

CROSSTALK

February - March 2010



*News and Views from
Kidderminster Baptist Church*

*Franche Road
Kidderminster
DY11 5BB*

Website: www.kidderminsterbaptist.com

e-mail: mail@kidderminsterbaptist.com

Mothering Sunday

There is an old Jewish saying:

God could not be everywhere,
And therefore He made mothers.

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families - which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, with the traditional fasting in Lent being broken.

*Come and celebrate Mothers Day
@ Kidderminster Baptist*

*Join us for a family service
– suitable for all ages –*

Sunday 14th March 2010 @11am - 12noon



All Welcome

Refreshments Served afterwards

Facilities available for under 5's



A Happy New Year!

I know its February, but as this is the first Crosstalk of 2010, I feel that we can still wish people a happy New Year! – But what is going to be happy about it for you?



Maybe you've been like me from the end of December and throughout January, and seen the snow as one of the greatest phenomena that God has invented – you've got to admit, it's a better idea than boring rain! Children's faces have been a real treat as they've chased around in the snow, built the biggest snowmen, and targeted the finest arrowed snowball. For adults, some of the enjoyment has been about reliving childhood memories again – I know it has for me! Maybe this has brought you a happy new year? For many people though, it probably hasn't.

For me, I'll be hoping that as you read this, my wife Louise will be about to, or will already have, given birth to our third child. If the feeling is the same as when our boys were born, then I am expecting this to be high on the reasons for me having a happy new year. For many of us, we can look to our immediate family, or extended family, or just simply the closest friends around us, and this can bring us great joy. For many people, though, we still need to recognise, that sometimes families are not the happiest of places and that they won't be the cause of us having a happy new year.

A pretty impressive speech

In one of the most famous speeches in the Bible, that we call the 'Sermon on the Mount', Jesus tries to describe true happiness – he calls it 'being blessed', you can read it in Matthew 5 and 6. But his definition of being blessed isn't what his hearers expected, or what we imagine will make us happy today.

He talked of being most blessed when we don't think of ourselves, when we look for a right relationship with God above anything else, and when we feel persecuted because we are standing for what we believe is right.

It is a similar theme to a verse in the Old Testament that we have decided to adopt as our church text for the year,

“And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” (*Micah 6:8*)

Both Jesus and the Old Testament prophet Micah are saying that true happiness and fulfilment in life won't come from snow, new babies, or any other emotional feeling. They both say that it comes from loving other people through God's eyes, and desiring a closer relationship with God.

I've found this to be true, not just in my life, but in many other people's lives as well. Snow and babies are brilliant additions to this great life, but nothing beats the happiness that can be found in really getting to know God in a more personal way.

May God bring you a truly happy new year.

Simon

Christmas celebrations @ Kidderminster Baptist

Christmas time, in the religious sense of the word, is often overshadowed by the secular world in which we live, which only sees it as a time for enjoyment and self-indulgence and a midwinter celebration. However, as the coming of Jesus is central to the Christian story and experience, it's important that the Church makes it a time of celebration and praise.

At Kidderminster Baptist, we have just come together to give thanks and to show wonder at the birth of God's own son, Jesus, into the world, not as a King or conqueror, but as a helpless baby.

It all began at our Nativity Service on the 13th December, where we were able to welcome a generous helping of children from our local community to tell the story of the birth of Jesus as a 'scratch nativity' with no prior preparation as far as script or parts were concerned – all extremely good fun!

Sunday 20th December saw people of all ages gather together for a traditional carol service by the atmospheric light of candles and glow sticks held by the children.

On Christmas Eve we held a moving Midnight communion service and welcomed in Christmas Day. Then on Christmas Day itself we held a Christmas morning family celebration service and again gave thanks for His birth into the world.

Following the morning service a lunch was held at the church for anyone who wanted to join together to continue their celebrations.

On the Sunday after Christmas we continued the celebration by looking at the story of the magi, the wise men from the East, bearing costly gifts to lay at the feet of the baby Jesus.

If you did not manage to get to any of these services then maybe you will be able to join with us next year. Or, even better, come along and worship with us Sunday by Sunday, you would be most welcome. For details of our service times, please turn to the inside back cover

Roger Wood – Church Secretary

Lent – a good time to pray

Lent is traditionally a time when Christians take stock of themselves spiritually. They set aside extra time for prayer. So there you are, tentatively wanting to pray... Here are some helpful things to remember as you settle down to it:

People have been praying since Adam had a grandson named Enosh. At least the Bible tells us in Genesis 4:26 that it was during his days when “men began to call on the name of the Lord”. They have been doing it ever since.

People have been answered by God since Genesis, too. But if you want to read some beautiful prayers – and answers to them, browse through the Psalms. Again and again the psalmist writes: “the Lord heard my cry”.



So – what do you need to bring to prayer? Just the tiniest amount of faith that God is even there.... Jesus assures us that even faith as big as a tiny mustard seed will be effective.

What gives you the right to come before Almighty God? Jesus does. The Bible is clear that “there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ”. (1 Tim 2:5)

The Bible makes clear that God does not stand on ceremony – he wants our personal, spontaneous prayers. Jesus was very matter of fact about it: “When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

The Bible assures us that prayer will bring us good things: “we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need”. (Hebrews 4:16)

Above all, prayer must be made with a pure heart. “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.” (Psalm 66:18) That simply means that if you know you are doing something wrong, and intend to keep right on doing it, don't waste your time praying.

Finally, what can be the results of your prayers this Lent? Well, here are seven, for starters....

1. Joy and deep happiness. (John 16:24)
2. Relief from your worry, stress and tension (Philippians 4:6,7)
3. Wisdom and more mental clarity (James 1:5,6)
4. Protection and deliverance from temptations (Matthew 26:41)
5. An ability to share the Good News of Jesus to other people (Matthew 9:38)
6. Strength to persevere when you feel under spiritual attack (Ephesians 6:18)
7. A growing thankfulness to God, who is worthy of all glory (Revelation 4:11)

Remember the persecuted...

It is not generally discussed in our national newspapers or openly acknowledged by western governments that today and every day Christians are being persecuted. Every three minutes a Christian is killed somewhere around the world. This persecution can take many forms - physical abuse, death penalty, imprisonment, denial of human rights, denial of jobs, denial of education, no freedom of worship, not being able to erect or repair churches or allowed to have prayer meetings.

In communist countries such as China, Vietnam and North Korea, and under dictatorships such as Burma and Eritrea, repressive regimes conduct a policy of eradication of Christianity by imprisonment, slave labour or torture until people either give up their faith, or they are executed. In Eritrea, some evangelical Christians are imprisoned in metal shipping containers where many have to endure the baking heat of the day and the cold by night resulting in death, some are interned in dungeons without light, resulting in blindness.

In Islamic countries such as Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia, Christians often experience discrimination in education, employment, in the courts and general harassment in daily life. Christian girls and women are regularly kidnapped, raped and forced to convert to Islam by Muslim men, the police authorities do not pursue these offenders as Christians are considered as second class citizens.

A hope in charity and prayer

Many Christian organisations are involved in supporting persecuted Christians in various ways, such as through legal representation, lobbying the governments concerned, raising petitions for false imprisonments and human rights issues, supplying food, setting up businesses, providing education and medical aid. Also they supply bibles and Christian literature where possible. Besides all the physical assistance given to them, the persecuted Christians have consistently requested prayer support from other Christians around the world because they know it is the power of prayer which has the greatest impact on them and their persecutors.

Join us in this prayer, supplied by the charity 'Open Doors': -

'Almighty God, ruler of nations, we bring before you our persecuted brothers and sisters. You are the God who provides, please give food to those who are hungry. You are the God who rescues please bring freedom to the captives. You are the Father to the fatherless; please protect those who are vulnerable. We remember especially those who are paying a high price for following Jesus. Please give strength to those who are in prison, may they know your grace sustaining them. Please give courage to those who continue to meet to worship you despite the dangers, may they find hope in your word. Living Lord, we pray that your kingdom would come particularly in those countries where your people are persecuted. Let these countries be governed with justice and may your people worship you in freedom. We ask all this for the glory of your name. Amen'

Christine Barkouni

On edge the of debt – and beyond

Some 35 per cent of Britons who responded to a recent pan-European survey on consumer debt felt that their borrowings were too high, relative to their income. Only the Spanish (45 per cent) were in a worse position. So it is heartening to know that the nationwide Church in partnership with a national debt counselling charity called Christians Against Poverty are providing free information, guidance and practical help for those worrying about their finances.

It is estimated that as many as seven million people in the UK are at risk of getting into problem debt. Many of them won't realise how serious, and stressful, the situation can become if it isn't kept under control.

Carol's story, for instance, is not uncommon. "We had a few credit cards and a loan," she said, "but my husband Tony had a well-paid job, so we could afford them. Then Tony got ill. It was awful and he was laid off work. I had to reduce my hours to look after Tony." Things went from bad to worse "and if we tried to talk about debt it would always turn into an argument," said Carol.



Then Carol's sister told her about Christians Against Poverty (CAP) whose support workers can visit people in their homes. CAP has a network of 112 centres based in local churches across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. For those visited at home, CAP will help to work out a realistic budget and arrange affordable payments with each creditor. A local 'debt coach' then keeps in touch with the client. A CAP account is set up for the client (like a simple bank account) into which the client makes a weekly or monthly payment (CAP then pays the bills). If there is not a local centre close by then CAP can still provide free advice and referral to other local sources of help.

For more information on the work of Christians Against poverty, log onto www.capuk.org or call 01274 760720.

So what is a Baptist Church?

You may sometimes wonder what exactly a Baptist Church is, and what makes it any different to other churches? Well, here, in one page, is an attempted summary!

Every Baptist Church is different! – That's the first thing. We believe in individual churches making individual decisions in what they do. This means that all our Baptist churches will be slightly different to each other.

Our name originates from a nickname in the 1600s – 'the baptisers', we were the ones who rebelled against the State-run Church. We only baptise (by full immersion!) adults who have made a decision to follow Christ, and therefore we dedicate and pray for babies instead of baptising them.

Because of our belief in making individual decisions as a church, Baptist churches are characterised by the very significant involvement of their members to make decisions. We have no hierarchy, our 'leaders' will only bring suggestions to the church for them to vote on. Some would call this 'democracy'; we call it 'discerning the mind of Christ together'.

Our 'local church' belief means that we fund ourselves. Each Baptist church relies upon the giving of it's attendees to function.

We also believe in religious freedom, because only free faith is true faith and we should all have the freedom to come to our own convictions.

We are interdependent – we need each other and each church needs other churches.

There are an estimated 110 million Baptists in the world, making it the second largest Protestant Christian denomination. We have 2500 Baptist churches in the UK.

What would I find at Kidderminster Baptist Church?

It's always daunting walking into church for the first time in a new place. This is what you might find at our particular church.

- Around 40-50 people dressed casually – 'Sunday best' is an option but never a requirement – and a speaker who is likely to be dressed the same.
- Services relatively simple without a large amount of formal material.
- Computer projected words and images without any assumption that you should know the right words or know when to stand or sit.
- A comfy seat rather than a pew!
- An emphasis on welcoming all ages – with a 'Sunday Club' catering for younger ones.
- An emphasis on preaching from the Bible and getting to grips with how it applies to modern life – a fair part of the service is taken up in this area.
- At communion services, we pass round bread and non-alcoholic wine rather than expecting people to come to the front of the church.
- A growing community that tries to be welcoming and share journeys together. You would be welcome to join us at any time.

Children and Families Worker

You may not have heard yet but at Kidderminster Baptist Church we have a new Children and Families worker. You might wonder what this is all about, why do we need one, what are we trying to do? I will try and explain...



As a church we place a great value on children and the families they grow within. We want to help children to grow into confident, responsible, caring people and will do what we can to help achieve this. If you've not been to one of our family services you might not have experienced *church from a child's point of view*. Children should feel free, confident and safe and we aim for them to enjoy their time with us on a Sunday and want to come back again.

To support children in our community we have asked Brent Cairns (photo above) to be our Children's and Families worker. Brent will help us understand what children need and how we, as a church, can help them. He will also be studying in Bristol on a part time basis for a degree in Children and Families work. We're not expecting Brent to do everything for us, as I said we all place a great value on children and we all want to help them grow.

Over the next three years, Brent will be working with groups that already meet on the premises, with the local schools and with other children's organisations, in fact wherever children in our community are. We would like to help children to find out about God in safe and interesting ways.

This is not only about children, children grow in families and families come in all sorts of varieties. We would like to partner with families in their privilege of bringing up their children and in their responsibilities as carers facing today's challenges. Life is tough these days and we want to help where we can.

I hope this has sparked some interest, please feel free to come and have a chat with us about how we can help you and your family, and say hello to Brent as you see him around the area.

All contact details can be found on the back page.

Chris Lane – Youth Co-ordinator

Download a sermon from the church!

Over the past year a new feature to our website has allowed users to listen to sermons preached on a Sunday at their leisure.

All sermons since the beginning of 2009 have been available in mp3 format and at around 5meg in size are able to be downloaded by clicking on the 'sermon downloads' link on the site.

In addition to this service, full copies of each service have also been available on CD for those who request it.



This facility allows people to listen to any services that they may have missed, and also allows for the increasing trend of people looking for a new church to 'listen first' before they attend for the first time.

Why not try listening for yourself?

Log onto www.kidderminsterbaptist.com to get started.

The Alpha Course – My view!



It all started when I saw the notice in *The Shuttle* about the Alpha course at Kidderminster Baptist and had a strong feeling that I should go.

From the beginning it felt right. There was a lovely atmosphere where the group felt able to listen to one another and have a great discussion. I went home with an inner warmth that continued after each session.

By the time of the Alpha Away-Day where the topic was about the Holy Spirit, I was beginning to feel a sense of anticipation and I was a little nervous. At one point we stood in a circle and were all prayed for – my nerves disappeared and time seemed to stand still. The inner warmth I'd already experienced during the preceding weeks intensified and there was a stillness during which I was able to ask for forgiveness and give thanks to God with a grateful heart. The experience was amazing, but also felt perfectly natural.

So thank you for reaching out to people through your Alpha Course and in many other ways. Also, thank you to all those involved organising Alpha and for your prayers so that people like me can begin a wonderful journey.

Val Cooper

Challenging Lifestyle

Our culture is obsessed by lifestyle: clothes, fitness, slimming, sex and cars to name but a few, but are these things really fulfilling our needs, easing our anxieties and deepening our relationships?

How can we succeed in relationships, or build a secure future for those we care about, when the odds seem stacked against it happening?

Over the next few weeks the housegroups at Kidderminster Baptist will be doing a course called 'Challenging Lifestyle', written by Nicky Gumbel (also developer of the Alpha Course) which examines part of the Sermon on the Mount found in the book of Matthew in the New Testament.

Looking at topics such as living and acting with integrity, responding to difficult people, handling conflict, giving, praying like Jesus and handling ambition we hoped to be presented with some radical alternatives for 21st century living.

Assemblies in our local Primary Schools

Since the beginning of this academic year we have been invited to do fortnightly assemblies at Franche Community Primary and St Catherine's Primary School. It has been a privilege and a real joy to share with the children and teachers of the local schools each week.

Every Monday morning Simon, the Minister-in-Training and Brent, our new Children and Families Worker, have been sharing talks on a whole wide range of topics. We alternate each week between the two schools.

We've acted out Bible stories with modern interpretations, created prayers using each letter of the alphabet, looked at meanings of people's names in relation to the name Irene (meaning peace), and even dressed up pretending to be Joseph with his coloured coat.

Do remember us as we visit the schools each week, and maybe even ask your children, if they attend, what we talked about this week.

But not only that, try and spend a moment giving thanks for the teachers in our local schools, they do a wonderful job, and our schools are definitely something to be proud of.

Pray with us through February & March

February

- 7th** Pray for and give thanks for the men and women who comprise the emergency services in this country: The police, the fire brigade, the ambulance service, also the lifeboat men and the more localised search and rescue workers.
- 14th** Please pray for the school assemblies undertaken by Simon and Brent. This includes assemblies at Franche Community Primary School and at St. Catherine's Primary School.
- 21st** Please pray for the homeless and the destitute who have been having a hard time of it this winter. Pray also for the opening of 134 Franche Road as a half-way house between hospital and totally independent living for a number of people with disabilities and/or mental health issues.
- 28th** The current Alpha course will be at its half way stage; please pray for those on the course and the personal journeys they are pursuing.

March

- 7th** Please pray for the church Annual General Meeting, which includes the election of deacons, later this month. Please also pray for the current deacons and leadership of the church.
- 14th** Mothering Sunday: Praise God for the joy and celebration this day often brings for families. Also, remember those for who this day is a difficult one.
- 21st** The church Crosstalk magazine will be going out today and throughout the coming week. Please pray for those who read it, asking that God will bless them through it.
- 28th** Palm Sunday: Remember Jesus' last entrance into Jerusalem on this day all those years ago. Please pray as we hold our Covenant service today that as a church we will become increasingly united and loving.

**Come and join us for our services in
February & March**

Morning @ 11am

Evening @ 6pm

February

7th

Simon Gudger

Roger Wood
Communion

14th

Simon Gudger

Bernice Darlington

21st

Simon Gudger
Communion

TBC

28th

Simon Gudger

TBC

March

7th

Simon Gudger

Brenda Wood
Communion

14th

Mothers Day
Brent Cairns
All-age service

TBC

21st

Simon Gudger
Communion

Crosstalk delivery

28th

Palm Sunday
Simon Gudger
Covenant Service
Followed by lunch

Joint Service
@ Bromsgrove Baptist
- 6.30pm
Rev Jonathan Edwards

** Please note that morning services in February and March are subject to a change of speaker when Simon & Louise's baby arrives.

Community Groups @ Kidderminster Baptist Church

Jack and Jill Pre-School
Mon-Fri 9.00am-12.00pm

Julie Murdoch 01562 745955
Chris May 01562 632867
Playgroup Mob 07857 513935

Slimming World
Mon 6.30-8.00pm & 8.00-9.30pm

Russell 01562 746265

Kidderminster Camcorder Club
Tues 7.30-9.00pm

Mr R Jordon 01562 631475

Aerobics
Tues 7.45-8.45pm

Mrs M Lemiech 01562 752830
07855 996437

Studio 4 Dance
Weds 8.00pm-9.00pm

01299 400027
07968 21660

Brownies
Thurs 6.15-7.30pm

Louise Morris 01562 863158

Star Performers
Fri 5.00-6.30pm

Lucy-Charlotte 01562 67203
07791 307131
lucydancingqueen@yahoo.co.uk

Having a party? Need a room?

Kidderminster Baptist Church Hall is available for hire.

- ❖ Large Hall with staging area
- ❖ Excellent kitchen facilities
- ❖ Toilet facilities (including those for the disabled)
- ❖ Car parking
- ❖ £5 - £10 per hour
- ❖ Ideal for children's parties
- ❖ Call Roger Wood on 01299 405601 for details

Please note that the premises are NOT licensed

Weekly Church Programme

Why not come along and join us on;

Sunday:

11am

Morning worship & Sunday Club

Family worship suitable for all ages,

Activities & supervision for children and youth

Communion 3rd Sunday morning of the month

6pm

Praise & Prayer Meeting

Communion 1st Sunday evening of the month

Monday:

2.30pm

Afternoon Fellowship (Fortnightly) – 8th, 22nd Feb, 8th, 22nd Mar

7.30pm

Alpha Course

Tuesday:

10.30am

TotsRock (Weekly – term time only)

2.00pm

Communion @ Brookdale Nursing Home – 2nd Feb, 2nd Mar

Thursday:

7.30pm

Deacons Meeting – 4th Feb

8pm

Weekly Housegroup

Friday:

7.30pm

Church AGM – 26th Mar

8pm

Weekly Housegroup

Birthdays

We wish the following people in our fellowship a very happy birthday:

February

1st

Marion Appleby

9th

Claire Cairns

28th

Nicci Lane

March

2nd

Diana Stephenson

Sophie Cairns

3rd

Janet Short

Charlotte Ready

7th

Brent Cairns

Pippa Cairns

14th

Iris Cox

15th

Jerry Walton

29th

Leon Jones



Useful Contacts

www.kidderminsterbaptist.com

Minister In Training:	Simon Gudger minister @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 822858
Secretary:	Roger Wood secretary @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01299 405601
Treasurer:	Pete Edwards treasurer @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 630875
Deacon:	Christine Barkouni	01562 751080
Deacon: (Premises Steward)	Susan Lane	01562 752097
Deacon: (Pastoral Care Co-ordinator)	Marion Appleby	01562 751444
Children & Families Worker:	Brent Cairns children @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 820005
TotsRock Leaders:	Louise Gudger totsrock @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 822858
	Nicci Lane totsrock @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01299 401740
Alpha contact:	Simon Gudger minister @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 822858
Monday Afternoon Fellowship:	Simon Gudger minister @ kidderminsterbaptist.com	01562 822858
Youth Co-ordinator:	Chris Lane	01299 401740

Church text for 2010

**“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love
mercy, and to walk humbly with your God”**

Micah 6:8 (NIV)