



IVYBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

Sharing Life
Sharing Faith



August 2017
Newsletter



Letter from Mark

Dear Friends,

The Word of God says, “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4)

On Sunday 10 September following the IMC time of prayer and fasting we’re going to have a trip to the seaside! We’re having our church family social/picnic at Bantham Beach. This will also include the opportunity for you to be baptised by full immersion. Hang on, you might be thinking, that isn’t Methodist! Oh yes it is! Traditionally the Methodist Church emerged from the Anglican Church who performed infant baptisms. Normally at these ceremonies some promises are made by the parents and the baby is sprinkled with water. The Methodist Church now recognises the need for a deeper, more biblical expression of Christian commitment and discipleship and allows a reaffirmation of ‘baptismal faith’. If you would like to do this let me know. For those who haven’t been baptised at all or aren’t sure if you have, you need to obey the call of God and get on with it. Christian baptism is part and parcel of being a true Christian. We require you to be baptised to be a full member of the Methodist Church. So it might be your next step. More importantly still Jesus said to His disciples that we are to ‘Go and make disciples, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...’ (Matthew 28:19).

The Greek word for baptise is baptizo. Not that different from English! However, the Greek word is associated with shipping! When a boat sank beneath the waves it was baptized! In the verse at the top from Romans 6:4 it is the same context. Baptism requires submergence below the water to symbolise death to our old ways, death to living for ourselves and death to sin. As we raise up again above the water-line it symbolises our new life in Christ and His resurrection power. We are raised up with Him in our truly new life.

So as you read this article and respond to the word I gave back in July - do something about it and obey the call to be baptised or to reaffirm your baptismal faith! During my ministry I’ve had the privilege of baptising over a hundred people in prison, in churches and on the beach – what a blessing!



I've even had spectators on the beach come to Christ and been baptised themselves because of the witness of Christians being publicly obedient!

So dear friends, see you at the beach!

With every blessing in Christ,

Mark

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From the Editor ...

PLEASE NOTE -

The next Newsletter will be a ***double issue*** for September ***and*** October, so if you would like to include anything in this double issue, please let me have the details by Thursday 10 August in any of the following ways :-

- ♥ send it by email to contact@jennyhansford.co.uk
- ♥ ring me on 01752 894634
- ♥ hand it to me at church on a Sunday
- ♥ place it in the "H" pigeonhole in the Church Concourse
- ♥ post it through my letterbox at 10 MacAndrew Walk, Ivybridge



Jenny Hansford



HELP WANTED!

We could really do with some new volunteers to join the Crèche Rota, as we're currently running with a limited number of people.

No special skills are needed, just some enthusiasm! The commitment would hopefully be no more than once a month. If you are interested, or want to find out more, please speak to Helen Kimble (878937). Thank you.



August Worship

IVYBRIDGE

Aug 6	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Simon Leigh Taizé
Aug 13	10:30 am	Mr Gary Streeter
Aug 20	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Mark Lawrence Songs of Praise
Aug 27	10:30 am	Rev Mark Lawrence - Communion

BITTAFORD

Aug 6	10:30 am	Rev David Youngs - Communion
Aug 13	2:30 pm	Rev Simon Leigh - Communion
Aug 20	10:30 am	Mr Paul Whitell
Aug 27	10:30 am	Miss Sue Bolt

The speakers for September are not known at the time of going to print.

*The speakers have been taken from Circuit Plan
and are correct to the best of the Editor's knowledge.*

Churches Together in Ivybridge
will hold a Taizé Service
on 6 August at 6:30 pm
at IMC.



Parenting Teenagers

getting them (and you!) through

Presented by bestselling authors and international speakers **Rob Parsons** and **Katharine Hill**.



Thursday 9 November 2017

at 7:30 pm

at

Hope Baptist Church, Plymouth, PL3 4QG

Do you feel your teenager has become a different person overnight?
Will they go out with you only if you wear a brown paper bag on your head?
Or maybe your child is almost a teenager and you're feeling a bit apprehensive about what's ahead.

Join Rob and Katharine as they explore some of the hot topics for parents of teenagers:-

- ♥ Understanding your Teenager
 - ♥ Staying Connected
- ♥ Puberty, Privacy and Porn
- ♥ The Testing Teenager
 - ♥ Identity
- ♥ Letting Them Go

Ticket prices

4 or more tickets - £5 each 1-3 tickets - £6 each
On the door - £7 each Partner rate - £4 each

Book today!

careforthefamily.org.uk/parentingteenagers
Tel: 029 2081 0800





Mark and Carolyn invite you to a
'Housewarming Party'



When? Saturday 2 September 2017 from 7:00 pm

Where? 11 Badgers Close, Ivybridge, PL21 9TN

Please bring a bottle and some finger food to share.

We look forward to welcoming you to our new home.



24 HOURS OF CONTINUOUS PRAYER

9 and 10 September



We believe we are in a most exciting season as God moves amongst us and stirs us to action! For this reason, we want to take time as family, to pray, fast and worship together at the beginning of this new chapter in the life of IMC.

Starting at 10:30 am on Saturday 9 September and going all day and night into the Sunday morning service on 10 September we will be meeting and praying together for God to anoint, stir hearts, challenge, equip and move by His Spirit. Will you join us?

The event will begin with worship and then we hope you as individuals, couples, families, house groups, friends, will come together and commit to praying with us at varying points throughout the day and night.

The church will be open throughout the event and we will have varying focusses of prayer at different times but you are free to come and go and pray however you feel led to do so. Our prayers will flow on through into the Sunday morning service.

A sign-up sheet will appear in church soon – look out for it and please join us as we commit ourselves afresh and ask God to move in power and love!

*“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 Chronicles 7:14

For more info please speak to Paul Courtney
01752 893839 / pauljamescourtney@hotmail.com

A father to the fatherless ... is God in His holy dwelling

Fact: According to a report by the Cambodian Ministry of Social Affairs, 35,000 Cambodian children and young people are housed in a range of residential care facilities. Almost 40% of these institutions have never been inspected by the Ministry and 12% are unregistered. There were 16,579 children under the age of 18 living in 406 orphanages alone - or one out of every 350 Cambodian children. Almost 80% of adolescents in orphanages have a living mother or father. Social problems such as poverty, divorce, illness or a large number of children in the family, migration and a lack of social welfare services all contribute to children with living parents being shunted into orphanages.

The United Nations Children's Fund found that in the five years to 2011, while the number of Cambodian orphans had decreased, the number of orphanages had increased rapidly.

Like many developing countries, Cambodia suffers from the phenomenon of orphanage tourism, where children can be exploited by orphanages run as businesses, be vulnerable to sexual predators or feel emotional loss from exposure to a revolving door of short-term volunteers.



Organisations such as *M'lup Russey* and *Children in Families*, both founded and staffed by Christians, are working to change Cambodia's culture from placing children in institutions to home-based foster care.



Pray: Please pray for

- the protection of vulnerable children;
- a crackdown on exploitative and abusive institutions and practices;
- improved inspection and safeguarding procedures;
- restrictions on tourist visits to orphanages and the employment of unqualified, unchecked volunteers;
- Christians like Sarah and Anni working to change Cambodia's culture from institution-based to family-based care and to find Christian foster parents who will provide a loving, caring, secure home life to needy children;
- parents who for a variety of reasons see no alternative to placing a child in an institution.

Myers Cooper



Cradle Roll Secretary

Christine Welch has faithfully fulfilled this role for a considerable length of time, and now needs to step down, and we thank her for the wonderful way she undertook this roll.

So we are looking for someone who feels called to take on this roll, maintaining relationships with families who have their children baptised

or dedicated at IMC - a real mission field in many cases!

The role entails liaising with the Minister at each baptism/dedication so that a record of details is maintained; buying books and flowers as necessary for the family and arranging for someone to present them on the day. All the expenses are fully refundable. A DBS check will need to be in place for this role.

Following the above the Cradle Roll Secretary will also deliver/send newsletters monthly to each family until the child reaches the age of three years old when, if a Church family, they will receive a Pastoral Visitor and if not, a final birthday card will be sent with details of Junior Church times etc.

If you feel God may be calling you to this ministry, please chat to Carole Mitchell. Thank you.

Methodist Conference 2017

What is Methodist conference?

Every year the Methodist Church in Britain hold a conference and this year representatives of every part of the country and beyond got together to confer and make decisions on various matters affecting the life and witness of the church. The representatives at conference are the governing body of the Methodist Church at national level. The Methodist Church has a connexional structure rather than a congregational one, so matters decided at the annual conference affect every Methodist church across the nation. Each year new leaders of the church in Britain are elected – the President who is an ordained minister and the Vice President who is always a Deacon or a lay person. I had the privilege of being one of nine representatives for the Plymouth and Exeter District at conference and spent a week in Birmingham taking part in various discussions, debates, acts of worship and fringe events.

What are some of the issues discussed?

There were various important reports presented about finance, legal issues and general running of the church and its ministries and discussions on some matters which affect all of us who worship in the Methodist church.

Here are one or two key highlights which I hope you will find interesting. More information can be found on the Methodist Church website www.methodist.org.uk

- There are grants available for churches who are taking risks and seeking to reach out to their communities so it may be worth looking into whether we might be eligible for one.
- Methodist Women in Britain fringe event – we welcomed the new MWiB president, Sandra Goodwin, who will serve in this role for the next two years and with whom I will be working on the MWiB executive.
- World Church fringe event on the theme ‘Let the walls come tumbling down’. We heard stories from around the world where the church is working to bring reconciliation and help to those divided by barriers such as families split up by the wall at the border of Mexico/USA, division on the Korean peninsula and problems faced by Christians in Zimbabwe. We were urged to pray against such barriers. We were reminded



Anne Browse passing the MWiB presidential cross to Sandra Goodwin



that before the wall dividing Berlin came down, 20 people began to pray for its fall and that group of people grew to 20,000 people praying before the wall actually came down so we need to keep being faithful in prayer.

- I attended the Methodist Evangelicals Together (MET) presentation at which we prayed for the ongoing work of God in the church and the upholding of biblical and Godly values. (I encourage you to become a member of this if you are not already!)
- There was a call for every church to begin the new church year (September) every year with a day of prayer and fasting and a letter will be sent to every church in the country to encourage this.
- In the light of a report showing declining Methodist membership across the UK generally, there was a call for churches to prioritise mission and evangelism and reach out to their communities with the love of Jesus in creative ways.
- The new President for this year, Rev. Loraine Mellor, said as part of her inaugural address, "I know I am part, at present, of a declining Church, but I am not part of a declining gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ is here to stay, but has the time not come of us to be radical? To take some risks in order that we can grow ... because, you see ... I don't believe that God is done with us just yet."
- The Revd Canon Gareth J Powell, Secretary of the Conference, said, "At the heart of this report is a challenge - not with the statistics, but with the very nature of our being. We must take seriously our responsibility for being an evangelistic community of love - a profound giving of attention to another person - which leads people to Christ."

My prayer is that we as a local expression of church will take some of these recommendations seriously and seek ways in which we can bring honour to Jesus and share His love with those in our community so that God can build His church and establish His kingdom through us.

Carolyn Lawrence



Our district reps discussing the report on 'Statistics for Mission' as it relates to our area.



August News

If you have anything you would like included in the Church News please let Judy Jago know at church,



By the skin of his not yet grown teeth Noah Anthony Jack Baker made it into this month's news! Many congratulations to Claire and Martin on his safe arrival on 21 July, weighing in at 7lb 9oz. From the photos he looks gorgeous and we look forward to meeting him soon. Hope you enjoy your little brother Aiden, and Grandparents June and John - you'll have your hands full now. Love to you all

Our warmest wishes and congratulations go to Ben Hooper (Sara Hladkij's youngest son) and Eva who will marry in Belgium (can't spell the place!!) at the end of August. Ben and Eva we hope you have a wonderfully memorable day and we wish you many blessings as you begin married life. Safe travelling to Sara, John, Jasmin and all the family.



Will Collier, who has been worshipping with us of late, has obtained a new post in Leicester which he started on 17 July - so Will, if you read this we wish you well and hope you soon settle in. See you next time you are in Ivybridge.

Congratulations and many happy returns to Robin Duckering who celebrates a special birthday this month. We wish you a very happy birthday Robin and hope you enjoy your celebrations.



Another celebration of a big birthday - many congratulations to Fiona Ion as she celebrates her 60th in September. We hope it's a great time, we're sure it will be as we know how wonderfully you Ions celebrate! So enjoy every moment with all your family. Happy birthday Fiona

One of our older members, Dorothy Lucas, who lives in Grosvenor house has been very poorly of late but after a long haul (for her and Colin and Cynthia!!) she is now back in Grosvenor. We pray all will continue to go well Dorothy.





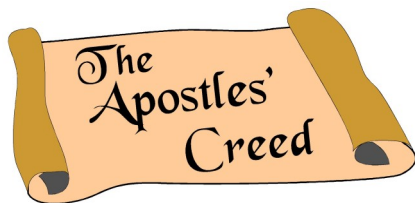
Join us at our next
Alpha Course!

Starting on
Wednesday 13 September
7:30 pm
here at Ivybridge Methodist Church

Who will you invite...?

For more details contact Mark
or any of the stewards.

Find out more about the Alpha Course at
www.alpha.org



Line 7

**"He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand
of the Father."**

Read Psalm 47:1-9

The last time we looked at the Apostles' Creed we descended into the lower earthly regions - hades and hell! This week we ascend high above the earth and the heavens into the third heaven!

This is the post-Resurrection narrative within the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. An essential doctrine, which defines the nature of the person of Jesus Christ and His total triumph over the created realm. *"God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding trumpet."* (Psalm 47:5)

Another prophetic Psalm is 110:1-7, *"The LORD said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."* Psalm 110 is a prophesy all about the Messianic King triumphing over His enemies and being given the place of full honour. If you remember Jesus quotes this Psalm regarding Himself in Matthew 22:41-46.

If you like, it is all about the enthronement and coronation of Messiah Jesus. It is triumphant – it is victorious – it is glorious! Not a tortured, humiliated, crushed, lamb, but a mighty, victorious, all-conquering Lion of Judah! So we need to unpack the significance of this!

We'll get to the throne-room in a minute, but first Jesus ascends. This is what literally happened. He took-off from the earth's surface and journeyed into heaven. It wasn't spiritual – it was physical! As earth is a physical place, so is heaven! It is a place. It is real. It isn't an ethereal quasi-place in a different dimension – it is real. It exists today.

Jesus left the earth and went up into heaven – literal fact! He is Lord even over the laws of gravity! Read Luke 24:50-51 and Acts 1:9-11

In John 20 Jesus speaks to Mary Magdalene! He says to her, *"Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"* (Jn.20:17) This is highly significant talk, as all of the words of Jesus are!

Because of the death and resurrection, we are reconciled to God! Things will never be the same again, and neither are we when we receive this unique



Saviour! Read Hebrews 1:1-3. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. One thing led to another and then another and then another! A divine plan – a holy running order! The plan of salvation!

We are now ransomed, healed, restored and forgiven because God became human. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit – as we have seen. He suffered. He was crucified. He died. He was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. Then He has ascended. And now history catches up!

He is seated at the right hand of the Father. We move from the past tense, into the present tense. Why? Because Jesus is still in heaven! **Because Jesus is still seated at the right hand of the Father!** So what does this mean?

First of all - seated

There are several scriptures that can help us understand this important position. Read Hebrews 10:11-13. Standing and sitting! Big difference!

Sitting signifies – job done, mission accomplished! Christ has won the victory – we continue the fight! *“He sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time He waits for His enemies to be made His footstool.”* (Hebrews 10:13) We are royal foot-stool makers for the King!

In Hebrews 12:2 we are told to be: *“...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

His mission is accomplished! Our isn't! We've still got work to do! We've still got the Gospel to preach. We've still got our neighbours to love. We've still got to bear eternal fruit. There is so much wonderful stuff to be done – all for the glory of God! Christ has won it for us, we've just got to go and get it!

So to be seated is to complete the job.

Secondly - at the right hand side

I'm left handed, so I feel a bit of a freak! But the right-hand is very significant too. Read Ephesians 1:18-23

“Seated Him (Jesus) at His right hand in the heavenly realms.”(v.20)

“Far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked.” (v.21)

“Not only in the present age but also in the one to come.” (v.21)



Every world leader's reign, however good or bad, will come to an end – but not with Christ! His reign is everlasting! God has placed everything under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church. The Church is Christ's body – it is the only earth-originated organism that will outlast the old order into the new – more than that – will continue on into eternity!

We are *"His body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way!"* (v.23) We share this amazing position of glory with Him, or we will do if we persevere and do not give up!

Read Ephesians 2:6-10. Here we are told that God *"...seated us with Him in the heavenly realms!"* (v 6)

In Romans 8:34 we are let in to another secret ... *"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."*

So let's return to this right hand side bit! We're told to, *"Set your minds on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."* (Colossians 3:1) The right is the position of honour, authority and power. In addition, a person of high rank who put someone on his right hand gave him equal honour with himself and recognized him as possessing equal dignity and authority.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

Line 8

"He will come again to judge the living and the dead".

We will come to the judgement in our next magazine edition, but for now let us focus on the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not going to get in to the myriad of different interpretations, theories and musings or talk about pre-, a- or post-millennialism approaches, but stick to what the Bible actually says in it's most basic form.

So let us look at 20 Bible facts regarding the Second Coming, the Elect, and what we must do to prepare for His arrival?

1. Jesus Himself will come again (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

"For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first."



2. Jesus Himself will rescue us (John 14:3)

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am."

3. We will meet Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

"After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever."

4. He will minister to those who are watching (Luke 12:37)

"It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when He comes. I tell you the truth, He will dress Himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."

5. He will return to the earth (Acts 1:11)

"'Men of Galilee', they said, 'why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus who has taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.'"

6. He will return to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4)

"On the day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south."

7. He will come in justice and mercy on His chosen ones. (2 Thessalonians 1:6-8)

"God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus." (More on that next month!)

8. He will come with power and great glory (Matthew 24:30)

"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory".

9 He will come to gather His elect with His angels (Matthew 24:31)

"And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other." (More about the Elect later)

10. He will destroy the anti-Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

"And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of His mouth and destroy by the splendour of His coming."



11. He will sit on the throne of His glory (Matthew 25:31)

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His throne in heavenly glory." (More about this next month too!)

12. He will gather all the nations and judge them (Matthew 25:32)

"All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." (The Second Coming and the Day of Judgement are synonymous, but more on the next month too!)

13. Every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7)

"Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen."

14. The Second Coming will come at an unexpected time. (Matthew 24:44)

"So you must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him."

15. The Second Coming will bring about the destruction of the old order (2 Peter 3:12)

"That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat."

16. The Second Coming 'delay' is an act of God's mercy (2 Peter 3:9)

"The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

17. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ completes the maturity of His Church (Philippians 1:6)

"...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

18. The Elect will accompany Christ Jesus at the Second Coming. (Colossians 3:4)

"When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

19. The Elect will be rewarded at the Second Coming (2 Timothy 2:4)

"Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing."



20. The Second Coming rescues the Elect from God's anger (1 Thessalonians 1:9b-10)

"They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead - Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."

(Not the tribulation, but God's judgement.)

So who are the elect? They are God's Chosen People.

To the Christians dispersed among the nations Peter writes: *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy"* (1 Peter 2:9,10).

What a privilege it is to be God's chosen people. *"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He has chosen as His own inheritance"* (Psalm 33:12).

The concept of God's chosen people is first found in the Old Testament. God chose Israel as His special people. *"And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power"* (Deuteronomy 4:37).

"For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth" (Deuteronomy 7:6 / Deuteronomy 14:2).

"But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the descendants of Abraham My friend. You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest regions, and said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away; Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand'" (Isaiah 41:8-11).

Who are God's chosen people now? In the Old Testament/Covenant the Elect were the Israel of God. In the New Testament/Covenant things have opened up because of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus!

There are many New Testament Scriptures which declare this wonderful truth! We don't have to be Jewish to be acceptable to God, because He loves the Gentiles too! When Christ gave up His spirit of the cross we are told, *"At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom."* (Matthew 27:51)



We don't need a temple any more, we don't need a curtain any more, we don't need animal sacrifices any more - we're a New Covenant people! It doesn't matter if we're Jewish or Gentile, because God doesn't show favouritism. (Romans 2:11) Jesus Christ has demolished the barriers in every sense of the word (see Galatians 3:26-29 and Ephesians 2:11-22)

Now that the promised Messiah has come, God's chosen people are those who accept Him as Lord and Saviour, and who love Him enough to obey Him. They have a passion for the things of the Spirit and live to please Him! *"So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace."* (Romans 11:5)

The election is no longer based on physical lineage, but on one's relationship with the Messiah: *"He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful"* (Revelation 17:14).

The election of physical Israel was but a sign of a higher spiritual election on the basis, not of the lineage of Abraham, but of the faith of Abraham. This was God's plan even before the creation of the world. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved"* (Ephesians 1:3-6).

Paul explains this more fully in his letter to the Romans. *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us"* (Romans 8:28-34).

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do" (Colossians 3:12,13).



This election before the foundation of the world was in Christ, which means that we are part of God's chosen people only if we are in Christ and remain in Him.

Peter tells us how we can make our calling and election sure: *"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"* (2 Peter 1:2-11).

So Jesus is coming for the elect - they are the whole point of history - to bring back to Himself His chosen people and to be with them forever!

What we must do to prepare for His arrival?

There are seven things we need to do to prepare for the Lord's Coming

1. Stand firm and hold on to sound teaching (2 Thesallonians.2:13)

"He called you to this through our Gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand firm to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word or mouth or by letter." See also Matthew 24:12-14.

2. Wait in holiness (Titus2:11-14)

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good."



3. Watch and, 4. Pray (Luke 21:34-36)

"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation [cooling off, losing spiritual vitality, becoming lukewarm, nominalism], drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth [so much for the pre-trib theory!] Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

5. Long for it (2 Timothy 4:8)

"Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but also all who have longed for His appearing."

6. Live worthy lives (2 Peter 3:11-12)

"Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness."

7. Fellowship (Hebrews 10:24-25)

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

The RNIB logo consists of the letters "RNIB" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a dark blue rounded rectangular background.

Could you spare 1-2 hours a week to help us deliver RNIB talking books? The Transcription Centre, David's Lane, Ivybridge is now sending out CDs and USB sticks of Talking books throughout the UK and is seeking extra help with copying of USBs and packing the wallets. If you can spare just 1-2 hours each week or even now and again we would love to hear from you.

Talking Books provide great joy to many blind and partially sighted people so please help us to send out these wonderful titles. Please contact Gill Cowsill on 01752 690092 or gill.cowsill@rnib.org.uk for more information.

Thank you so much!



Wise and Wonderful



We meet fortnightly in the IMC Café: see dates below.
Meetings are on Fridays, from 2.30 until 4:00 pm
with a charge of £1 each time

Autumn 2017

8 September

Harvest celebration

22 September

Guyana! with Carolyn and Rev Mark Lawrence

6 October

The shoe box challenge.

Covering and filling as many boxes as we can, to send to Eastern Europe
with gifts for children in need. We did 32 last year!

20 October

“Red sky over Dartmoor”

Tony Rae talks about his latest book, based on events in The Great War.

10 November

Fair Trade with Lorna Howell

24 November

The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) with Sarah Guy

8 December

Christmas meeting

Please contact one of us for more information:
Valerie Marriott 893614 Sara Bromage 894198
Judy Jago 894829 Sue Pengilly 896444
Christine and David Moulder 892858

We are an open fellowship and all are welcome!

Don't forget

**... the next Newsletter will be a double issue for the months of
September and October!**

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If you have any items for the
September/October Newsletter

please get them to the Editor by

Thursday 10 August

at the latest please.

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