



CONTACT

April / May 2024

Where strangers become friends

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

If you would like to find out more about the Church and its activities, more details can be found on our website:

www.gasgreen.org.uk

or Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/GasGreenBaptistChurch

Alternatively, you may like to get in touch via any of the contact details given below:

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Debbie Hunt

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*** Subject to change following 2024 Church AGM**

Magazine Editor:

Tony Dymock

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Articles for the Magazine to the Editor please - see back page for magazine deadline.

Weekly notices to Tony Dymock
(Tel: 01242 244594 or
E-mail: secretary@gasgreen.org.uk)
by Thursday evening at the latest.

Prayer requests to Debbie Bonanos
E-mail: deborahbonanos@gmx.co.uk
by 12 midday Wednesday



FROM THE MINISTER



Hello,

This winter will go down in the record books as being one of the wettest on record. For several months we have had very wet weather with little snow or should I say no snow! The scientists would have us believe that as a result of climate change, we will experience here in the northern hemisphere wetter winters and dryer summers. How does that make you feel? There are many for whom they don't believe any of it – the weather is as it has been for years, changeable.

However, there are some things that are not changeable. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News is the same today yesterday and forever, Hebrews 13:8. Both Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 13:8 declare that God is the same always and never changes. He is always good, always loving, always all-powerful. No matter how this world changes around us, we can trust God is consistent. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! This is a profound statement. When we realise how inconsistent we are and then compare, if we dare, ourselves to Jesus we are a pale imitation. Yet Paul the Apostle calls upon us to be imitators of Christ. So, what are the implications of being imitators of Christ. The imitation of Christ, as in Ephesians 5:1 is viewed by Paul as a path to the imitation of God: ¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. The earliest concepts of imitation focused on the works of the Holy Spirit, self-sacrifice and martyrdom.

We are now thinking about offering a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. What will it mean for you to live a life of Love? In all of our actions we must be honourable. In all of our dealings with other people we must leave the aroma of Christ, 2 Cor 2:15. Where we are called to wear the aroma of Christ, as the “pleasing aroma of Christ.” Through our faith, they spread this sweet scent to others by sharing the gospel with those who need to be liberated from the decaying stench of spiritual separation from God. The aroma of Christ being love.

How do we share the aroma of Christ? Paul describes those who receive the Word of God and embrace Jesus as their Saviour as the “pleasing aroma of Christ.” Through their faith, they spread this sweet scent to others by sharing the gospel with those who need to be liberated from the decaying stench of spiritual separation from God. Out of the five senses, our body's sense of smell is probably the one to which we humans respond the most strongly. The enticing waft of freshly baked bread reminds us of the treats that your mum may have made for us as children, or the scent of freshly cut grass evokes memories of a past summer holiday. In contrast, a smell can symbolize danger for us, trigger a negative memory, or even induce trauma, depending on our association with it. However, sharing the gospel is sharing love the aroma of Jesus Christ.

Every blessing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Church Office-Bearers 2024

We are grateful to all those friends who have agreed to serve the church in various capacities during the coming year. The full list of those elected at the Annual General Meeting held on 17th March is as follows.

Deacons

Debbie Bonanos	To retire 2026
Sharon Kedward	To retire 2026

OTHER OFFICE-BEARERS

Sunday School Leaders	Val Hoskins, Debbie Lake, Sharon Kedward
Pastoral Share Co-ordinators	Debbie Lake & Olive Keyte
Weekly Prayer Guide	Debbie Bonanos
Designated Person for Safeguarding	Val Hoskins
Safeguarding Trustee	Debbie Lake
Communion Steward	Marian Lee
Fire Safety Officer	Debbie Hunt
Fabric Officer (Church)	Debbie Hunt
Magazine Editor	Tony Dymock
Website Administrator:	Adam Woodcock
Mission Treasurer	Tina Meredith

Youth & Community Centre Management Committee

Administrator	Sarah Avery
Treasurer	Debbie Hunt
Fabric Officer	Debbie Hunt

Committee

Tony Dymock, Sharon Kedward.

Our special thanks were extended to Alan & Elaine Green, who retired as Youth Centre Administrators, and Debbie Hunt, who retired as Church Treasurer, all after many years of service in those positions.

Token presentations in recognition of their service were made at Sunday worship during the latter part of March.

Church members are reminded that, in the absence of nominations at the AGM, they will have a further opportunity to nominate additional deacons, and a minute secretary for church meetings, at the next Church Meeting in May. The Church Secretary and Church Treasurer will be appointed from those elected as deacons.



We are so grateful for the many prayers that have been offered for the Baptist Union Council meeting this March. You will be aware we have spent much time with the question posed to Council in March 2022 regarding Ministry and Marriage as defined in the Ministerial Recognition Rules.

Below is a statement from Council regarding the outcome of our deliberations.

Baptist Union Council Statement

Following a period of prayerful and careful listening across our Baptist movement we have sought to discern the mind of Christ together. Council maintains that the basis of our Union is the Declaration of Principle and, “that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures...”

Council has concluded that our Ministerial Recognition Rules concerning marriage and ministry will remain unchanged. Therefore, an accredited minister should not themselves be in a same-sex marriage. Nonetheless Council reiterates that sexual orientation is no bar to accreditation. Furthermore, Council upholds the liberty of the local church to appoint ministry according to their governing documents^[1].

Council laments all the pain that has been experienced through the process which has led to this decision and is acutely aware of the significant impact it may have. While Council has reached a decision, it recognises that the consultation report reflects a range of convictions across our Baptist family.

Council asks us all to demonstrate grace and respect towards those that hold different views to their own. Council also asks us all to exercise pastoral care and sensitivity, especially to those who requested this change or are unable to be in accredited ministry. Remembering the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Church in Ephesus for us to bear with one another in love, we strive to make every effort to maintain the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:2-3)

Council has reached this decision seeking to embody the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) in all our deliberations and conversations. We continue to pray that all the communities into which we bring God's love as Baptists Together will recognise the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us. Our deep desire is for all to know the renewing love of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

This was agreed following the Council vote which required a 2/3rd majority for change.

Council voted not to change the Ministerial Recognition rules as follows:

No change: 49 votes (64%)
Change: 27 votes (35%)
Abstention: 1

Council was very grateful for your participation in the Consultation which facilitated the discernment process. You may also be interested to read the Consultation report received by Council which can be accessed in full on the Baptist Union website at: https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/415168/Consultation_Report.aspx

In the context of Council's reference to Ephesians 4:2-3, we continue to pray for one another as we seek to serve Christ in the many contexts to which we have been called.

Grace and peace,

Lynn Green
General Secretary

Seidel Abel Boanerges
Moderator of Council

[i] The Baptist Union of Great Britain: Guideline Leaflet L09: Equality law and your church



Strengthening Our Community: The Heart of Pastoral Care

Dear Members of Our Church Family,

As we welcome the changing seasons and the promise of new beginnings, it's an ideal time to reflect on the essence of pastoral care within our congregation. Pastoral care is the foundation of our community, embodying the love and support we offer to one another as we journey through life together.

In the midst of our busy lives, it's easy to overlook the struggles that those around us may be facing. However, pastoral care calls us to be attentive to the needs of our brothers and sisters, extending a hand of compassion and support in times of joy and sorrow alike.

Pastoral care isn't reserved for pastors alone—it's a responsibility we all share as members of the body of Christ. Whether it's lending a listening ear, offering practical assistance, or simply being present for someone in need, each one of us has a role to play in nurturing our community.

At its core, pastoral care is about showing love in action. It's about reaching out to those who are hurting, lonely, or in need of encouragement, and reminding them that they are not alone. It's about creating a culture of care and compassion where everyone feels valued and supported.

As we continue to journey together as a church family, let's recommit ourselves to the ministry of pastoral care. Let's look out for one another, offer a helping hand when needed, and above all, show love to those around us in tangible ways.

In doing so, we not only strengthen our community but also bear witness to the transformative power of God's love in our midst.

With warm regards,

Debbie Lake

Pastoral Share Lead

Called to be Fools!



April Fool's Day is the traditional way to begin this month. In medieval times the fool (or jester) was not just there for amusement. He had an influential role in the court, because he could speak the truth in ways others couldn't. As Christians we are also called to be fools; Paul described himself as a *'fool for Christ'* (1 Corinthians 4:10). In what ways is this an appropriate description of a Christian? In his letter Paul expands on this theme.

A foolish message:

'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.' (1 Cor 1:18). The heart of the Gospel does not focus on clever ideas, but on the Cross of Jesus Christ. This message of foolishness and weakness is both God's wisdom and power for our lives.

A foolish community:

'But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.' (1:27). The church in Corinth consisted of slaves, rather than the rich and successful. God calls the weak and vulnerable to follow Him, in order to shame those who think they don't need God.

A foolish ministry:

'My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.' (2:4,5). Paul's ministry didn't rest on human wisdom, but on the power of the Holy Spirit. For us, this power is often displayed when we are at our weakest.

'A fool thinks himself to be wise, but a wise man knows himself to be a fool.'
(William Shakespeare)

Happy Birthday!



to BMS Birthday Scheme members celebrating their birthday during the coming weeks:

April 25th

Pete Keyte

Are you a member of the Birthday Scheme? This is a way to say "Thank You" to God for another birthday. You receive a lovely birthday card and in return you are invited to make a donation to the work of BMS. By giving on your birthday you are supporting BMS projects around the world and transforming the lives of vulnerable people. Every year more than £250,000 is raised in this way, please be part of this.

Please see Tina for more details.

Judy Cook

Celebrating Life and Community

February 2024

www.bmsworldmission.org/jcook



Greetings from Chiang Mai, Thailand. For many here the recognition of Valentine's Day is seen as important and at Hope Home we also celebrate and remind all the staff and children how much they are loved and respected by us, but more importantly how much greater is God's love and care for them. This year we were also blessed to a part of an event called Night to Shine which is held simultaneously worldwide in churches on the Friday before Feb 14th - giving special needs children and adults the opportunity to shine and shine we did!!



So this year four of our older children at Hope Home got all dressed up and made up to attend the Night To Shine prom evening with other young people and families in Chiang Mai. It is the first time we had heard of it, and first time in Chiang Mai First Church, and we hope not the last. For information and inspiration look up the website (timtebowfoundation.org). On the night the children were processed up a red carpet to cheers and banners, and crowned on stage as Kings and Queens. There was also much dancing, fine dining, and talent/karaoke, and even a magic show. The caregivers/parents attending get lavished attention on them too and each child has an assigned 'buddy' to release the parents for a fun night. Above all the fun though is the clear recognition and expression of value and worth of each child and young person there. There is no them/us going on, rather we are one family community together and let's celebrate our belongingness to God. We all came away feeling refreshed, loved, and welcomed and my prayer for our non-Christian staff who attended, a little closer to understanding how much God really does love them! This evening was such a tangible celebration of life for each of our children and their joy and pleasure was so recognizable.

February has been an exciting month for us at Hope Home too since we are now the official owners of the land next door. This month we have had the land cleared of debris and multitude banana trees, and levelled ready for walls and gates and paths next. The children have just loved seeing diggers, tractors, and dumper trucks for real and that has been perfect entertainment for them, albeit a bit dusty. We really hope the walls and gates and some pathing / covering can be down by the end of February since school is out on March 2nd, and we want to let the children run and play as much as they can. We are so grateful to God for His abundant provision of this land and for the amazing way churches and individuals and BMS have been part of this project. Exciting times ahead as we see the emerging of a disabled accessible playground and garden areas too. The ground will be accessible to our community too and they are excited. We hope and pray that this safe and welcoming space can and will provide many opportunities for us to be a true witness in our local community.



Again, we at Hope Home are grateful for their expertise and advice regarding potential solar energy sourcing for the playground and knowing people we can source for help. The partnership in the Gospel between us all is such a wonderful thing. One potential labourer for the land project, who is also a pastor, came to see what he could do regarding our next phase, and we were pleased to be able to offer him our excess play equipment for use in their church grounds. We are pleased to be able to bless the local Thai church in this way.

Watch this space as we look to celebrate community, and to celebrate life. Our land is also the walking access point between two urban villages, ours and the one where most people pop out to shop, and our staff live in that community too. All the local residents who use the path have been anxiously waiting to see if they were about to lose this access, but they have now been assured that the path will remain open on the outside of our new wall, and they have nothing to fear. Word spread quickly and now the families with young children are eager to see what play space is being made for them too. We are being blessed with advice from many sources on what grass to use, what trees to plant for fruit and shade and how best to grow our vegetables. We are confident that the community will embrace this space with us, and that through this community spirit God will be glorified.

Meantime at the Social Development Services Unit of the CCT we are in a seemingly endless run of project writing and report writing. The SDSU staff are so hard working and often out and about on ministry work so it can be hard to find face to face time with them for clarification of reports.

Pray for the ongoing progress on the land project and the development of the playground. Pray for the workers and that their lives will be impacted.

Praise God for opportunities for the young adults with special needs to be celebrated across the world through Night to Shine. Pray for each heart represented to know God's love in very real ways.

Pray for the ongoing health of the staff of SDSU, Hope Home and the children and families represented, especially as pollution levels begin to rise at this time of year.

Once again, thank you for your faithful support, prayers and encouragement and thank you for partnering in the ministry of BMS across the world.

May the peace of God be very real and close to you and your family.

With prayers from Judy

Ephesians 2.v.10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

If you would like to support Judy Cook by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners, or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.





On Sunday 12th May we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of our foundation as an independent Church, on 14th May, 1964.

We welcome as our visiting preacher that day Rev. Dr. Stephen Finamore, former Principal of Bristol Baptist College, and President-Elect of the Baptist Union for 2024/25. Stephen served as Principal of Bristol Baptist College for 17 years from 2006, during which time he has had a number of connections with Gas Green, through former college students who have served as our Minister.



He says: "I've now reached the point where I need to step aside for someone with fresh vision and lots of enthusiasm to take on the role of Principal. Becca and I will be retiring to Somerset, but I hope that there may still be ways that I can be of use to our churches". That hope was realised when he was elected as Baptist Union Vice-President last year, and he will assume the office of President at the Baptist Union Assembly this year, the week after he is with us.

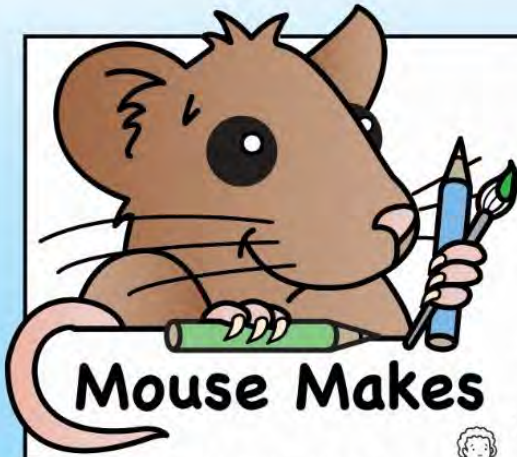
GIFT DAY



Gift Day will again form part of the Anniversary celebrations. It is hoped that all members and friends will take this opportunity of expressing their gratitude to God in a practical way for the work and witness of Gas Green over the years.

Gift envelopes will be available in late April. These will be received on Anniversary Day. If you are unable to come on that day, but would like to contribute to this appeal, please send or take your gift to the Minister, Secretary, or Treasurer beforehand, or just place the gift envelope in the offertory bag. Alternatively, if it is more convenient for you to make your donation by bank transfer, just have a word with our Treasurer, who will be happy to provide you with the necessary bank account details.

You are reminded that it is possible for the church to reclaim tax on any such gifts made by anyone who pays income tax (at any rate). All that is needed is for you to complete a simple declaration form, a copy of which is included in the gift envelopes. This will increase the value of your gift by 25%, at no extra cost to you. Do please seriously consider taking advantage of this scheme, and ask the treasurer if you have any queries about it.



Mouse Makes

Some time after Jesus had risen a few of His disciples met together to go fishing. They fished all night but caught nothing. As the sun rose a man on the shore asked; "Have you caught anything?" "Not a thing" they answered.



He said to them "Throw your net out onto the right side of the boat and you will catch some."

So they did and they and they caught so many fish they could not pull in the net.

Then John recognised the man, "It is the Lord!"



READ

the story in **John 21**

How many times had the risen Jesus revealed himself to the disciples before this?

Read John 21:14

How many disciples were there? Who were they?

Read John 21: 11

How many fish did they catch?

Read John 21: 11



B S N F F I R E R F
 W A T E R I F D A Y C W
 R I G H T A N I I B O A T Y
 J O H N D S S O C S I N
 M S H C B N T B A
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 B R E A K F A S T N S S A
 D F I S H U N I G H T E
 C A U G H T L D O F U L L

DISCIPLES • TIBERIAS • SEA • SIMON PETER • THOMAS • NATHANAEL • JOHN • DAY
 FISHING • BOAT • NIGHT • CAUGHT • NOTHING • WATER • SHORE • FISH • CAST • NET
 RIGHT • FIND • HAUL • LORD • FULL • LAND • FIRE • BREAD • BREAKFAST • JESUS

Colour in all the fish

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Wordsearch: St George of the Golden Legend

St George is Patron Saint of England, but he never actually came here. He was a Christian officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror. George was therefore martyred in Palestine about 300 AD. His courage became legendary, and St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages. In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine tells the story of how St George helped rescue the people of Sylene in Lybia from a dragon, especially the princess, who had been offered to the dragon as a sacrifice. With the dragon dead, and the princess returned to her father the King, the people of Sylene converted to Christianity.

Words to find:

George, Patron, Saint, England, Officer, Roman, Army, Diocletian, Terror, Martyred, Palestine, Courage, Example, Helper, Evil, Soldier, Hero, Golden, Legend, Dragon, Princess, Converted



DIARY FOR April & May 2024

EACH WEEK UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

SUNDAY 10.00 am PRAYER (In Vestry)
10.45 am MORNING WORSHIP,
with SUNDAY SCHOOL for Children

MONDAY 10.00 am LUNCH CLUB

TUESDAY 5.00 pm onwards BEAVERS, CUBS, SCOUTS
7.00 pm COMMUNITY CHOIR

WEDNESDAY 7.00 pm HOME GROUP or PRAYER & PRAISE

FRIDAY 5.45 pm onwards BOYS' BRIGADE & GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENTS & PREACHERS: APRIL
Wednesday	3 rd	7.00 pm	Home Group
Thursday	4 th	6.30 pm	Brigade Leaders Meeting
SUNDAY	7 th	10.45 am	Debbie Hunt (<i>Communion</i>)
Wednesday	10 th	7.30 pm	Deacons Meeting
SUNDAY	14 th	10.45 am	Rev. Iain Hoskins
Wednesday	17 th	7.00 pm	Home Group
SUNDAY	21 st	10.45 am	Rev. Iain Hoskins (<i>Parade: Messy Church</i>)
Wednesday	24 th	7.00 pm	Prayer & Praise
SUNDAY	28 th	10.45 am	Tony Wilkes
DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENTS & PREACHERS: MAY
Wednesday	1 st	7.00 pm	Home Group
SUNDAY	5 th	10.45 am	Trevor Howard (<i>Communion</i>)
Wednesday	8 th	7.30 pm	Church Meeting
CHURCH ANNIVERSARY (SUNDAY 12th)		10.45 am	Rev. Dr. Stephen Finamore (Baptist Union President-Elect: 2024/25_
		12.30 pm	Anniversary Lunch (<i>Prior booking needed</i>)
Wednesday	15 th	7.00 pm	Home Group
SUNDAY	19 th	10.45 am	To be announced (<i>Communion</i>)
Wednesday	22 nd	7.00 pm	Home Group
SUNDAY	26 th	10.45 am	Rev. Iain Hoskins
Wednesday	29 th	7.00 pm	Prayer & Praise
Thursday 30 th May to Sunday 2 nd June			BB/GA Junior Section Battalion Camp

The June / July issue of "Contact" will be published on Sunday 26th May.
Articles for inclusion to Tony by 12th May (written) or by 19th May (by email).