

TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

# MAGAZINE



No 362 – March & April 2026

## Pastoral Letter – March & April 2026

### Whose side are you on? – sitting on the fence.

Listening to the radio recently following the United States / Israeli air strikes against Iran I heard one American commentator who was very critical of the stance of the British Government. We had questioned the legality of the action and refused permission for American aircraft to use British airbases in the region. The commentator noted that “we were sitting on the fence” which was not consistent with the so-called special relationship between the US and UK. The commentator went so far as to say that he considered the special relationship was now between the US and Israel. As I sit down to write this letter events have moved swiftly on with the British having now given permission for the US to use British airbases to defend against the threat of missile attacks against US bases in the region. Sir Keir Starmer in a recent statement has stated that British aircraft will not be involved in attacking Iran or their allies. It is a complex and quickly evolving situation which threatens the peace of the whole region and we pray for a swift end to hostilities not least because of all the innocent people affected by it who just want to live their lives in peace. Let us therefore be prayerful – particularly for Christians who are in the firing line and their families who anxiously wait for news of their loved ones.

The question of “whose side are you on?” is a relevant one as we approach another Easter. In a dispute with the Jewish religious leaders where Jesus was accused by them of casting out demons by the power of the Devil, Jesus shows them that instead the kingdom of God has come upon them as the demons were cast out by the Spirit of God. He then goes on to make this statement;

**“He who is not with Me is against Me”** (Matthew’s gospel chapter 12 verse 30). When it comes to Jesus Christ the Bible is very clear. We

are either for Him or against Him, believers or non-believers, sheep or goats. There is no middle ground between the two where we are neither for or against. If we are not for Him then we are definitely against Him. There is no sitting on the fence. If we do not have faith in Christ we are relying on our own resources when it comes to the Day of Judgement – we stand alone without a Saviour who died in our place taking our punishment for our sins. That is a fearful place to be as only Christ is able to cover our sins because He was a perfect Man and God’s Son sent for that specific purpose of being the Sin bearer and Saviour that we all need. Without Him we are indeed lost and will face God’s righteous anger against sin alone.

Pontius Pilate thought he could sit on the fence and not get involved. As Roman Governor he had the power at the time to put someone to death, a power which the Jewish authorities did not have. So it was to Pilate that they came seeking the death penalty for Jesus because of his “crime” of claiming to be God’s Son. After questioning Jesus Pilate came to the conclusion that there were no grounds to condemn Him to death. Three times in John 18 verse 38 and John 19 verses 4 and 6 Pilate says clearly “**I find no fault in Him**”. He tries to distance himself from the case and even washed his hands but eventually he hands Jesus over to the Jewish authorities to do what they will with Him and in doing so he signs the death warrant of Christ. He was in a difficult position as he didn’t want a riot on his hands so he gave in to the crowd’s demands even though he knew Jesus was innocent. He sought to sit on the fence but he was at the centre of the trial and ultimately the crucifixion of Christ. Whilst we know that the death and resurrection of Jesus was totally within God’s will and purpose and absolutely vital in God’s plan of salvation for lost mankind each person in that chain of events leading to the cross bears individual responsibility for their actions – Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin, Herod and Pilate.

The sacrifice that Jesus made at Calvary on that first Easter is the most significant moment in human history. How we react to it matters. Whose side are you on? Have you seen that at the cross God was at work providing a Saviour for you and me that we might be forgiven and reconciled to a holy God? Or do you just see a good man being unjustly killed? Does it matter to you and affect the way you live? God has intervened in human history in His great love and mercy to give us hope of eternal peace with God, a relationship with Him as our Father by faith in Christ and His presence in our hearts by the Holy Spirit for those who truly believe and ask Him into their hearts.

There can be no sitting on the fence. On that Day when the Lord Jesus returns in Glory, as He promised and most surely will, each of us will stand before Him as Judge and give account of our lives and what we have done with the offer of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Easter shows us death is not the end – there is an eternity before us and the way to eternal life is only through the Lord Jesus – only He has power over death and has been raised from the dead. He offers us life in Him and hope but we must come to Him, accept Him as our King and live for Him now. Ignoring Him and His claims on your life and heart means that you are against Him. So the question comes – whose side are you on? Remember there is no sitting on the fence!

Trusting that you may know the joy and peace of Easter which comes from being reconciled to God as a result of His great love for us, that in Christ our sins have been dealt with, that we have an eternal hope and that we have the presence of God the Spirit in our hearts helping us each day to be disciples of the Risen Christ,

*Martin Sellens*

## **Thankful Memories of Bill Dyer**

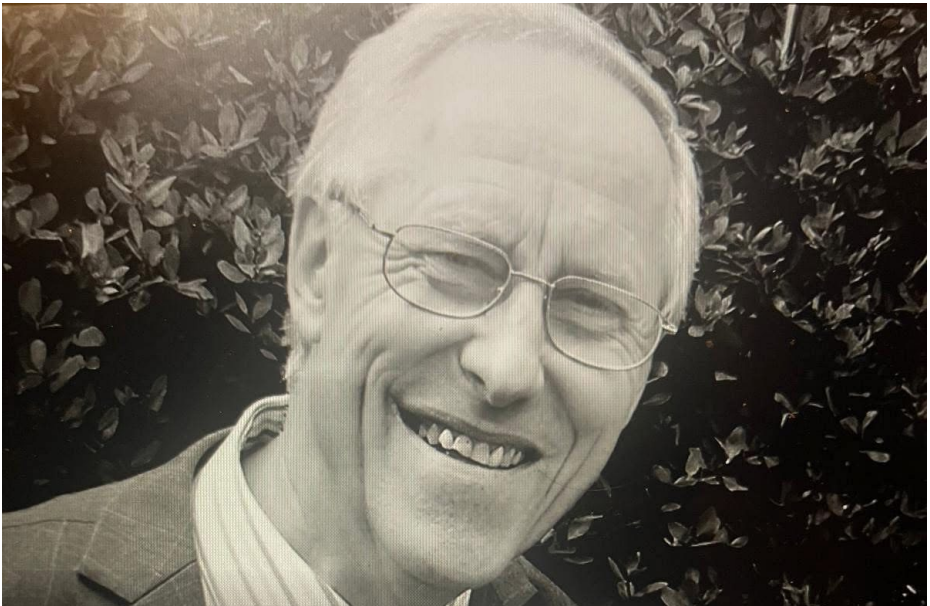
It's a great privilege to have known Pastor Bill Dyer and to remember his long contact with Tinshill in the pages of our church magazine. Bill went into the direct presence of his Lord and Saviour on Saturday the 14th February after a long hard struggle with kidney problems.

My first contact with Bill was when he was recommended as a speaker for our ladies evangelistic coffee morning at Tinshill which ran fortnightly in my home on a Tuesday morning. He readily agreed to come and speak for us and became a 'regular' and was very much appreciated. He was a humble man, friendly, deeply faithful to the gospel and very sensitive in tackling the varied topics and issues we tried to address.

Glyn and I went over to Pontefract where Bill served as a deeply committed and faithful Pastor of a church situated in the centre of that Yorkshire mining town. We attended some of his "Faith for our Times" missions (as did many others from Tinshill) where there was the Lord's great blessing of a mini revival and local people were converted in quite large numbers and the lovely old stone church with its gallery and pipe organ was often full. These missions continued regularly over some years. A couple who were converted during one of those missions lived local to our church at Tinshill and Bill directed them to come and join us which they did, and they served for many years amongst us here. Bill was happy to accept Glyn's invitation to come and preach at Tinshill and a regular ministry and fellowship developed (Glyn at that time was still in his secular full-time job). Bill had been a farmer and he was an excellent speaker at our Harvest Suppers at which he spoke several times. He was so humble and likeable, engaging in style and presentation, and he managed to declare the truths of sin and judgement without being harshly confrontational, and then greatly honoured the Lord Jesus in speaking

of His great love and suffering for all who will trust in Him as Saviour and Lord.

In 1990 Glyn gave up his secular employment in computing at Huddersfield University (it was a Polytechnic then) and saw more of Bill when they met at the Yorkshire Reformed Ministers Fraternal which met monthly. Glyn was asked to speak quite a lot at Pontefract's evangelistic coffee mornings held in the church building.



The many people who were converted under Bill's ministry and the "Faith for our Times" missions grew in grace and maturity and loved and appreciated Bill for his faithful and sacrificial care over them for 40 years as their pastor. His call to shepherd the flock of God at Pontefract produced a generation of people who knew and loved their Saviour greatly. As that generation got older they asked if they could have a service on a Tuesday morning, and it was to this that Glyn went to minister quite often, sometimes taking three consecutively. What a

delight and privilege. I used to go with him and loved it, they were such happy times of fellowship with the "fruit" of Bill's ministry and they so loved and appreciated the Word.

For the latter years of his retirement Bill had serious kidney problems. The Lord's victory for Bill was completed on Saturday 14th February when Bill went home to be forever with the Lord. He has heard "Well done, good and faithful servant". We pray on for Bill's wife Christine and for the family. The funeral/thanksgiving service for Bill's life will be held in the church at Pontefract at 1pm on Friday 13th March 2026.

*Margaret Williams (and on behalf of Glyn who had great respect and thanksgiving for a beloved brother in Christ).*

### **3 Crowns**

The First, too wondrous to behold.  
Precious more than this world's gold.  
Laid aside and left above,  
A sacrifice of matchless love.

The Second made by men for scorn,  
Woven through with cruel thorn.  
Borne by One who made no sound.  
No greater love can e'er be found.

The Third for Victory o'er the grave,  
Worn for those He came to save.  
Returned to take the First once more  
And reign in Heav'n for evermore.

*Angela Mathers*

## A One Way Journey

One time when I was feeling in a low mood, pondering my salvation and whether it was possible to lose (or even have lost) it, two verses of Scripture came to me. One was John 5:24, where Jesus says that the person who believes in Him **“has passed from death into life”**. The other was Colossians 1:13, where Paul says that God has **“conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”**. The thought that followed was a very simple one – these verses are describing a one-way journey.

The Christian life is not like a commuter journey, travelling constantly back and forth. The Christian does not receive salvation and then continually lose and regain it. The very thought that a person could pass from death into life, only to pass back into death, life, death... struck me as preposterous.

Equally, God has given the believer citizenship of Jesus’ kingdom. Is Jesus going to grant citizenship only to withdraw it, restore it, withdraw, restore...? Surely not. Jesus Himself said, **“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing”** (John 6:39). He also said that no-one can snatch the believer out of His hand, or out of the Father’s hand (John 10:27-29). A preacher who recently read the latter verses to the congregation at Tinshill then added **“And you can’t snatch yourself out of His hand either!”** (which answered a question that had occasionally come to my mind).

These verses from God’s Word brought me reassurance that however low a Christian believer may feel, however badly they consider themselves to be doing in the Christian life, God has still given them salvation and they still belong to Him. If a person has truly

passed from death into life, then in spiritual terms a legal transaction has taken place which will not be rescinded.

I'm very glad of this! I trust that you are too.

*Rosemary Hilton*

## **Clinging To The Lord Your God**

***"You shall cling to the Lord your God."*** – These were Joshua's parting words to wayward Israel, just before his death. ( Joshua 23 verse 8).

CLING : *"To hold fast to something, as by grasping, sticking, embracing, or winding around"*.

As a wet raincoat would CLING to your back.

As a person on the verge of death would CLING to life.

*"To remain attached in thought or practice"*.

*"To follow close after, pursue hard; to resist separation"*.

Jesus put it this way: ***"If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps, he must give up all right to himself... and keep close behind Me."*** (Luke 9 verse 23a – Phillips)

CLINGING conveys the *sense* of desperation: That there is no other viable option.

So the QUESTION comes: ARE YOU CLINGING TO CHRIST?

Or are you clinging to: Your bank account? Your reputation? Your capabilities?

SELF SUFFICIENCY is the arrogant assumption that I can go it alone... without God.

CLINGING is the humble acknowledgment that I must be intimately connected to God for life to make sense and to be worth living. In Joshua's admonition to CLING to God he gives this warning:

***"If you ever go back and CLING to the rest of these nations (i.e. the world and its values)... (they) shall be to you as: a snare and a trap... A whip on your sides... Thorns in your eyes... until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God has given you."*** (Joshua 23: verses 12 and 13).

So are you CLINGING to Christ? Or do you have it so together that you can go it alone? If so, are you willing to pay the price of independence?

*Facts of the Matter (submitted by Paul Crossley)*

**Next Magazine** – The next edition of The Magazine will be for May / June 2026 -- the deadline for the submission of items and contributions to Martin will be Sunday 31st May - all contributions welcome.

## Diary

### March

Thu 12	7.30pm	Rock up
Sat 14	am/pm	Connected Conference at Dewsbury Subject: Gospel Driven Change Speaker: Paul Watts
Tue 17	7.30pm	Men's Fellowship
Thu 19	2pm	Thursday at Two
Thu 26	7.30pm	Rock up
Sun 29	2pm	Bedford Court Easter Service

### April

Thu 2	1pm	Thursday at Two - Easter Meal
Fri 3	7.30pm	Good Friday Service with communion
Thu 9	7.30pm	Missionary Prayer Group
Sun 12	2pm	Cookridge Court Easter Service
Thu 16	2pm	Thursday at Two
Tue 21	7.45pm	Elder Deacons Meeting
Thu 23	7.30pm	Rock up
Mon 27	7.30pm	Trustees Meeting
Tue 28	7.30pm	Ladies Spring Crafts
Thu 30	2pm	Thursday at Two

### May

Thu 7	am/ pm	Church in use as a Polling Station
	7.30pm	Rock up

Note - There will not be a Men's Fellowship in April.

Tots Club, Ketchup and Rock up will not meet during the 2 week Easter holidays – April 3<sup>rd</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>.

## 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>March</b>	11th	Nahum Chapter 2	Paul Crossley
	18th	Deputation - FIEC	Daniel Grimwade
	25th	Nahum Chapter 3	Martin Sellens
<b>April</b>	1st	Easter devotional	Tim Hickman
	8th	Easter study	Martin Sellens
	15th	Prayer Meeting	
	22nd	Zephaniah Chapter 1	Martin Sellens
	29th	Zephaniah Chapter 2	Martin Sellens
<b>May</b>	6th	Zephaniah Chapter 3	Paul Crossley

## Preaching Plan

		<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>March</b>	8th	Martin Sellens	Martin Sellens
	15th	Alan Brearley	Steve Harding
	22nd	Martin Sellens	Mick Lockwood
	29th	John Harris	John Harris
<b>April</b>	5th	Martin Sellens	Martin Sellens - Easter
	12th	Martin Woodier	Martin Woodier
	19th	Martin Woodier	Martin Woodier
	26th	John Harris	John Harris
<b>May</b>	3rd	Alan Brearley (Com)	Gordon Frame
	10th	Steven Bowers	Steve Harding

(Com) = (Communion)

## Outside Appointments

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

### Paul Crossley;

Sunday March 8th am – Garforth

Sunday April 5th am - Hebron, Altofts

12th am - Garforth

Sunday May 3rd am - Hebron, Altofts

## Rotas

### Cleaning for week ending

<b>Mar</b>	14th	Kathryn Hibbard, Nigel Hibbard
	21st	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell
	28th	Angela Mathers, Christine Crossley, Rosemary Hilton
<b>Apr</b>	4th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens
	11th	Hickman family, Natalie Sellens
	18th	Kathryn Hibbard, Nigel Hibbard
	25th	Elaine & John Snuggs, Sue & Gordon Chell
<b>May</b>	2nd	Angela Mathers, Christine Crossley, Rosemary Hilton
	9th	Deborah Williams, Eva Ng, Anne Sellens

### Flowers for Sunday

<b>Mar 15th</b>	Margaret Williams	<b>Mar 22nd</b>	Sue Chell
<b>Mar 29th</b>	Christine Crossley	<b>Apr 5th</b>	Eva Ng
<b>Apr 12th</b>	Natalie Sellens	<b>Apr 19th</b>	Kathryn Hibbard
<b>Apr 26th</b>	Mavis Mathers	<b>May 3rd</b>	Rosemary Hilton
<b>May 10th</b>	Anne Sellens		

## 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
<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

**Tinshill Free Church**  
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### **Deacons:**

Mr Nigel Hibbard (Fabric) [nk\\_hibbard@btinternet.com](mailto:nk_hibbard@btinternet.com)

Mr Tim Hickman (Treasurer) [tim\\_hickman\\_2000@hotmail.com](mailto:tim_hickman_2000@hotmail.com)

Mr Jonathan Brearley and Mr Reza Kiyanimehr (from 24/02/26)