

An encouraging poem taken from
Stanley Fitzsimmons' book "Each Day is a Gift"

Count your Blessings

Take time to look around you,
Take time to take it in;
Take time to count your blessings,
Be thankful for everything.
Yes, even in the bad times
When you're feeling down and blue
God is still caring very much for you.
So listen to some music
Look carefully at a flower;
Marvel at God's creation,
And praise Him for His power.
Just think of one thing
You can truly thank God for,
But once you start out on this way
You'll thank him more and more.



"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

Philippians 4:8

A big "thank you" to all contributors this month. To continue monthly we need YOUR news, YOUR pictures, YOUR poem, YOUR story, any articles of interest to others. Please send by email to susan@msbye.co.uk, or phone Sharon Joddrell or Susan Bye and dictate, or by post, to arrive by **15th October** for the November edition.

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MRBC

CHURCH MAGAZINE—OCTOBER 2020



Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Message for October from our Minister

JOHN 3¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Dear friend,

This Scripture is one of the most known verses in the Bible and it is one that is for this moment in our experience of life as a church family. On September 6th we had corporate worship in our church buildings for the first time in six months. It was a special time, although very different to that previous gathering on Sunday 8th March. In our coming back together, the Gospel truth declared in this verse is unchanging although so much has.

In the last six months there has been so much go on in the life of our world, our nation, our city and our communities. The Coronavirus pandemic still has hold and there is struggling in all areas of life, physical and emotional health, work, finances, education and relationships. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the brokenness, yet in the middle we see glimpses of such amazing generosity and love. This Bible verse is a constant and ever present glimpse of light.

Elsewhere in the magazine are details about Dave Mangan's standing down from his role as Church Secretary. I want to express here my heartfelt gratitude for his love and support to me. He knows my ways and is a person who is able to know what I am trying to say and presents it both verbally and written in a concise and clear fashion. Dave has brought the church to this moment which we are thankful for and we are here in this place with these words from John's Gospel resounding loud.

Brothers and sisters, we are the church set in this moment of time. We have travelled a unique journey to this point and the future is before us. Lots of uncertainty, but this verse of Scripture is one of hope and beginning as we enter what is before us.

Jesus died for ordinary, everyday people. He died for each and every person. He died for you and me as we are the Church.

The Church is the storyteller of hope, we are to be storytellers of hope. God's love is why we keep telling the story!

With Greetings, *Andy Wilson*

Romance in the Holy Land—1972

Roger and I recently celebrated our 47th Wedding Anniversary on 25th August and we thank God for so many happy years together, and for two lovely children.

We met on a holiday / pilgrimage in the Holy Land (Israel) in 1972, led by the Rev Ronald Rawlings, a charming Methodist Minister. Roger joined the party with a friend from Nottingham and I with a friend from Surbiton, Surrey.



Thus began a holiday romance in Jerusalem and Galilee, followed by our engagement on holiday in Egypt the following Easter, 1973. After a courtship with Roger and me commuting between Nottingham and Surbiton at weekends, we married at my home church, Christ Church, Surbiton in August 1973.

We settled in Nottingham because houses were much cheaper here than in the South! I came here no knowing anyone except some folk at MRBC where Roger had been a member for many years. (Special thanks went to Sheila Brazier who took Roger's Sunday School Class when he visited me.)

I'm sure that God brought us together and I've never regretted marrying Roger and moving away from my home in the South.

God moves in mysterious—and wondrous—ways!

Sue Rust

(Do tell us how you met a life-long partner or friend !)

“Hats off to Hats” by Mags Isley

During my last visit to Barbados in 2018, I went to an Anglican Church Service. It was well attended and the worship and commitment were very good, although like most places, they say the numbers are falling off. I was the only visitor there and had to stand while they clapped, welcomed me and gave me a bookmark.

It was a "Sung" Service, which I had not been to before. There were many hymns, very nicely sung by the Choir who were wearing heavy looking robes. Considering how hot it was, I was concerned about them. Still, they were fine. It was an elderly lady in the congregation who sparked out, slumping over the edge of the pew, having had a stroke. She was quickly wheeled out and the ambulance soon arrived. Throughout this, the female Vicar continued to sing the Psalm.

I started looking around and noticed how magnificent everyone's hat was. I was very impressed and thought “wow”, our Church could take some ideas from them. After two and a half hours, the Service ground to a halt. The Vicar took off her robe to reveal a very nice dress. She then put on a fabulous hat, looking as if she was off to Ascot.

Anyway, it turned out, it was the day of their annual Hat Competition!



Mags has sent this photo of a beautiful beach —which she says is about a 5 minute walk from where she stayed.

Mags grew up in the Caribbean and she has a lot of family still there, hence regular visits to Barbados.

DIARY FOR OCTOBER

ALL Sunday Services and other meetings in the church buildings are now paused.

The Deacons have decided that this is the right response for both church members and the wider community in the present climate.

Pre-recorded Sunday Services will continue to be shared through the website: www.mrbc.org.uk

For those not able to access this, a recording on either CD or MP3 Player may be requested through the Church Office:

Telephone: 0115 9604304 or Email: admin@mrbc.org.uk

Young Disciples (Zoom meeting) .. 3pm each Sunday

..... Meeting Id: 7032705653 Password: mrbc

Retreat Day..... Postponed

Deacons Meeting..... Wed 7th at 7.30pm on a Teleconference call

CHURCH SECRETARY

Dave Mangan has recently stood down from serving in the role of Church Secretary. Our primary concern is for Rosemary, Dave's wife, as she continues treatment for her condition with Dave supporting her. We are committed in prayer, bringing them both before God the Father for his special touch and anointing.

The deacons have expressed thanks to Dave through a formal letter. He has served in the position for four years. We are thankful for the way he has approached the role with dedication and also with an openness and approachability which has helped others to feel at ease. His guidance and wisdom have been invaluable in changing times.

Please be prayerful for how this position will be filled in the months ahead. Please speak to one of the deacons if you have any insights or thoughts. In the immediate future we have arranged for Andrea, the Church Coordinator, to be present to take minutes for the deacon and church meetings. With this in mind we will be looking to have meetings alternate months. Deacons in October and December this calendar year and a Church Meeting in November. In 2021 the AGM will be in June, with Church meetings also in February and April. Deacon Meetings will be in January, March and May.

Jennifer Maxwell writes about a course she has recently completed

At the beginning of 2020 I was given the opportunity to complete a Low-Carb High Fat (LCHF) online training course delivered by a South African organisation called The Nutrition Network (NN) (www.nutrition-network.org) part of the Noakes Foundation (<https://thenoakesfoundation.org>). The LCHF way of eating is supported by scientific research that shows benefits to a range of health

conditions such as general immunity, fatigue, digestive / bowel problems, arthritis, obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.



The Noakes Foundation has a community outreach programme, Eat Better South Africa (EBSA) (<https://thenoakesfoundation.org/eat-better-south-africa>) which is described as “an intervention programme aimed at educating people from lower income areas, teaching them to get better by

eating better”. EBSA’s mission: “is to educate under-resourced community members about the dangers of excessive sugar and carbohydrate consumption, and to teach them how to make better food choices through dietary education, meal and budget planning, and general nutritional awareness”

The LCHF course is a fee-based training programme, however NN offers a number of bursaries and I was lucky enough to win one. In my application, I wrote about the MRBC health group and my aim to develop the group along the lines of EBSA. I have a commitment to NN to set up and run at least one LCHF 6-week programme for an under resourced community.

MRBC “The Church on the Corner” is an ideal location and venue for the programme, situated as we are adjacent to Hyson Green, Forest Fields and Sherwood Rise. An eat well for health course also fits in with the work we do in offering food parcels and supporting parents / carers at toddlers.

It would be helpful to hear your views on the above; please pass on your thoughts through the Church. *Please note that I do not treat health conditions. I offer advice on real food that supports health.*

A Testimony from Meifang He

Many people will remember Meifang who began worshipping at MRBC 9 years ago. She and her husband, Feng, had arrived in the UK as asylum seekers from China and were housed in the Forest Fields area. Meifang was, and is, amazing. She quickly taught herself English to a good standard and built a home for a growing family of three children: Joicelyn, Jesse and Jonisa. She has ‘green fingers’ and in the tiniest patch of land produced beans, vegetables native to China and huge, happy sunflowers. You will know that she was very faithful in coming to church and Feng and herself became members and the children were dedicated here.



The asylum seeking process, however, is not kind. In the space of six years the family had lived in 4 houses and the children had attended 3 different schools. By Christmas 2019 Meifang and the family were living in Aspley and were feeling very isolated. They had been worshipping at Bulwell URC for some time but were now miles away from this fellowship as well as MRBC. Meifang, who had always been so strong, began to suffer with severe mental health problems. Sleep was elusive. She had no energy to give the children or to even unpack their possessions. You can imagine that this difficult situation was further compounded by the lockdown due to the virus.

Through this ‘storm’, however, Meifang decided to trust in God whom she has always loved. She felt God was telling her to have a thankful heart, to remember that she has a good husband who loves and cares for her and that she has three beautiful children. She has now got permission to remain in this country and has a home which is, at last, permanent.

Despite all the difficulties, slowly Meifang has been restored to health. Meifang quotes Ezekiel 37 about the Valley of Dry Bones. God breathed and flesh came upon the dry bones and they came to life. Meifang says that is how it has been for her. Now Meifang’s creativity has returned and she is doing craft and painting with the children. She is gardening, attending services at Bulwell and is joining an online community of Chinese Christians who are studying the bible and committing to minister in the UK.

Let us join with Meifang in thanks to our God who helps us when we are in the deepest valleys.

(“Thank you” to Mary Wilson for writing this on behalf of Meifang)