

TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

MAGAZINE



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Pastoral Letter - March / April 2023

The Need for Enduring Hope

I don't care who you are – we all need hope and hope that lasts!
Without hope we are hopeless and that is not a good place to be.

We have seen recently on our television screens the continuing suffering of the people in Eastern Ukraine of the effects of a destructive war which grinds on after a year and seems to have reached a stalemate with little prospect of an end in sight or a peace treaty and a return to normal life once again. We could also think of the people of Southern Turkey and Northern Syria so badly affected by the major earthquakes with so many dead and injured and thousands whose lives are ruined and are out on the streets dependent on aid for shelter, clothing, warmth and food. They have little to look forward to – whilst promises have been made to rebuild within a year that looks unlikely given the scale of the disaster with so many buildings needing major reconstruction – it is likely to take decades in reality. I was struck by an old man gathering up what little remains of his possessions and loading them onto a trailer behind his tractor as he left the city to move to a village out in the countryside where he thought he would be safer – he saw no future remaining in the city amidst the ruins.

As I sit to write this letter the news broadcasts are full of the Windsor Framework – the newly negotiated deal between the Government and the European Union to deal with trade in Northern Ireland in particular which has been so badly impacted by the original Brexit deal. The new agreement has been warmly welcomed by many as it offers a way forward and gives genuine hope that things can improve for the peoples of that province making trade and normal life easier. It could

also open the way, if it is grasped by the politicians, for a power sharing assembly to be restored to Stormont after a year when they have not met to pass laws and govern as they were elected to do. It has been good to hear the optimism returning which happens when people are offered genuine hope.

In the natural world this is the time of the year when we notice the days getting longer and the gardens springing to life after the winter as a new season brings the promise of new life and growth. I have noticed the birdsong recently as the creatures herald and celebrate the arrival of Spring.

But where do we find enduring hope – hope that lasts through this life and beyond?

The answer is found in God alone. The Psalmist understood this when he wrote in Psalm 146 v5 ***“Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for His help, whose hope is in the Lord His God”***. When we are looking to God and beyond the circumstances of this life that is when we find help and real happiness/blessing. Christians saved by the blood of Christ have real enduring hope which lasts and gives real joy (Romans 12 v 12). Our hope is in Christ and His finished work at the cross and through the resurrection from the dead. If our hope was just confined to this life then it would not be something to rejoice over – in fact the apostle Paul says that ***“if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable”*** (1 Corinthians 15 v19). But our hope is not just confined to this life but extends into eternity because Christ has been raised to life, is ascended back to heaven and is returning a second time. This is the glory of the Easter message we believe and trust. There was a time when we had no hope because we were cut off from God by our sin and under His judgment. But when we were saved from our sin through Christ then we were given the hope of

eternal life and a glorious body to come like the Lord Jesus, which we eagerly wait for with patience (Romans 8 v 24). Because we are now in Christ, having believed and put our full trust in Him, we have hope. There is a glorious mystery that God has made known to us, which is - **“Christ in you, the hope of glory”** (Colossians 1 v27).

If we have Christ then we are recipients of the eternal hope which is found in Him. It is a living hope as 1 Peter 1 v3 makes clear because the Lord Jesus Christ has defeated death through His resurrection and is able to give an eternal inheritance to every believer, reserved in heaven for us. In the meantime, He keeps us by the power of God through our faith in Him. This enduring hope keeps us steady through all the ups and downs of life – it is like an anchor for the soul down here, sure and steadfast (Hebrews 6 v18-20). On top of that we have the great comfort of knowing that our great Saviour and Lord, Jesus has gone before us into heaven to make preparations to receive us and to always act on our behalf before Almighty God as our advocate and High Priest. Let us reflect on this enduring hope that God has given us in Christ as we approach another Easter and lay hold of it as the writer to the Hebrews encourages us to do. We must also always be ready to give a reason to others for the enduring hope we have within us (1 Peter 3v15).

My desire for you all is well captured by the benediction found in Paul’s letter to the Romans in Chapter 15 and verse 13;
“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

With love at Easter in the Lord Jesus,

Martin Sellens

Bible production in China

The Bible Society at the end of last year reported on the work of Bible production in China. During the Cultural Revolution years in the 1960s and 1970s Christianity was banned with all churches shut, Christian meetings and activities prohibited and Bibles were banned, confiscated, burned and destroyed. But barely ten years after the end of the Cultural Revolution, The Bible Society helped establish a Bible printing press (known as Amity Press) in China's Nanjing city in 1987. Since then, more than 90 million copies of Bibles have been printed for distribution in China. From being a banned book, the Bible became a bestseller!

Besides printing Bibles for China, Amity Press has also printed more than 140 million copies of the Bible for distribution overseas, with different editions in more than 190 languages exported to over 140 countries. Amity has grown to be the largest Bible press in the world.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, over the past 40 years, the population of Chinese Christians has grown to more than 46 million based on official estimates and much more unofficially. Although Bible mission in China has become more challenging in recent years there is still an open door for the work of the gospel there which we must continue to pray for.

World Watch List 2023

For many Christians in the world being a Christian could mean risking family, home and livelihood and could even result in a death sentence. Around the world it is estimated that more than 360 million Christians face persecution and discrimination for their faith. Open Doors have recently published their list of the ten countries where their research

shows that following Christ comes with the greatest risk. This is the 30th year that Open Doors have done this. Using extensive research on the ground six categories of persecution are assessed covering private life, family life, community life, national life, church life and risk of violence. Each country is given a “persecution score” out of 100. A score above 40 is high, above 60 is very high, and above 80 is extreme. The numbers are a reflection of the real, lived experience of our brothers and sisters. The list is reproduced here with their scores so we can pray for them;

1. North Korea – 98
2. Somalia – 92
3. Yemen – 89
4. Eritrea – 89
5. Libya – 88
6. Nigeria – 88
7. Pakistan – 86
8. Iran – 86
9. Afghanistan – 84
10. Sudan - 83

News from EMF

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”
Romans 12 v12

Below is the main content of an email sent by Martin Tatham, Church Partnership Co-ordinator with EMF (European Missionary Fellowship) to the church at Tinshill in late January;

“Thank you so much for your kind support for the work of the gospel in 2022 through EMF. We’ve been so encouraged to see the Lord’s

answers to prayer over the last year as the work of the gospel grows across the world's most spiritually needy continent.

Last year, thanks to the faithful and generous support of Christians, we were able to begin supporting 4 new missionaries or missionary couples. And at the start of 2023, we began to support 3 new missionary couples, all involved in church plants, including our first missionaries in Bulgaria and in Denmark.

We've also been overjoyed by the astonishing response to our Ukraine crisis appeal and to our Bibles and Blankets Christmas appeal. While we hoped to raise £100,000 across these two appeals, the total donated has now exceeded £1.5 million. This has enabled us to provide ongoing support for many evangelical churches in Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Romania and beyond, as they serve refugees and displaced people often very sacrificially. And in the midst of great suffering, there have been opportunities for the gospel as never seen before especially in Ukraine, and many people coming to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We continue to encourage churches to partner closely with particular missionaries, and we've been developing ways to enable churches to develop closer direct links with missionaries. “

Note: We sent a gift from the church at Tinshill to buy a generator for a church in Ukraine and this has been received and acknowledged. We have asked if we might have some direct contact with the church on the ground to which the generator goes and are waiting for confirmation that this is going to be possible. A large shipment of 47 generators was sent to Ukraine just before Christmas and a further 10 have since been bought and shipped from Poland.

Martin Sellens

Ladies Craft Evenings

There are three Craft Evenings for Ladies planned for this year, so here are the dates for your diary;

Tuesday 2nd May - Crafts for Spring and King

Tuesday 12th September - Amber, Russet and Ruby

Monday 20th November - Crafts for Christmas

We are including a craft of Christmas wrapping shoe boxes in September ready for the Shoe Box Appeal and we already have two dozen shoe boxes, so if you have difficulty in getting shoe boxes they will be available on 12th September.

The Crafts Team

Earthquake Appeal for Turkey / Syria

Thank you to all those who have given recently through the church to help the victims of the devastating earthquakes which have affected Turkey and Northern Syria. As a result, a total of £1,430 was sent to Tearfund recently. Here is their response;

“Your generosity is showing the love of Christ to Syrians who have lost everything in the earthquake.

Our church partner is responding now. Thanks to the support of people like you, they are reaching people in huge need with vital supplies such as food, warm clothing and hygiene essentials.

'The faithfulness of our supporters is a lifeline,' says Martin Leach, who leads our work in the region. 'The scale of this disaster is scarcely imaginable. Rescue workers are facing freezing conditions as they continue to dig through the rubble. But for people who have lost their homes – people who are worried, grieving, and who have already been through so much – your gift will be a ray of light.'

Thank you for standing with the people of Syria. Poverty is not God's plan. You are."

Yours in Christ, Cathy Winmill, Head of Supporter Services, Tearfund

Note: We will continue to send on any donations we receive at the church to help with the aid effort – it is a long-term project.

Watching over your heart

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."

Proverbs 4 v23

Ah, the "heart"... that is where our problems lie, is it not? The heart here represents your ethical centre, your intellectual centre: What you think, what is going on with your will, your perceptions of yourself and your knowledge of God.

The condition of your heart is critical because what goes on there determines the course of your life. So... guard what is happening in your HEART with all diligence.

Picture your physical heart pumping blood through the arteries to the extremities of the body. The health of the heart determines the health of the body.

So it is with your spiritual heart. What goes on there affects all the extremities of your life. Want to keep your heart pure? Then check your ACTIONS in three areas:

1. Your speech:

"Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you."

Proverbs 4v24

QUESTION: Is your speech truthful? Straight forward? or misleading?

2. Your eyes:

"Let your eyes look straight ahead, and let your eyelids look right before you."

Proverbs 4v25

QUESTION: Are you looking only at things that enhance your mind and your morals?... or do you have wandering eyes?

3. Your path:

"Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or to the left; remove your foot from evil."

Proverbs 4v26

QUESTION: Are you only going to places that keep your heart pure... or are you drifting into questionable areas?

Facts of the Matter submitted by Paul Crossley

Review of the Hymn Book of Zion Chapel, Morley

To write a review of the Hymn Book of a now defunct chapel in a small West Yorkshire town called Morley might seem strange to some, but I collect hymn books for my itinerant ministry. One of the churches I went to at one time was Zion Independent Chapel in Morley. I was always grateful for the opportunity to lead the worship and preach to the small aging congregation. They very kindly loaned me a copy of their hymn book for service preparation and personal devotional use. I have found it ideal for both purposes. Through one of the darkest periods of my life it was a great help to me. How I had wished it was more widely available. And now it is, but more about that later.

Some hymn books can be very general and run of the mill in their organisation and selection of the hymns. Some are quite limited in the number of hymns included. Others can be quite restricted by the theology of the hymn writers used. There can be quite a difference as well between the doctrinal and experiential content; some being more doctrinal than experiential. A good hymn book needs a good balance between the two, otherwise the danger is that we will have much head knowledge but little awareness of heart knowledge in our worship.

“Grace Hymns” was the hymn book of the church which I pastored for three and a half years. In the preface are these words: *“It has been said that the theology of a church is shaped by the hymns it sings.”* I agree with this statement. That is also true of the hymn book that Zion Chapel used which was unique to them. The impossibility of getting something called the “Leeds Selection” and dissatisfaction with the layout of “Dr Watt's Psalms and Hymns” led them to produce a book which I think most believers would gain some spiritual advantage from

using devotionally and I think most competent musicians would be able to find suitable tunes for the hymns. It was designed for both public worship and private devotional use. Among those who helped in some way to produce it were C.H. Spurgeon, Mrs Pennefather, E.R. Conder, and the representatives of Horatius Bonar.

A hymn book with one thousand four hundred and forty-five hymns and doxologies is somewhat rare these days. But what a range of hymns and their authors. I particularly liked the closing paragraph of its preface : *“The heartfelt prayer of all who have been interested in the production of this collection of Psalms and Hymns is, and has been, that the blessing of a Triune Jehovah –Father, Son, and Holy Ghost – may attend its use; so that the perusal or singing of the precious lines may prove instructive, edifying, and profitable to the reader or worshipper, and redound (make a great contribution) to the honour and glory of the God of all Grace.”* In this book you will find hymns that you have never come across before. That was certainly my own experience. Wonderful hymns that encourage, challenge and humble the soul!

Before the last few members of Zion Chapel went to be with the Lord a large batch of newly printed hymn books was produced. These are now in the possession of Pastor Chuck Pietrowski who is a member of The Yorkshire Reformed Ministers Fellowship. If you would like one or more then please contact him at chuck@bereanbaptistmission.net Can I suggest a donation of £10 per copy to further the work of his church would be a good idea? I suggest you read it devotionally and it will be a great blessing to you in your daily life. I have my copy ready for use in 2023, and I am being greatly helped by it.

Paul Crossley

Jesus – a poem

He walked alone - our Jesus -
Determined to fulfill
His awful death on Calvary's cross,
It was His Father's will.

We did not understand at first
Why He should die like this.
He took our place on Calvary;
It was His Father's will.

A love past understanding,
Eternal, strong, and true.
He sacrificed His precious life
For sinful me and you.

This was but the beginning,
The price to set us free,
That Jesus died upon that cross,
On the Mount of Calvary.

But, praise the Lord,
He rose again -
And lives for evermore.

Take heed, I pray,
When Jesus comes
Knocking on your door;
The handles on the inside,
There is no lock or key,
Only you can let Him in.

Only He can take away your sin,
So trust the Lord – He loves you.
Ask Him into your heart
To help and heal and guide you,
And from Him never part.

*Submitted by Christine Crossley
written by the friend of a friend*

Thank you

I have been home from hospital for a few weeks having been admitted following a not too severe heart attack. This was treated by the insertion of two stents.

Thank you all for your prayers and other ways in which you have shown your thoughts and support, especially since coming home.
With Christian love,

Ruth Holder

Note: Since Ruth wrote this letter she has experienced some further pain and been readmitted to hospital for further examination and tests. She is now back home again. The tests revealed her stents are working well. She has had a pacemaker fitted as a result of this latest visit. Please continue to uphold her at the throne of grace during this testing time and pray that things will now settle down for Ruth.

Bible Studies

Wednesdays at 7.45pm at the church with a Zoom option

Mar	8 th	Martin Sellens	2 Samuel 6 v12-23
	15 th	Glyn Williams	2 Samuel 7 v1-17
	22 nd	Martin Sellens	2 Samuel 7 v18-29
	29 th	Alan Brearley	John 18 v1-18
April	5 th	Paul Crossley	John 18 v19-40
	12 th	Glyn Williams	John 21 v1-14
	19 th	Richard Brown	John 21 v15-25
	26 th	Martin Sellens	2 Samuel 8
May	3 rd	Alan Brearley	2 Samuel 9

Preaching Plan

		Morning	Evening
Mar	5 th	Martin Sellens (com)	Richard Brown
	12 th	Mick Lockwood	Neil Hulse
	19 th	Alan Brearley	Martin Sellens
	26 th	Ben Hutton	Roger Fay
April	2 nd	Richard Brown	Mick Lockwood (Com)
	9 th	Martin Sellens	Paul Crossley (Easter)
	16 th	Martin Sellens	Martin Woodier
	23 rd	Jonathan Chell	Jonathan Chell
	30 th	John Harris	John Harris
May	7 th	Martin Sellens (com)	Richard Brown

(com) = (Communion)

Outside Appointments

Do pray for our men as they minister outside in the coming months as follows;

Alan Brearley;

Sat March 18th 2.30pm – Torch Trust for the Blind

Glyn Williams;

Sun April 23rd am Bethel, New Wortley

Paul Crossley;

Sun March 26th pm Pentecost Baptist

Sun April 2nd am Hebron, Altofts

Sun April 9th am Garforth Evangelical

Sun April 23rd am Crossgates

Sun April 30th am Crossgates

pm Pentecost Baptist

Sun May 7th am Hebron, Altofts

Do pray for the schools event on Friday March 24th when children from two local primary schools – Holy Trinity and Cookridge will be with us for the morning learning about the tremendous truths of Easter. Do pray for the children, the staff, the schools and the team.

Do also pray about our ministry to local Care Homes as the team go in to take Easter Services at Cookridge Court and Bedford Court.

Diary

March

- Thu 9th 2pm Thursday at Two
 7.30pm Missionary Prayer Meeting
- Sun 12th Fellowship Lunch after the morning Service
- Tue 14th 7.45pm Elder Deacons meeting at 39 Kelmscott Avenue
- Thu 23rd 2pm Thursday at Two
- Fri 24th 9.30am “What’s Easter all about?” with local schools

April

- Sun 2nd 2pm Cookridge Court Easter Service
- Mon 3rd am/pm Yorkshire Reformed Ministers Fraternal meeting
- Thu 6th 1pm Thursday at Two Easter Special
 7.30pm Missionary Prayer Meeting
- Fri 7th 7.30pm Good Friday Service with communion
- Sun 16th 2pm Bedford Court Easter Service
- Tue 18th 7.30pm Mens Fellowship
- Thu 20th 2pm Thursday at Two

May

- Tue 2nd 7.30pm Ladies Craft Evening: Crafts for Spring and King
- Thu 4th am/pm Local Elections – Church open as a Polling Station
 2pm Thursday at Two
 7.30pm Missionary Prayer Meeting

Next Magazine

The next edition of The Magazine will be the May / June edition.
The deadline for the submission of items and contributions to Martin will be Wednesday 19th April - all contributions welcome.

Rotas

Cleaning

Week Ending

Mar	11 th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens
	18 th	Hickman Family, Natalie Sellens
	25 th	Kathryn Hibbard & Nigel Hibbard
April	1 st	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell
	8 th	Angela Mathers, Christine Crossley, Rosemary Hilton
	15 th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens
	22 nd	Hickman Family, Natalie Sellens
	29 th	Kathryn Hibbard & Nigel Hibbard
May	6 th	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell

Flowers

For Sunday

Mar	12 th	Anne Sellens
	19 th	Carole Brearley
	26 th	Kathryn Hibbard
April	2 nd	Elaine Snuggs
	9 th	Angela Mathers
	16 th	Deborah Williams
	23 rd	Colette Hickman
	30 th	Margaret Williams
May	7 th	Sue Chell

Diary of Services and Activities

Sunday	Sunday Morning Worship	10.30am
	Key Club (children aged 4-11)	10.30am
	Prayer Meeting	5.30pm
	Evening Worship	6.30pm

A Communion Service is held every month alternating between morning and evening on the first Sunday of the month and follows on from the main Service.

Tuesday	Men's Fellowship (3rd Tuesday – bimonthly)	7.30pm
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Wednesday	Tots Club (term time)	1.15pm
	Prayer Meeting and Bible Study	7.45pm

Thursday	Thursday at Two (seniors - fortnightly)	2.00pm
	Rock Up (school years 7-11- fortnightly)	7.30pm
	Missionary Prayer Meeting (monthly)	7.30pm

Friday	Ketchup (Children aged 5-11 in term time)	6.00pm
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