

Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts
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Wednesday Community Days

- Whilst we are constantly aware of the dangers of Covid we are now open both inside and out in the garden.
- Lunch is available from 11:30am to eat in or take away.
- Volunteers to help are welcome as are gardeners too.

Church Services

- We are now back to holding in-church services each week. We encourage the use of masks - sanitiser will be available and we will be socially distancing.
- Our next services are:
Sunday 24 October 2021 at BABC 10:30am
Sunday 31 October 2011 at Hamsterley Baptist Church 10:30am

Bible Study

- Next meeting is:
Tuesday 26th October 2021 at 1:00pm

Sharing God's Comfort

- If you know of anyone you feel would benefit from our online offerings, please feel free to share our website at www.bishopbaptists.co.uk with others so they too can enjoy our weekly online service (also available on our YouTube Channel), newsletters, blog and other items of prayer and interest.

Prayers

Please keep in your prayers all local churches and remember those still suffering from the virus plus those whose finances are compromised.

Please pray for:

- All in Bishop Auckland Hospital including Rev David Etherington, Hospital Chaplain.
- Percy Street, Waldron Street, Clifford Avenue, Durham Street, Clevedon Avenue, Woodhouse Lane, King James Academy, Bishop Barrington School, St John's School & Sixth Form College.
- Ian and Richard and their families at this time.

Please give thanks for:

- The organisations and people who contribute food, clothing, and books for us to distribute to others including FareShare (via Asda), Feeding Families, The Auckland Project, Local Donations.

Our Departed Brother

Our oldest and longest-serving member, Ray, died peacefully at home on Tuesday 12th October at 9:00am. His family, who have devotedly cared for him over his last months, were present at the time and were able to share the final moments of his earthly life and know that he assuredly went with joy and confidence to see His Lord.

***Blessing:** The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you and give you peace; may the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace .May the Lord's goodness and love be with you for all time, and you dwell in His house for evermore. (From Numbers 6:24-26 NIV and 23rd Psalm).*

**The Funeral Service of our brother in the Lord, Ray,
will be held at BABC on
Friday 29th October 2021 at 1:30pm
Our Pastor, Rev Tony Taylor, will take the service.**

NBA Prayers

We are asked to pray this week for: **Durham City Baptist Church.**

Thanksgiving

- For a joyful and interesting celebration Saturday sharing our love, appreciation and thanks to Pastor Ronnie and Miriam in their retirement following eighteen years with DCBC.
- For the re-opening of the new craft group and the effective development of our men's group.
- For the skill, passion and enthusiasm of the Search Team (three deacons; three volunteers).
- To God, the Lord Almighty, who is with us in the Spirit of his Son Jesus

Prayers

- For the Search team, guided by Paul Revill as Moderator, as they seek the mind of Christ as to how to proceed with pastoral applicants.
- For those who apply for half time pastoral vacancy and their sense of God's leading.
- For the Sunday services and the choice of those who preach and those who will lead the services; for the welcoming team and the music team.
- For the new group on Monday evenings: informal sharing of joys, problems, Scripture, matters for prayer.
- That we may learn to be a church family.

(Mike Cross -NBA Prayer Requests Co-ordinator)

NBA Event

Northern Baptist Association Assembly - Saturday 6th November 2021 at 9:30am
Oxford Road Baptist Church, Hartlepool

"Come and Join the Adventure...." we will be exploring how we can be a part of the adventure of God in our local communities; through worship, inspirational teaching, learning from missional communities & pioneers - reflecting together.

This is a free event, and all are welcome – we recommend booking.

Please book your place by contacting admin@thenba.org.uk

Other Events

- Sun 14th Nov 2021Remembrance Sunday
- Sun 3rd July 2022BABC 150th Anniversary (All Day)

Thoughts

God's people have a long history of facing oppression, abuse, violence, civil unrest. But in these times God has always been faithful.

God calls us to pray but many people see prayer as a last resort for when things are the worst, there's nothing left that we can do - this is not understanding prayer properly.

Prayer is calling upon our gracious and powerful God to come into these situations, to heal the brokenness in our culture, to bring justice where it is needed, to bring equality and healing, comfort, and grace to those in need to be nursed, cared for, and restored.

In Exodus, God saw the affliction and heard the cry of His people suffering. He did not stand idly by God delivered them from the oppression. Over and over, we see examples of God listening to our prayers and the prayers of His people.

Prayer is not a last resort, it is what we should be doing at all times. We should be thankful to be reminded to pray.

We are also called to love. Mark 30:31 says: *"Love your neighbour as yourself there is no greater commandment than these."* It is hard to love when we are deeply hurt, when we have emotions of vengeance, when we see so much wrongdoing, injustice and inequality around us - these times are opportunity.

Romans 12:19-21 says: *"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good."*

We have the opportunity to do good to one another!

By setting aside our selfish instincts and putting others in front of ourselves is where we can act with caring action towards others, towards a worthy cause in a loving manner.

Let's think critically about all these issues, take steps that improve issues, and help to bring relief to those in pain.

Now is also a time for deep reflection as well, to look within ourselves, to be convicted if we have not loved one another as we should.

The amazing thing is when we repent of our wrongdoing we are forgiven, by our Lord Jesus, we can renew our spirit, renew our minds, and are given the power and opportunities to love those around us as we should!

So as we experience the chaos and brokenness of this world, let it remind us to pray, let it remind us that we belong to the Kingdom of the Most High, let these atrocities remind us to love those around us as Christ loved us.

(Bethany Hamilton)

What To Do When It Feels Like God Is Far Away

It's sometimes easy to feel as if God is far away from us, as though He doesn't hear us when we call.

It's easy to see the suffering around us and wonder where God is. Some days it seems like our prayers aren't being heard.

Especially concerning the sad and shocking events of the last few days.

I don't think it's necessarily a lack of faith that causes this. Of course, we often drift far away from God, particularly when we don't make an active effort to invest in our relationship with Him.

But sometimes we can find ourselves in circumstances where it just feels incomprehensible. We feel deserted and powerless; we feel like our prayers are bouncing off the ceiling and hopelessness isn't far away.

In times like that, Psalm 22 might be a comfort. The psalmist offers three pieces of practical advice to those of us who cry out the same words as he does in the first two verses:

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest."

1. Remember what God has already done.

Firstly, he urges us to remember what God has already done, as recorded in the Bible and throughout history (Psalm 22: v4-8). *"In You our fathers trusted," he tells the Lord in verse 4, "they trusted you and you delivered them."*

God has shown us that He cares for us, that He is all-powerful and all-knowing, that He hears His people when they cry out to Him.

Start with Adam and trace through all the Bible characters who trusted in God, even in the bleakest of circumstances, and found salvation in Him.

He is faithful to His promises. He does not change; He is the same God today, yesterday, and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8). And therefore we can draw encouragement from the fact that we serve the same God who rescued a shepherd boy facing down a giant with five pebbles, the same God who rained down bread in the desert and who blinded an entire army.

He has shown His power and love in the past, and He will do so again.

2. Remember what God has done for you personally.

Next, the psalmist tells us to remember what God has already done for each of us in our own lives (Psalm 22 v 9-21) where he writes: *"Yet You are He who took me from the womb; You made me trust You at my mother's breast."*

Since our births, God has been faithful to us in our own lives in a personal way that transcends blanket promises or an impersonal power.

It is by God's will that we were formed; it is His will that we are alive.

He created each of us for a reason, and He has a purpose for our lives. Therefore, we can, each of us, approach Him in prayer and ask: *"Be not far from me"* (Psalm 22: v19).

3. Remember that there is meaning in our suffering.

Finally, we are reminded that there is reason in our sufferings, even if we cannot see it (Psalm 22: v22-31): *"I will tell of Your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you"* (v 22).

Then in v24 we are promised that God hears us when we cry out to Him, and the rest of the psalm reminds us that God is glorified in our tribulations. This legacy serves to encourage our fellow believers.

When obstacles and suffering occur over a longer time period, it can be difficult to trust that any good can come out at the end.

But though we are weak, God is strong, and He says to us: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9).

So we can claim strength in our weaknesses because they serve to illuminate God's power and grace. We find comfort in our troubles because we know that He holds us and will be faithful to the end.

(James 1:2-3) tells us that sufferings and trials will result in the testing of our faith, and this, in turn, produces steadfastness.

When we have gone through trials and seen over and over again that God is faithful and powerful and active and just, our faith is strengthened.

And this steadfastness, this clinging to faith, will be an encouragement to those around us.

**No matter what happens, we are not alone.
God promised to be with us always**

(thoughtcatalogue.com/ Corine Hilda)

Closing Words

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory
and the victory and the majesty,
for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours.
Yours is the kingdom,
O Lord, and you are
exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour come from you,
and you rule over all.
In your hand are power and might,
and in your hand, it is to make great and to give strength to all.
And now we thank you,
our God and praise your glorious name.

(1 Chronicles 29:11-13 ESV)

Online Prayer

- Bishop Auckland Baptist Church Service
<https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/>
- Northern Baptist Association Service
<https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/>
- Influence Church Service (Services streamed Sundays at 11.00am and 5.00pm)
<http://www.influencechurch.co.uk>

Helpful Links

- **BABC Sunday Service** <https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/>
- **BABC Newsletter** <https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/newsletter/>
- **BABC Garden Blog** <https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/church-garden-blog/>
- **NBA Sunday Service** <https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/>
- **BABC Main Website** www.bishopbaptists.co.uk

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