have served to strengthen and build their faith. The point being made was that those scriptures will always be prominent in the journey of faith but must be constantly reviewed and seen in the context of the now.

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
I SHALL NOT BE IN WANT.**
HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES
HE LEADS ME BESIDE QUIET WATERS
HE RESTORES MY SOUL.
HE GUIDES ME IN PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.
**EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE
VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH
I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR YOU ARE WITH ME**
YOUR ROD AND YOUR STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME.
YOU PREPARE A TABLE BEFORE ME
IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES.
YOU ANOINT MY HEAD WITH OIL, MY CUP OVERFLOWS.
SURELY GOODNESS AND LOVE WILL FOLLOW ME
ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE, AND I WILL DWELL
IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER.
PSALM 23

I think most of us will say that certain scriptures have played important parts in our faith journeys, some of them very unlikely on first glance. I was once present at a Ladies' Day in Kingdom Faith Church in Horsham when the visiting speaker preached on a list of names in Chronicles. Now these would not appear to be the most inspirational verses in the Old Testament but the insight that she brought while working her way through the list was very exciting and surprising.

So, what is it that makes a verse from the Bible stand out as important, special, or precious to us? For me it is usually something that I read during a time when I am asking the Lord questions, or seeking enlightenment about something. Sometimes it might just be the light going on to illuminate something I have wondered about for ages or a new clarity that I never saw coming.

It is interesting how puzzlement about something in the Bible can linger around for years until the Holy Spirit intervenes. Then we wonder how on earth we went for so long without understanding that it is so simple. Perhaps this is what makes those scriptures so precious. It is the intimacy of the Holy Spirit coming close to little me and taking time to show me something wonderful about Himself. It is the memory of that moment when the clouds parted and the light got through.

Without the help of the Holy Spirit, we can all become brilliant exponents of the contents of the Bible, But with Him we enter into the wonder of what really lies between the covers.



A message from Penny who has been working incredibly hard on her preaching course. Well done, Penny.

Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher Course

Thank you, AFC family for all your support while I have been studying. I have completed my first year and am now halfway through! This is a report that was recently on the URC Facebook page. I appreciate all your prayers and support. *Penny*



United Reformed Church

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After meeting for a weekend of reflection, worship and fellowship, a second cohort of students has spoken highly about the Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers course. Find out what they have to say about it here, <http://ow.ly/wPyB50NQaUO>



From Chris Smith.....

I don't have any precious scriptures. Almost every time I listen to my bible the scripture is relevant to that time. I suppose Psalm 139 is a lovely one to be reminded of. I'm reading Revelation currently. It's about the third time but this time it seems clearer somehow. I think God reveals scripture to you when the time is right.

Christine Smith

A Call to Prayer

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chron 7:14



Many years ago, during a prayer time at AFC this scripture was given to the whole church as an incentive to pick up this instruction and promise from God. Since then, He has repeated this word several times. When God keeps saying something it usually means He sees this as an important instruction. The call to humility, seeking God and prayer has been something that has been the repeated call to us and so we have reinstated Friday prayers now we are free from the restrictions of covid.

**Every Friday [unless stated in the newsletter]
between 1pm and 2pm in the worship room**

Important Bible Verses That Have Meaning For Me *From Sandie B.*

The focus for this month's magazine is Precious Scriptures. However, being asked to give one scripture I find to be extremely difficult. All scriptures are precious.

In short, Christians know the scriptures are God's Word because in them they hear the voice of their Lord. As Jesus declared,



“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10: 27).

Over the years I have found myself turning to the following scriptures for solace, inspiration and to

help others. For me it has to begin with Psalm 139: 1-18.

Particularly verses 13 and 14. **You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!**

Your workmanship is marvellous - and how well I know it.

Each of us is unique and special ... embraced and accepted by God himself ... even though not one of us is perfect.

In Numbers 6: 24-26 the simple words of this blessing reflect God's desire for all his people.

‘May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you his favour and give you his peace.’

In Isaiah 40: 29-31 **I know that I will be able to seek God and wait on him to complete his work in my life and I will be continually renewed.**

He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on the wings of eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not grow faint.

I am not fortunate to see eagles flying where I live but I do see red kites ... and they often remind me of these verses as they circle in the sky with their beautiful wings glistening in the sun.



For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29: 11

This verse is one that has help me throughout my life and one I frequently pass onto others.

In the Bible we have the Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer but I have felt happier reading the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes contain much of what God desires of us as we seek to follow his will for our lives.

“God blesses those who realise their need for him,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is given to them.

God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

God blesses those who are gentle and lowly,
for the whole earth will belong to them.

God blesses those who are hungry and
thirsty for justice.

for they will receive it in full.

God blesses those who are merciful
for they will be shown mercy.

God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of
God

God blesses those who are persecuted
because they live for God,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

Matthew 5: 3-10

Finally I have my last scriptures from 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 and verse 13.

There are three things that will endure - faith, hope, and love - and the greatest of these is love.



Because where would we be if we didn't love one another.

I have had many things taken away from me in life but fortunately my love for God remains.

Scriptures taken from the New Living Translation.

Sandie also writes.....

Unexpected Find

Whilst browsing in the poetry section of Waterstones my eyes were drawn to a particular book. On opening its pages, I came across this poem

...

The Laughter Forecast

Today will be humorous
With some giggly patches,
Scattered outbreaks of chuckling in the south
And smiles spreading from the east later,
Widespread chortling
Increasing to gale-force guffaws towards evening.
The outlook for tomorrow
Is hysterical.

Sue Cowling

Those that know me well would almost think that poem had been written for me.

I must say after reading the poem I had a little giggle.

Meet our Youth Team Co-Ordinator

I attended AFC as a child and teenager, but returned in 2021 after attending an Alpha course in the Spring with Gordon and Janiel as my small group leaders. My life shifted and rather than my faith being at the periphery it moved to the centre.

I continued to be part of the Alpha team at AFC as a helper in an online course and the face-to-face course last year. It's been great to work alongside, get to know members of AFC better, meet with new people and be part of their journey of faith at its varying stages.

You will see me now attending church with my 2 young daughters,



Amelie and Adrienne (Adi). I also lead the youth monthly and coordinate the youth timetable alongside our great team; Zem, Pat, Barbara, Brian and Penny.

As a secondary school teacher of English, I know how to educate in the typical setting,

but have been developing ways to create sessions for our youth that teach and guide, whilst are also fun and give the opportunity for bonding and peer relationships to grow. The process of planning sessions has strengthened my own knowledge and relationship with Jesus.

In January, I started a Bible study group that runs via Zoom on a Monday fortnightly basis. I felt drawn to develop my Bible knowledge and desired to hear God's word at a deeper level, as connecting with the Sunday service can be difficult when looking after 2 young children.

Beth Tutton.

Our youth team do a brilliant job with young people between the ages of 5 and 18. If you think you could be a blessing on this team please speak to Beth or one of the other members mentioned here. We would love to extend our provision and this would also release members to attend services more often.

Threads Through Creation



**And God said 'Let there be light' and there was light.
Genesis 1**

The story of creation is reimagined in this outstanding quilt exhibition by Devon-based textile artist Jacqui Parkinson and will continue to be on display at **St Albans Abbey** until 11th June.

St Albans Cathedral, Sumpter Yard, St Albans, AL1 1BY

Let yourself be enchanted by 12 large-scale and colourful embroideries while you look, imagine and question the Book of Genesis in a completely different way.

He Rescued Me

Many years ago, I was going through a destructive crisis in my life and the lives of my children. Every day seemed like an eternity of pain and emotional disruption as we tried to survive, financially, practically and in

faith. It had been brought about by the actions of someone else and my inability to see it coming and do something about it.

I was a young Christian, only into faith by a couple of years but I was thirsty for God and for His word. Night after night, when the children were in bed, I scoured the Bible for instruction or assistance and I prayed for my family, literally on my face, almost in desperation. I had been told that God was my father and I determined to apply that truth to my situation as I appealed to Him for help. He was not slow in answering me.

One evening I was reading the Psalms and that thing that many of us have experienced happened. The words of Psalm 40 leapt off the page and into my spirit.

I waited patiently for the Lord,
He turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
Out of the mud and mire,
He set my feet on a rock
And gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.

It was weird; as though the words of the Psalm were burning into me and I literally heard a voice within me telling me that this was for me and I should take it and live in it. I went to sleep and, as though to prove to me that the message was true, I woke the next morning singing praises to God.

For several weeks after that, new songs began to form in my mind. One day our minister came to me and asked if I had a song that I could sing in the service on the following Sunday. I hadn't told him about what had happened. Yes, I did have a song. It was one that no one had heard before. I was blessed to have a minister who was in tune with God because that could be the only explanation.

The situation we were in did not change. In fact, elements of it tried to attack us in different ways for many years but I was now equipped the better to deal with things as they arose. Our financial situation eased a little and we got by, never once going into the red. Whenever we had a deep need God met it through the love and obedience of my fellow believers and even some friends who were not Christians but suddenly thought we 'might need this!'

Psalm 40 is one of my most precious scriptures. Yes, it is a word of hope but it is much more than that because God took it and used it for my rescue. He rescued me.

A Special Windrush Celebration

On 22nd June this year our nation is celebrating the 75th anniversary of those who came here on The Windrush from the Caribbean to help boost our post war flailing economy and find a new life for themselves.

A member of AFC, Yvonne Davies MBE is the organiser for the Windrush celebrations in Dacorum. She has been working very hard for months trying to encourage our Council to support some activities in Hemel to mark the occasion.



On Saturday 24th June there will be a special art exhibition on display. The exhibition will be touring several towns around the country and we at AFC are privileged to house it in Hemel. Alongside this there will be music, dancing demonstrations and other interesting things to see and enjoy that reflect the Caribbean culture the Windrush generation left behind. It proves to be a lovely day. Come and join in the fun. Look for the advertisements on our screens and in the newsletters during the weeks running up to 23rd.



During our Sunday Service on 25th June there will be mention of the celebrations and thanksgiving for all the Windrush generation and their families have contributed to our culture and development.

Summer Celebration & Lunch

Sunday 16th July

Plans are being made for our annual celebration.
If you would like to join the planning team
we would love some help!

Please speak to Penny



AFC
Summer Camp 2023
Friday 25th -
Monday 28th August

Our Annual Summer Camp
is held at Crays Pond,
near Goring on the
August Bank holiday weekend.
A low key family-oriented camp
open to all -
Camping is in a field
next to a scout hut,
so we have access to a kitchen
and toilets - it's not too rugged!

**We have extra tents and
equipment so
no excuse not to join in the fun ...**

Bonfires compulsory!

**Questions or to book:
Penny 07906420738**

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Mag Wordsearch

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 EZRA-GALATIONS-GENESIS-HEBREWS-JAMES-JOEL-JOHN-
 KINGS-LEVITICUS-LUKE-MARK-MATTHEW-MICAH-
 NEHEMIAH-NUMBERS-OBADIAH-PETER-PHILIPPIANS-
 REVELATIONS-ROMANS-RUTH-SAMUEL

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Our Moderator has not been idle



Synod News reported.....

Thames North Synod Moderator, Revd George Watt (pictured above) said,

'It was good to join with Christians of different traditions on pilgrimage and protest from St John's Waterloo to Parliament Square to raise awareness of the Church's concerns about the current climate crisis. It was a moving experience with the opportunity to worship, walk, talk and pray together. It culminated in different groups converging on Parliament Square (which was closed off to traffic) to make our voice heard by our political leaders that change is needed.'

**The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
Lam. 3:22**

Coronation Service



Synod News reported recently.....

Revd George Watt, Moderator, URC Thames North Synod with Cllr Sameera Saleem, Mayor of Luton (L) and Prof Zafar Khan, Chair of Luton Council of Faiths in the grounds of St Mary's Church, Woburn, MK17 9PG on Sunday 14 May 2023 at HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire's Service of Thanksgiving celebrating the Coronation of Their Majesties The King and Queen Consort.

George is not only our Moderator but a member of AFC. He has obviously been very busy lately with extra tasks to his usual routine. We see him on Sundays when he is not preaching in another church or attending a church function.

Visitors To UK from the Czech Republic



The Synod was pleased to host two ministers (Martin Horák and Filip Keller) from our partner church in the Czech Republic at the recent Ministers' Spring School.

George told me recently that he will be visiting the Czech Republic sometime this year which will be a return visit to Ministers who came to the UK.

Sundays in June

4th Turning towards God

11th Create in me a pure heart [communion Sunday]

18th A loving relationship between Father and child
[Father's Day]

25th Windrush Sunday. Celebrating diversity

Singing Scripture

I love some of the new worship songs that come out but I hope we don't ditch or belittle older songs just because they are 'old'. When I first came to faith over 40 years ago, I learned some short and simple songs that were lifted straight from scripture. The tunes were not remarkable but the power within those simple songs is strong and it is because when we sing them, we sing scripture and when we sing something, that song seeps into our very being. I have found myself singing one or other of these scripture songs on many occasions when I found myself in circumstances where the Word of God was powerful and active. It is how we find it easiest to retain God's written word within us. Look at these.....

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases
His mercies never come to an end
They are new every morning, new every morning
Great is your faithfulness. O Lord
Great is your faithfulness.

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live
I will give praise to my God while I have my being
My meditation of Him shall be sweet
I will give thanks, I will give thanks to the Lord

I will rejoice, I will rejoice
I will rejoice I have made a choice to rejoice in the Lord

Ah Lord God
Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power
Ah Lord God
Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thine outstretched arm
Nothing's too difficult for Thee. Nothing's too difficult for Thee
O great and mighty God, great in counsel mighty in deed
Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing
Nothing's too difficult for Thee.

I'm a conqueror, victorious
I'm living in Jesus
I'm seated in heavenly places in Him, in Him
For the kingdom of God is within me
I know no defeat only victory
For the Kingdom of God is within me
I know no defeat only strength and power

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Fear not for I have redeemed you, I have called you
by name, you are mine. Isa 43:1

