

TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

# MAGAZINE



No 357 – May & June 2025

## Pastoral Letter - May / June 2025

### Peace be with you

**“Then the same evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you”. When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.”**

John 20 verses 19 & 20

It has been good in recent weeks to remember again the sufferings, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and to share that message of salvation and hope with young and old, Christian and non-Christian. As I sit down to write this letter fresh in my mind is the lovely opportunity we had yesterday to welcome two schools into the church (some hundred or so children and their teachers and support staff) and explore “What is Easter all about?” My thanks go to the team of 13 from the church who helped and contributed on the day to make it happen – there is something wonderful about working together in gospel work as we all play our part.

A much smaller team have taken two Easter Services at local care homes – Cookridge Court and Bedford Court when we have been able to speak and sing of the glories and meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ for each one of us. Of great value also has been the opportunity to spend some time afterwards speaking one to one with the residents. Pictures of these events are included in this Magazine. We pray on for lasting fruit.

I have been struck this year in John’s gospel account of the greeting that the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples after the resurrection recorded in Chapter 20 – “Peace be with you” or “Peace to you!” He doesn’t just say it once but three times in verses 19, 21 and 26. The disciples

were reeling and in shock. Their leader had been cruelly killed by a combination of the Jews and the Romans on the cross despite His goodness and innocence. They were in great fear as they would be next in the firing line as His disciples. They hadn't yet grasped or understood the words of Jesus to them before Calvary that He would rise from death on the third day – they had no such expectation and the outlook was very dark and bleak indeed. It is into this fearful assembly that Jesus suddenly appears. He comes to dispel their fears. He comes to show them He is alive as He shows them His wounds in His hands and side – it is definitely Him and He is alive! He comes to reassure and strengthen them in their discipleship and equip them for future ministry (John 20 verses 21 & 22).

How gracious God is to us. He does not leave His disciples with their last view of Him hanging on a cross to die in all His weakness, but He comes to them in His powerful body full of life and vitality but still bearing the marks of the cross as a reminder of His sufferings and love for them and us. Over that forty day period He showed Himself alive by **“many infallible proofs”** and gave His disciples much valuable teaching about the kingdom of God to equip them before He finally left them to ascend to heaven (Acts 1 verse 3).

The Lord Jesus knows our frame and our circumstances. He knows that life here is not easy and that in this world His followers will have tribulation and fears. He counteracts that by giving us His peace (as here in the locked room after the cross) – see John 16 verse 33. This is His gift to us and what a valuable gift it is. We need it in a difficult and uncertain world. We will struggle to survive without it. So the Lord speaking to His disciples before the cross and knowing what they need promises them that He will give them a Helper who will abide with them forever;

**“the Helper, The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”**

John 14 verses 26 & 27

Here in John 20 after the cross the Lord comes to them in their great fear and need to give them His peace, to dispel the clouds of grief and gloom, and fill them with joy and gladness (verse 20). After His ascension back to heaven, at Pentecost, the Father will send the Holy Spirit to indwell their hearts as the Lord had promised back in John 14.

We are to live now in the light of the resurrection. The Christian believer has eternal hope. That does not mean that everything in the garden is rosy. We know that is not the case. There are many difficult things that we are likely to face in this life, particularly as we get older. Elsewhere in this Magazine you will find a report from the Connected Conference in Dewsbury in March which considered the whole area of Dementia which is affecting more and more people as we live longer in bodies which are deteriorating. This is just one of the many challenges we may have to face. Through it all though we can know the peace of God in our hearts. Indeed this is the exhortation that the apostle Paul gives to the Colossian church **“let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called in one body, and be thankful”** (Colossians 3 verse 15). One of the ways in which we do that is by ensuring that God’s Word fills our minds and hearts (see verse 16 which follows). We know as believers that we have peace with God by faith in the cross of Christ (Romans 5 verse 1) – this is what justifies us before God and deals with our sin granting us forgiveness. This is the covenant blessing we enjoy in Christ. But we must let the peace of God rule in

our hearts day by day keeping us steady and joyful in Him. How do we do that?

The answer certainly lies in keeping close to God and His people and living lives which are obedient and submissive to God, where His word fills our mind and heart. We will not be at peace with God if we live in rebellion or drift away from Him. If we are abiding in the vine then the love of God will fill our hearts and we will be fruitful in Christ – one of the fruits of the Spirit is “peace” (Galatians 5 verse 22). To counteract our fears and anxieties we do need to bring them to God in prayer – it is as we do so and commit our way to God that we know the peace of God as we give our burdens to Him;

**“Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus.”**

Philippians 4 verses 6 & 7

May each of us be assured that we are at peace with God through faith in His Son, believing and trusting in His death for our sins and sharing in His resurrection life. May we also know the reality of the peace of Christ in our hearts day by day as we walk with Him through this life dealing with all our fears and anxieties knowing that He is gloriously alive and at the right hand of God on our behalf.

With love in the Lord Jesus

*Martin Sellens*

## Report on the Connected Conference in March

On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March Paul and Chris Crossley and I went to the Connected Conference at Dewsbury Evangelical Church. Nigel and Kathryn Hibbard were also there. During a session for news from churches in the Yorkshire area, five churches were featured with a leader from each one bringing a report. One of the five was our own church with Nigel giving the report. It was an interesting and encouraging session, but the main reason for us going, was to hear three sessions on dementia from Alan Thomas, who is a Professor of Psychiatry and a Consultant, and is an Elder at Newcastle Reformed Evangelical Church. His name will be familiar to many because he writes a regular column for Evangelical Times. Dementia is Alan's speciality and he is very experienced.

Alan's talks were titled (1) Understanding dementia and the image of God (2) Caring for people with dementia and (3) Helping churches support people living with dementia. He covered a lot of ground - far too much to adequately convey here! - and was very helpful. There was a lot of practical medical information, and also he provided an encouraging spiritual perspective.

Just to pick out a few things and give a taster of the talks:-

Dementia develops gradually over many years until it interferes with normal activities. It is far more than a loss of memory (and not all memory problems are due to dementia) because the brain and mind are damaged. This can lead to a whole range of physical difficulties such as sleep disruption, inability to perform everyday tasks and poor balance, as well as behavioural disturbances including unsettled agitated unrest, anxiety, hallucinations and delusions, physical

aggression and disinhibited behaviour. There are many issues which may occur and they all affect the carer as well as the sufferer.

It was the spiritual input which struck me most. Alan described how as a person changes it feels as if their godliness is disappearing, especially if their behaviour becomes challenging. The dementia causes their outer self to wear away, but if they are a Christian their inner spirit is being renewed day by day. God is at work from His side. Faith comes through a work of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit is still at work in the believer, despite their dementia. They have changed outwardly, but not inwardly in their soul - they have not been cut off from the Lord Jesus Christ. The person may have lost the memory of their salvation, but they have not lost their relationship with the Lord.

Worshipping with dementia becomes difficult. It's hard to formulate prayers, concentrate and remember. Routines are helpful both at home and at church. The Spirit helps us in our weaknesses which includes in dementia. He knows our desires and sanctifies our incoherent groanings. Dementia may have led to apathy. Helping someone with dementia to attend church needs careful planning from encouraging them to come, providing lifts, being thoughtful about where they sit, ensuring there are people around them who they know, and trying to make sure everything is as familiar as possible.

Alan finished by talking about the Assisted Dying Bill. He is deeply concerned about it both as a Christian and as a dementia specialist. If it becomes law it will change the interaction of everybody with their doctors. He believes that only a tiny number of those who would die as a result would be the extreme cases where there is great suffering and they are diagnosed as within six months of death. Most deaths would be of the vulnerable and needy - stroke victims, dementia sufferers, the frail etc for there are no meaningful safeguards to protect them, and he said that the Bill is wide open to abuse. Alan thought that the best line to take in writing to our MPs was to emphasise the danger that the Bill poses to the vulnerable in society.

*Elaine Snuggs*

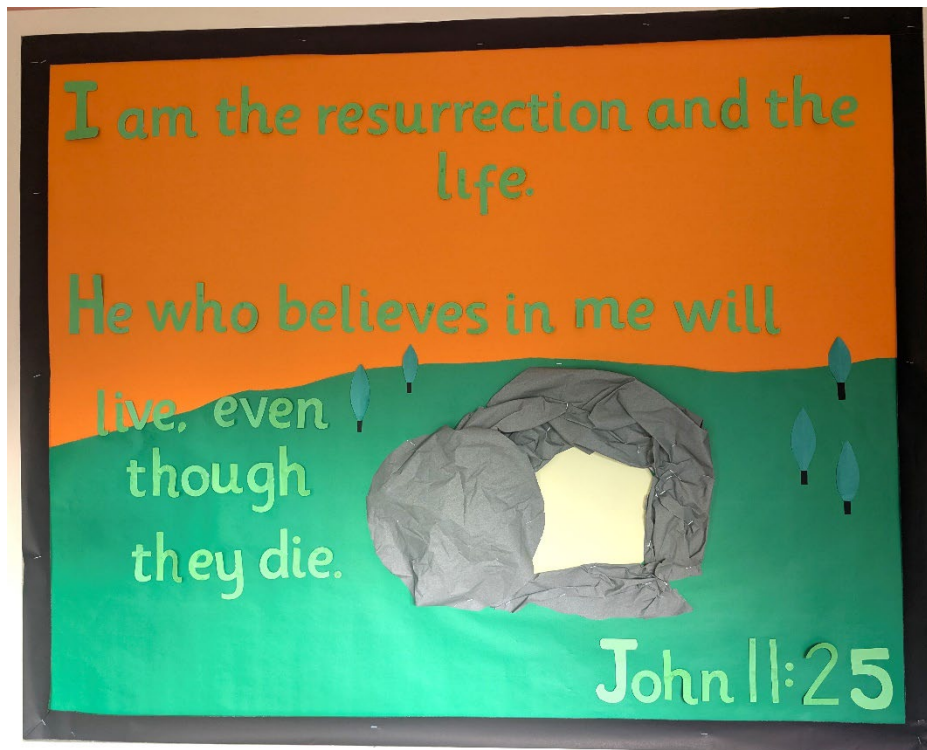
School children at “What is Easter all about” on April 25<sup>th</sup>



Easter Service at Bedford Court on April 27<sup>th</sup>



Easter murals in the entrance lobby and main church



**“The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?”**

This verse is a quotation from Psalm 27 verse 1. Look around you at the people, circumstances and institutions in which you tend to put your trust. With the slightest shift of the wind they could come crumbling down around you: People are fickle. Circumstances change. Institutions rise and fall.

King David cautioned such:

**"Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save...  
Though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them."**

Psalm 146:3; 62:10

One sneeze in London, Wall Street or OPEC and we all get colds. One unforeseen change in governmental policy and whole industries are deeply affected. Most of the kings and king-makers of the last decade are but a faded memory in today's centres of power and commerce.

So... what exactly is the stronghold of your life? If it happens to be people, circumstances, or institutions you have just cause to be afraid. King David grasped the vulnerability of our man-made towers of Babel, in crying out to God,

**"Whom have I in heaven but you, and earth has nothing I desire but you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."**

Psalm 73:25, 26

Therefore today, as you embark upon the challenges confronting you, keep in mind the Scripture's formula for experiencing God as your stronghold:

**"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my**

**weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me... For when I am weak, then I am strong."**

2 Corinthians 12:9, 10

The only barrier to you experiencing God as your stronghold would be your foolish trust in man, or in your lofty assumption that you can pull it off without Him at the centre of your efforts.

*Facts of the Matter submitted by Paul Crossley*

## **Thank You**

Thank you so much to everyone who kindly and generously donated money to my fundraising challenge for Caring For Life. I chose to walk 10 miles every day in March, but when I told my son, Robert, he said, "Mum, you already do that so it isn't a challenge". This was true so I decided to walk 15 miles every day in March. It certainly was a challenge and some days I struggled to complete it, but I didn't give up. With God's help and people's prayers I managed to walk 15 miles a day for 31 days. The total I raised was £967.50 which includes Gift Aid.

Wow.

Caring For Life will use it to help needy families, so, once again, thank you so much.

*Christine Crossley*

## **The Most Important Days in your Life**

"The two most important days in your life are the day that you were born and the day that you found out why"

*Mark Twain*

I found out – now I know.

*Carol Collins*

## Diary

### May

Tue 6 7.45pm Elder Deacons Meeting at 26 Woodlands Avenue

Thu 8 1pm Thursday at Two Light Lunch Special

Speaker: Martin Sellens

7.30pm Rock up

Tue 20 7.30pm Men's Fellowship

Thu 22 2pm Thursday at Two

7.30pm Rock up

### June

Tue 3 7.45pm Elder Deacons Meeting at 23 Kirkwood Drive

Thu 5 2pm Thursday at Two

7.30pm Rock up

Mon 9th to

Fri 13<sup>th</sup> am/pm Bible Exhibition with local schools  
and Open Air Mission

Thu 19 1pm Thursday at Two Food Special

Speaker: Mick Lockwood

7.30pm Rock up

### July

Thu 3 2pm Thursday at Two

7.30pm Rock up

**PLEASE NOTE** - There will not be a Men's Fellowship meeting in June  
The Half Term holiday for the schools is the week commencing  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May and there will be no Tots or Ketchup that week.

**NEXT MAGAZINE** - The next edition of The Magazine will be for July /  
August 2025. the deadline for the submission of items and  
contributions to Martin will be Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June - 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

<b>May</b>	7th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 31 v1-21
	14th	Alan Brearley	Genesis 31 v22-42
	21st	Martin Sellens	Genesis 31 v43-55
	28th	Nigel to lead	Prayer Meeting
<b>June</b>	4th	Alan Brearley	Genesis 32 v1-21
	11th	Deputation	Douglas Young Open Air Mission
	18th	Martin Sellens	Genesis 32 v22-32
	25rd	Paul Crossley	Genesis 33 v1-20
<b>July</b>	2nd	Martin Sellens	Genesis 35 v1-15

## Preaching Plan

		<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>May</b>	4th	Martin Sellens (Com)	Alan Brearley
	11th	Steven Bowers	Gordon Frame
	18th	Martin Sellens	Adam Broughton
	25th	John Harris	John Harris
<b>June</b>	1st	Dan Peters	Dan Peters (Com)
	8th	Martin Sellens	Douglas Young
	15th	Alan Brearley	Steve Harding
	22nd	Roger Fay	Roger Fay
	29th	Mick Lockwood	Martin Sellens
<b>July</b>	6th	Martin Woodier (Com)	Martin Woodier

(Com) = (Communion)

## Outside Appointments

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

### Paul Crossley;

Sunday May 18th am – Garforth

Sunday June 1st am - Hebron, Altofts

Sunday June 22nd am - Garforth

Sunday July 6th am - Hebron, Altofts

### Alan Brearley;

Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup> pm - Garforth

Sunday June 22nd am - Bethel, New Wortley

## Rotas

### Cleaning for week ending

<b>May</b>	10th	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell
	17th	Angela Mathers, Christine Crossley, Rosemary Hilton
	24th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens
	31st	Hickman family, Natalie Sellens
<b>June</b>	7th	Kathryn Hibbard, Nigel Hibbard
	14th	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell
	21st	Angela Mathers, Christine Crossley, Rosemary Hilton
	28th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens
<b>July</b>	5th	Hickman family, Nataile Sellens

### Flowers for Sunday

<b>May 11th</b>	Sue Chell	<b>May 18th</b>	Christine Crossley
<b>May 25th</b>	Eva Ng	<b>June 1st</b>	Natalie Sellens
<b>June 8th</b>	Margaret Williams	<b>June 15th</b>	Mavis Mathers
<b>June 22nd</b>	Rosemary Hilton	<b>June 29th</b>	Anne Sellens
<b>July 6th</b>	Carole Brearley		

## Diary of Services and Activities

<b>Sunday</b>	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.

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

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

<b>Friday</b>	Ketchup (Children aged 5-11 in term time)	6.00pm
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### **Tinshill Free Church**

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**Registered Charity CIO No 1198328**

**[www.tinshillfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.tinshillfreechurch.org.uk)**

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#### **Deacons:**

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