

FEBRUARY 2021

Contact

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday

Family Worship
10.30am

Wednesday

Congregational Café
11am – 1pm

Scoffs
12 noon
(2nd Wednesday only)

Thursday

Rainbows Baby & Toddler
Group
9.30am

Friday

Badminton
7.30pm

MINISTER

Rev Jonathan
Abernethy-Barkley
07927 495583
abernethysmile@
hotmail.com

SECRETARY

Liz Hill
0161 900 1437
07932 750436
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TREASURER

Justine Lewis
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07956 916505
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Dear Friends,

As I write this month's Contact, we find ourselves in the midst of a third national lockdown which sadly means that church will remain closed for worship until further notice. Services will continue to be live streamed on the church Facebook page so please join with us if you can.

Also on the church Facebook page, there will be a further short series of reflective videos beginning on Ash Wednesday, 17th February and continuing every Wednesday throughout Lent.

As we continue to take each day, week and month at a time, we can only hope and pray that some normality might return sooner rather than later.

Recent research from Tearfund has shown that prayer is more common than many would think, with 20 million adults in UK adults saying that they pray. 13 million pray at least once a month and 9 million pray every day, with one in twenty saying they started praying during the first lockdown last year.

The morning of a job interview. The night when a family member was sick. The five minutes before an exam. Most people have prayed in moments of desperation and most people admit to praying at some time in their life, even if they have given up on it later.

But have you ever wondered if your prayers ever make it to God? Was someone listening? Was the prayer answered? Or perhaps our prayers have been lost in translation or forgotten? Only one in three people believe that God will answer their prayers.

In reality, God does indeed hear and answer our every prayer but not always in the way that we hope. The answer may be a yes, no, or not yet and very often it may not be the answer we want, or the one we are looking for. But God's answers are always in our best

interest and according to his perfect will and timing, so we have to be willing to accept them when they come.

But what if things don't turn out the way that we wanted? What then? Was putting our faith in God wasted? Quite often things don't work out the way we wanted but strangely work out better. Unfortunately, however, some things do not work out at all and we may question whether God is really there and listening. And there are often times when we just need to keep going, knowing that it is not yet the end of the story. Giving up at the first setback is just not an option. We can only pray and leave it in God's hands. But we have to remember whatever the outcome, God is still involved. God is not done yet. He has a bigger purpose than what is before our restricted vision.

According to the Bible, the power of prayer is, quite simply, the power of God, who hears and answers prayers. Whatever the answer to our prayers, the God to whom we pray is the source of the power of prayer, and he can and will answer us.

Scripture describes the power of prayer in various situations and shows how God, through prayer, opens eyes, changes hearts, heals wounds and grants wisdom. The power of prayer has overcome enemies in Psalm 6: 9-10, defeated demons in Mark 9:29, brought healing as seen in James 5: 14-15 and indeed conquered death in 2 Kings 4: 3-36.

God's promise to answer our prayers is further portrayed in the Gospel of Luke showing us that He will respond; He will provide; He will open the door.

'So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened unto you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.'

Cont'd

Baptisms, weddings and funerals by arrangement with the Minister

OFFERTORIES

January Offertories - £292.00

Standing Orders - £727.00

Total £1,019.00

Donations

Impact Grant - £1,250.00

Drama - £339.60

Other donations - £100.00

AGM – Sunday 7th February 2020

All church members should be receiving the necessary documents for the AGM this month.

We still have two vacancies on the Diaconate so please give this some thought.



We have finally had to replace one of the church boilers which has been limping along on a wing and a prayer for the last twelve months or so and had become totally unreliable. Both the drama group and karate have been without heat on many occasions and Allan Thompson has been called out to assist more times than I care to remember!

Due to the age of the boiler, we were advised that further problems could occur and that replacement was the most sensible option. We have applied to the NW Area for a grant towards the cost and I am very happy to report that we have received a grant for the full amount of the work.

Huge thanks to Allan for all his hard work, help and advice with this matter – it is most appreciated.

When my mum passed away last year, I received a 'Prayer Square' through the post. It was something that I'd never seen before and was simply a small hand knitted square with a cross in the centre and the following verse attached ...

This square is knitted with love and prayers for you and your family.

Each stitch holds a blessing from God and each square is a reminder of God's great love for you.

As you hold your prayer square, know that you are in God's hands.

May you feel God's love. May you know his peace in your life.

God says in the book of Isaiah, 'I will not forget you – I have held you in the palm of my hand.'

It was a little reminder to pause and pray and also a comfort to know that someone had already prayed for me.

The power of prayer should never be underestimated, as there is strength and power in prayer to make a huge difference to our lives and the world around us. God remembers every prayer we pray and every one of them prayed through the power of the Holy Spirit has an effect on the earth.

Not one prayer is forgotten.

With all good wishes - Liz

I'M NOT SURE IF THESE ARE GETTING THROUGH, AS IT IS SUPER-CLOUDY AND I DIDN'T WIN THE LOTTERY YESTERDAY, BUT I'LL TRY AGAIN ...



Did you know? ...

Shrove Tuesday is the last day before Lent begins, the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday and always falls 47 days before Easter Sunday. This year, Shrove Tuesday falls on 16th February. While many of us celebrate Shrove Tuesday as a day of enjoying the sweet treat of pancakes, the history of the day is part of an ancient custom with deeply religious roots dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. It is a day of repentance, to clean the soul, and a day of celebration as it is the last chance to feast before Lent begins.

The word 'shrove' derives from 'shrive' and refers to the confession of sins as a preparation for Lent.

As Lent is traditionally a time of fasting and sacrifice and of giving things up, Shrove Tuesday is the last opportunity to indulge and to use up the foods that aren't allowed in Lent. Traditionally, families would use up all the ingredients in their cupboards like butter, eggs and milk, on Shrove Tuesday, ahead of the fast of Lent. Pancakes are traditional in a number of European countries as they are a dish which could use up all the eggs, sugar and fat so they will not go to waste. This is how Pancake Day came to be, as the ingredients were used for a sweet treat before Lent.



#LiveLent

Join us @
Springhead
Congregational
every Wednesday online
from
Ash Wednesday
17th February
for a midweek reflection
as we journey
towards
Easter



Springhead Congregational Church
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