

TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

MAGAZINE



No 355 – January & February 2025

Pastoral Letter - January / February 2025

Challenge, Thankfulness, Consistency

I trust you have had a good Christmas and can I start by wishing you a Happy New Year if it is not too late!

Over the Christmas season we look back at the past year – things achieved and not achieved, successes and failures – it is normally a mixed bag for most people. We also look forward to a New Year stretching out ahead of us and wonder what it will bring. We are trusting as a family in God's good grace that it will bring us two further grandchildren to love, cherish and pray for. But we don't know what lies ahead – even in the short term, but God does. So we must enter the New Year walking with God in Christ, holding onto His hand and trusting in His love and promises to us in the gospel. That is what drives us forward in an increasingly uncertain and hostile world for the Christian and gives us hope. As the Psalmist says in Psalm 27 verse 13; **"I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."**

What can we expect then in 2025? There will certainly be **challenge** as there was in 2024. We should expect that. I am writing this letter on New Year's Day. Today Thomas Tuchel starts his role as head coach of the England senior men's football team. The previous coach, Gareth Southgate was awarded a knighthood in the New Year's Honours list but failed to win a major trophy in his 8 years in charge. Thomas Tuchel has set himself the task of winning the World Cup in 2026 in 18 months time – now that is a challenge given it will have been, by then, 60 years since we last won it in 1966. For us as a church two of the challenges we have faced in recent years have been becoming a CIO (a Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and finding the right man to join me in Eldership and lead us forward as our Pastor in the future. We can look

back in thankfulness that the CIO is now fully operational and functional with a new constitution, church handbook and membership giving us a firm foundation for the future. The process has not been without its frustrations, particularly the long delay in opening a new bank account, but it has finally happened and we praise God for it. Progress should always be marked by **thankfulness**. We continue to call upon God to lead us in the search for a new Pastor and that call becomes a higher priority now that the CIO is in place. However, we wait upon God for His timing and the patience to do so humbly, expectantly and without complaint.

Individually for each of us in our personal lives there are bound to be challenges in the year ahead. We can only face those in the knowledge that our God is with us by His Spirit and that He will help us as we walk close to Him. If we think we can handle the challenges that life throws at us on our own then we are bound to fail – without Him we can do nothing. We need God's grace and help every day so we must determine to keep close to Him. The combination of God's Word and God's Spirit applying the Word to our minds and hearts are powerful tools in the hands of Almighty God to keep us walking by faith amidst life's challenges. We must make sure that we are regularly abiding in the vine and coming to God's Word and the throne of grace in prayer so He can feed, guide and strengthen us.

This year is a significant milestone as it marks 500 years since William Tyndale completed his New Testament translation of the Bible into English in the Netherlands in 1525. It would be a year later in 1526 that New Testaments began to be smuggled into England and Scotland in bales of straw. Of the 3,000 printed copies, only two survive in their entirety today. We give great thanks to God for William Tyndale and the burden He placed on his heart to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into our own language that we can understand. We must never take the Bible for granted – it is God's

Word to us and is so influential in our lives – in transforming our thinking and behaviour and showing us the wonder and beauty of our God and His beloved Son and our Saviour. We must show our **consistency** in opening it daily to mine its treasures.

This year will also mark 100 years of the Shipping Forecast being consistently broadcast twice daily by the BBC. These broadcasts take place now at 5.21am in the morning and 12.48am at night. I can remember listening to the Shipping Forecast in my childhood when we often listened to the radio (we had no TV then) – it used to be broadcast during the day then I think. It has become a beloved British institution and national treasure and will continue to be broadcast in the future. Sea areas like “Dogger”, “Viking”, “Lundy” and “Fastnet” feature regularly together with information about windspeeds, sea state, weather and visibility. Over the years it has been vital and important to sea-faring vessels in keeping them safe around our coasts. We too have a vital message to proclaim – how people can be saved from their sins and eternal condemnation through the cross and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to seek and to save those that were lost. People are in great danger and we are the ones who have to warn them and ensure that God’s message of salvation in Christ goes out so they can hear and respond. For that to happen we need consistency in our faith as we worship, serve and witness.

May we be those who face the **challenges** that lie ahead walking with God, who show **consistency** in our Christian life so that God can use us for His glory and the extension of His Kingdom and are always **thankful** that God is with us, working out His purposes in our lives and that we have His precious Word to instruct, equip and guide us in the coming year.

With love in the Lord Jesus

Martin Sellens

NOTICE THE NOTICES

Perhaps you don't pay much attention when the Notices are announced. At Tinshill they are usually read out at the start of morning and evening services. Following this, the leader of the service might say "Now we'll begin our worship" (with a hymn, or Psalm or some scripture text). But surely the Notices are part of worship - pay attention to them!

Why do I say that? Firstly, because they may remind you of activities which involve you; it might be good to remind you of meetings or activities which you have pledged to take part in.

But more than this, behind every event announced there lies an important spiritual endeavour. All of our activities are rooted in the Lord Jesus Christ, bringing Him and the gospel to friends who are not yet Christians. There's nothing "just social" about our meetings. That applies to children's and youth meetings, older folks meetings eg. Thursday at Two (which has been announced and run for 35 years).

So the Notices are part of worship, not just reminders of up-coming events and other necessary details concerning them. You might hear something you ought to be involved in - particularly prayer, for those who prepare and lead these activities.

Of course you can pray at home for those who have these responsibilities; for those who might be nervous about their part in them; for those who might just be starting to teach children and young people and the awesome responsibility they have. (I was converted to the Lord Jesus Christ in large part under the teaching of a Sunday School teacher).

But here's the thing - we might well take the opportunity to pray more at home for church life with the information we have heard from the Notices. But why not say 'arrow prayers' to God while the Notices are actually taking place?, adding your prayer quietly to the Notice you are hearing. It may of course be difficult to remember all of what the Notices contain, but if you only pick up a certain amount as 'ammunition' it can help direct your praying at home as well as in the mid-week prayer and bible study.

The Notices represent our corporate calling together in service of The Lord Jesus here at Tinshill. We honour Him and thank Him for the privilege of serving together as we listen carefully.

Also, you will hear the names of those down to preach on the next Lord's day as well as taking the mid week bible study and other meetings. As a retired pastor I can assure you that people praying for you as a result of hearing of that responsibility in the Notices is very precious and very needful

So...."Notice the Notices", and more than that, make them a rich part of your prayer life at church and at home.

Glyn Williams

We're going to a Party!

Well, that's how it is announced in the church notices! - a work party to give the church borders and shrubbery a good clear out and tidy up before the winter sets in. Since then we have also had a snow party to clear the church car park of snow ready for Sunday worship.

The first photograph, taken on Saturday morning, 2nd November, shows a hardy group of workers ready for session two following a break for tea/coffee and eats in happy fellowship in the sideroom.



Good inroads were made into the borders and edges including painstakingly digging out brambles and stubborn weeds from the back border where the ground slopes away to the fence, heavy weeding in every border and much cutting back -

what a difference at the end of the morning. Car boots were filled plus sacks ready to be taken away.

The second and third photos were taken on the morning of Saturday January 11th when 9 hardy individuals turned up to clear snow and mainly ice from the car park – it was hard labour!





*Rotary digger operated
by (left to right)
Martin, Glyn, Martin
Woodier, Anthony
Hilton, Matt Williams*



Part of the dictionary definition of "party" is "a group of people meeting together socially to enjoy themselves". As well as the discipline of turning up for the hard work of the gardening or snow clearing (where health allows) there is good fellowship and enjoyment to be had in labouring together, and a great sense of joy and gladness looking at the finished product knowing it is for the glory and honour of our great God and Saviour.

In 1983 after the new church building was opened work started on sorting the half acre of land out - it was very uneven, full of boulders as well as weeds. A rotary digger was used to help break up the land (see photo at the bottom of the previous page). Then lawn seed was sown by hand and stamped down by ladies in wellington boots. Our prayer was then, and remains so now, that local people will be influenced by how we love our God and want to honour Him in even this practical way. We are therefore so thankful for those who came to "the party" and those who work on the land all year round. "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (and your reward) Jeremiah 8:10

Please feel free to come to the party next time.

Margaret Williams

Creation or Evolution?

It takes ten thousand times more faith to be an unbeliever than to be a believer in God's revelation. One man comes to me and tells me I am credulous, because I believe in a great First Cause who created the heavens and the earth, and that God became man and died for sin. I tell him I may be, and no doubt am very credulous, as he conceives credulity, but I conceive that which I believe is in perfect consistency

with my reason, and I therefore receive it. "But", saith he, "I am not credulous - not at all". Sir, I say, I should like to ask you one thing. You do not believe the world was created by God. "No". You must be amazingly credulous, then, I am sure. Do you think this Bible exists without being made? If you should say I am credulous, because I believe it had a printer and a binder, I should say that you were infinitely more credulous, if you assured me that it was made at all, and should you begin to tell me one of your theories about creation – that atoms floated through space, and came to a certain shape, I should resign the palm of credulity to you. You believe, perhaps, moreover, that man came to be in this world through the improvement of certain creatures. I have read that you say that there were certain monads - that afterwards they grew into fishes - that these fishes wanted to fly, and then wings grew - that by and by they wanted to crawl, and then legs came, and they became lizards, and by many steps they then became monkeys, and then the monkeys became men, and you believe yourself to be cousin ape to an orang-utan. Now, I may be very credulous, but really not so credulous as you are.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, aged 22

(Printed with permission from Day One Publications).

Note: "credulous" means "having too great a readiness to believe things"

Submitted by Glyn Williams

“ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth ... for since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse..” Romans 1 v 18-20

Diary

January

- Thu 16 - 2pm Thursday at Two
Tue 21 - 7.45pm Elder Deacons Meeting at 68 Moseley Wood Walk
Thu 23 - 7.30pm Rock up
Thu 30 - 1pm Thursday at Two Winter Special

February

- Mon 3 - 11am Yorkshire Reformed Ministers Fraternal at Tinshill
Thu 6 - 7.30pm Rock up
Sun 9 - 4.30pm Fellowship Tea before the Evening Service
Thu 13 - 2pm Thursday at Two
7.30pm Missionary Prayer Meeting
Tue 25 - 7.45pm Elder Deacons Meeting at 26 Woodlands Avenue
Thu 27 - 1pm Thursday at Two Soup and Sweet Special
7.30pm Rock up

March

- Thu 6 - 7.30pm Missionary Prayer Meeting

PLEASE NOTE

There will not be a Men's Fellowship meeting in either January or February.

The Half Term break is in the week Monday Feb 17th to Friday Feb 21st and Tots Club / Ketchup will not take place that week.

NEXT MAGAZINE – The next edition of The Magazine will be for March / April 2025 – the deadline for the submission of items and contributions to Martin will be Sunday 16th February - all contributions welcome.

Bible Studies

Wednesdays at 7.45pm at the church with a Zoom option if you are not able to attend in person but no Zoom option for Deputations

Jan	8th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 23
	15th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 24 v1-28
	22nd	Alan Brearley	Genesis 24 v29-67
	29th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 25 v1-11
Feb	5th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 25 v19-34
	12th	Possible Deputation	Awaiting confirmation
	19th	Tba	Genesis 26 v1-14
	26th	Tba	Genesis 26 v15-35
Mar	1st	Tba	Genesis 27 v1-29

Preaching Plan

		Morning	Evening
Jan	12th	Alan Brearley (Com)	Martin Sellens
	19th	Martin Woodier	Martin Woodier
	26th	Martin Woodier	Martin Woodier
Feb	2nd	Martin Sellens	Paul Crossley (Com)
	9th	Mick Lockwood	Martin Sellens
	16th	Martin Sellens	Alan Brearley
	23rd	Tba	Tba
Mar	2nd	Martin Sellens (Com)	Tba

(Com) = (Communion) Tba = To be announced

Outside Appointments

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

Alan Brearley;

Sunday Jan 19th pm - Garforth

Sunday Feb 9th am - Bethel, New Wortley

Rotas

Cleaning for week ending

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

Flowers for Sunday

Jan 12th	Colette Hickman	Jan 19th	Margaret Williams
Jan 26th	Sue Chell	Feb 2nd	Christine Crossley
Feb 9th	Eva Ng	Feb 16th	Natalie Sellens
Feb 23rd	Kathryn Hibbard	Mar 2nd	Mavis Mathers

Closing Thought

“ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”

1 Peter 1 verse 13

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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