

Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts

Welcome to our condensed Newsletter. We are publishing this in digital format to help keep us up to date with each other during the Corona Virus chaos.

As you know many of our events, services, facilities and meetings are still postponed in order to reduce our contact with each other. The clear and strong advice is that we do not meet for worship or other meetings to ensure appropriate social distancing and protection for those who need it most.

Church is all about relationship: with God, with one another and with the wider community as we demonstrate that our relationship to God and seek to draw others into it, those relationships can still be nurtured, but in other ways. A kindness of heart and spirit can bring light into everyone's life, be it a kind word or a simple gesture, a telephone call, an email, an instant message, social media... there are so many ways... seek to share your light with those in need - but do so safely.

Clearly, we should pray. Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Corona Virus, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic.

For help and support. please feel free to contact:

- John Claydon johnclaydon@thenba.org.uk
- Paul Revill paulrevill@thenba.org.uk or
- Elaine Webster elainewebster@thenba.org.uk

Prayers

Please continue to pray, either by yourself, or collectively, using one of the many online and social media channels for:

- ***Members & friends of our Fellowship***
- ***People, families & neighbours within your own circle experiencing difficulties***
- ***Those who work for our benefit and welfare in frontline jobs, putting themselves and their families in vulnerable and frequently life-threatening situations***
- ***Supermarket staff and other supply industries***
- ***Carers in Care Homes and Nursing Homes and Sheltered Housing and Hostels***
- ***Carers who look after members of their own families***
- ***Postal Workers and other delivery people who bring us our mail, food and medicines***
- ***All those in positions of leadership, research, development, industrial organisations and new productions, at this traumatic time***

This week please pray for other local churches in Bishop Auckland area and the work they are continuing to do help the local people cope with the problems caused by Corona Virus and also to continue to do the Lord's work in our town and community including:

- ***Bishop Auckland Methodist Church***
- ***St Anne's Church of England***
- ***St Andrew's Church***
- ***St Mary's and St Wilfred's Roman Catholic Churches***
- ***Influence Church***
- ***Wear Valley Church***
- ***Hamsterley Baptist Church***

Please pray especially for all those living and working in:

- ***Bishop Street***
- ***Windsor Court***
- ***Wesley Street***
- ***Newgate Street***

Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Covid-19, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic

If you want to be the greatest one, then live as one called to serve others (Mark 19 v 43)

A prayer for the Front-Liners

Heavenly Father, thank You for the Front Liners caring for, protecting and serving our communities, our families and us. Thank you for these servant leaders called to this work, trained for such a time as this, daily risking their own health and safety for others.

Please protect them from harm. Give them courage and strength. Draw close to them, Lord, and let them feel Your presence throughout the long hours they are working.

Father, please provide everything they need both for the people they are serving and for their loved ones. Surround them with people who will help and support them and their families, even as they selflessly care for others.

You said we would face troubles in this world, but also that You had overcome it. Please work together with our Front-Liners, Lord, to ultimately bring about the best outcome possible. In Jesus' name

Amen

(Submitted by Rev Tony Taylor from YouVersion)

FareShare Food Scheme

John and Vanessa at Bishop Auckland Methodist Church have been collecting the vast amount of FareShare food kindly donated by a local supplier. They are currently taking the food to Woodhouse Close Food Bank to ensure the most efficient route of distribution. The food bank is open every weekday from 10.00am until 12.00pm.

We have now been offered a second collection from another local supplier which John and Vanessa have also agreed to manage.

The food is being received and distributed to those who need it most and has included a wide range of products such as: store cupboard items; pork pies; pizzas; baked goods and others.

Church Garden

Our dedicated folk continue to tend the church garden and cultivate new contacts as well as plant life. As a church we are active but in a different way. Please see the website for the latest photos of the garden.

Online Church Services

- Northern Baptist Association
Service 26th April: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhX2yuXyprk>
- Influence Church <http://www.influencechurch.co.uk>
Services streamed each Sunday at 11.00am and 5.00pm

Thoughts

Historians will probably call our era “the age of anxiety.” Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centred in anything short of God and His will for us (Billy Graham May 1965)

When Billy Graham wrote those words in 1965, no one knew how true they would be in 2020.

At its best, anxiety distracts us from our relationship with God and the truth that He is “Lord of heaven and earth” (Matthew 11:25). At its worst, anxiety is a crippling disease, taking over our minds and plunging our thoughts into darkness.

But God wants so much more for us than to walk through life full of fear, worry and anxiety.

“Do not be anxious about anything,” the Bible tells us in the book of Philippians, Chapter 4, “but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Our instructions do not stop there- the chapter goes on to tell believers exactly what we should focus on.

And it is **not** fear, terrorism, illness, death or evil.

“Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honourable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is **anything worthy of praise, think about these things**. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me - **practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you**”

(Philippians 4:8-9, ESV, emphasis added).

The first step to an anxiety-free mind is to **give your life to Jesus Christ**. Once you have taken that step, it is important to fix your thoughts on Jesus and the promise that He is preparing a place for His followers in heaven (John 14:2-3).

(Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, May 2015)

April 23rd - William Shakespeare's Birthday perhaps (also the day upon which he died) - we know quite a lot about him! We know a bit about St George too, - but not a lot really! Then there's George's dragon – he is a different kettle of fish - that dragon really is a bad lad! We can hone up on him in the Bible where he gets lots of mentions, but none of them good!

There is a sound description of a dragon in Job 41, but nowadays we use the word "LEVIATHAN". It appears that a dragon or a sea monster is being described here, but over time translators have left us with a depiction that leads us to believe the animal is what now we call a dragon.

In Job v31-34 (NIV) the creature is portrayed thus: "Nothing on earth is his equal - a creature without fear. He looks down on all that are haughty; he is king over all that are proud." There was nothing else on earth like the dragon - God made him mightier, stronger and fiercer than anything, including man. But God used Leviathan to remind us that there is no one else like Himself - there is only one God (Isaiah 45:6) and He is all powerful. It is He who makes the sick, the lame, the blind and the deaf (and heals them). There is no one else who can do that, and there is only one God who can kill the powerful, evil and feared Leviathan (Psalm 74:14).

Take a look in John's Revelations:

Revelations 12 vs 3, 4, 7, 9 / Revelations 13 vs 1, 2, 4, 11, 13 / Revelations 16:13 and 20:2.

There was nothing else on earth like the dragon - God made him mightier, stronger and fiercer than anything, including man. Revelations tells us the dragon is the devil or Satan. The dragon appears to symbolize power, but God conquers with His Almighty, unsurpassed power (Revelation 20:2).

Satan is called a dragon in the book of Revelation. He is described as an evil angel (Ezekiel 28:14), a created being – a cherub who used to live in heaven with God. In Revelations the term dragon is another name for Satan and it is also symbolic of Satan's real power.

Satan and Leviathan are powerful beings. Satan is a created, powerful angel who turned to evil and was then removed from Heaven and roams amongst us now. Leviathan Dragon is a powerful created animal of the sea.

However, our Scriptures reminds us that God is greater than any spiritual or physical being.

Job, understandably in my opinion, had been complaining about God and so God asked Job, ***"Why do you talk so much when you know so little?" (Job 38 vs 2 + 3)***

Centuries before Hand, Job already knew the answer - and now, even centuries later, we still know the answer - ***there is nothing like God on earth, in heaven or anywhere else - Glory to God!***

(David C – various)