



Ferring Baptist Church

Fellowship News

24 to 30 March 2024

**They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,
“Hosanna!”**

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Blessed is the king of Israel!”

John 12:13



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‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord’ (Matthew 21:9)

Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem is a profound moment. He enters the temple in the throes of religious festival and then casts out the peddlers and merchants who have turned it into a commercial enterprise. Religion has become a way of earning an easy living – devotion has become an opportunity to inflate the prices of the necessary paraphernalia of ritual and tradition.

The Court of the Gentiles had been turned into a religious market place. The outer court, that for many would be the only part of the temple into which they were admitted, had ceased to be their place of prayer. God had been displaced in the name of religion; exploitation and opportunism had been clothed with respectability and expedience.

Jesus’ response is dramatic and decisive, in a matter of moments tables are upturned, wares are sent flying and the entire scene is thrown into disarray. As our Lenten journey enters its final stage, we are reminded that the road to Calvary is not a place for easy religion.

What are the sounds that herald God’s coming?
Songs of praise and refrains of Hosanna?
Or the clattering of upturned tables, jangling of scattered coins
And the shouts and protests of angry traders?

For in the midst of this disrupted marketplace
You call all people to reclaim the rhythms of prayerfulness
Exposing the selfish opportunism
That is falsely veiled in expediency and necessity

Preserve us from a faith, where we become the temple traders
Laying out our stalls of religion and routine
Crowding out the gateways to your presence with our own pre-occupations
Leaving those who seek you outside of our cluttered sacred courts.

What public squares are we called to reclaim;
As places where your word can once again resound?
What tables are we called to over-turn;
That have too readily become the seats of exploitation?

What facades of respectability are we called to strip away?
What light might we shed on injustice?
Whose empires are we called to topple,
As the Redeemer’s presence is again made known?

Help us become true Beacons of Hope;

Where the radiance of your presence burns undiminished;
Where thresholds of gracious welcome are clearly illumined;
And the light of truth exposes evil’s harmful endeavours.

[Taken from Baptist Union – written by Phil Jump, Regional Minister Team Leader for the North Western Baptist Association].

Church Activities 24 to 31 March - all held at the Church unless otherwise stated

Sunday 24 10:30 am	Morning Service- Palm Sunday Refreshments and Fellowship Time	Rev Robin Brenchley
Wednesday 27 2:30 pm	Prayer Meeting	Everyone welcome
Thursday 28 2:00 pm	Dabblers	Pauline Parkinson, Julie Appleton
5:30 pm	Fellowship tea of bread and soup & Holy Communion	Rev Robin Brenchley
Friday 29 ** 10:30 am	Service of Reflection	Rev Robin Brenchley
31 March 6:00 am	Easter Sunday Dawn Service on the Beach – Joint with St Andrews	Rev Robin Brenchley, Rev Shirley Tupper
10:30 am	FBC Morning Service	Rev Robin Brenchley

**Young persons' activities are available - please ask for details on arrival. All leaders are DBS cleared in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy ** In respect of Good Friday – there is no Youth Group*

Church Notices:

- Fellowship tea of bread and soup – can people please sign up on the sheet on the noticeboard. The choices are for Lamb soup, beef soup (gluten free) or Vegan tomato soup (gluten free), all with gluten free bread. There is no charge, although donations are welcome but people must sign up so we do enough soup.

Congratulations - three new Deacons Elected

At the AGM last Thursday, three new deacons were elected – Julie Appleton, Lawrence Kenward and Karen Parsons.

Thoughts for this week:



“We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won’t need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don’t fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine.”

Dwight L. Moody

Prayer:

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. Mark 11:24

Gracious Father, in this very moment would you breathe your Holy Spirit afresh on us again. Would we be open to your voice in this time of uncertainty. Let us look again to your Son Jesus Christ with Joy and Praise, The One who is our Hope in this time of seeming Hopelessness, the light in the dark. Thank you that you are our everlasting strong and unbreakable refuge and strength.

Prayer Pointers:

- We pray for all those in need in our world especially those caught up in war, conflict, living in captivity, persecution and those living in poverty
- We pray for our Royal Family especially our King and the Princess of Wales as they recover from surgery and have further treatment as required. Pray for healing for them. We also pray for Prince William and other members of the Royal Family who are supporting family members and continuing with Royal Duties.
- We especially pray for:
 - Wendy Fogg;
 - Jurg Klemenz;
 - The family and friends grieving the passing of Sadie Rees;
 - Norma for the Thanksgiving Service for her sister Audrey to be held on Thursday 28 March;
 - Cliff and Maureen Warden;
 - John Wigley;
 - Kelly and Simon Stuart;
 - Sylvia Mepham;
 - Our lovely Church cleaner Chris, would appreciate our prayers for her Consultation regarding her hip displacement;
- We continue to pray for Judy Cook as she leads the staff and children at Hope Home
- We pray for the continuing safety for Jaco and Corrina Loenen (with Pioneer and MAF):
- Pray that our Church will be successful in our assistance to Worthing Soup Kitchen food parcels/pantry;
- Pray for Worthing Soup Kitchen that they will continue to meet the growing demand for their services;
- Pray for the Friday Evening Youth Group - that it continues to grow in the local community and help to support the families/community.

Food Donations required for Worthing Soup Kitchen (WSK) Food Parcels and Pantry

Crate for Donations can be found in the Church entrance – a huge thank you to those who have already given donations. The Charity is delighted that we are supporting them and say a huge thank you to our congregation.

Easter Donations - If you can buy an Easter Egg/chocolate(s) however small it would be greatly appreciated and will be part of the family food parcels for Easter.

That Easter Saturday Experience:

The Saturday of Easter is a day that is easily overlooked, the ultimate in grey days. Yet I find something familiar about it: it seems to me to be a picture of where many, or most of us, spend a lot of our time, writes J. John



Easter is not just the most important season of the year for the Christian, it's also the busiest – ask any church leader. So, in the space of a single week, a church can have a Palm Sunday service, a communion or Lord's supper on the Thursday, a Good Friday service and then, with a mere day's pause for breath, an Easter Sunday celebration. This week-long intensity of activity echoes the enormous emphasis the Gospels place on the events that occurred in Jerusalem that first Easter week.

In this week, buried almost out of sight between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, comes the day that although some church traditions prefer to refer to as 'Holy Saturday' is now almost universally called Easter Saturday. The Saturday of Easter is a day that is easily overlooked. For one thing there is very little mention of it in the Bible; after all, as the Jewish Sabbath it was a day of rest. Yet there is more than this behind its neglect. It is surely that, compared to the sorrowful darkness of Good Friday and the joyful brilliance of Easter Sunday, this Saturday is quite simply a 'grey day'; indeed, it is the ultimate in grey days.

Think about how it must have felt to Jesus' followers. It would have been a day marked by dejection. Those who had come with Jesus to Jerusalem had brought with them enormous hopes and expectations; Good Friday took every hope they had and utterly destroyed them. Any lingering belief that Jesus would suddenly turn the tables on his opponents and, at the last minute, reveal himself to be the majestic king of glory was bitterly and cruelly extinguished in the worst possible way.

It would have been a day marked by frustration. For Jesus' followers, Good Friday was not simply a savage blow to the heart but also one to the mind. Amid their sorrows the saddest of questions would have sounded: 'Now what?' If yesterday had been a tragic disaster, tomorrow was no better. With all their hopes in ruins they must have been utterly bewildered.

It was, too, a day marked by oppression. The only incident the Bible recounts on the Saturday is a significant one. Matthew 27:62–66 tells us that the religious leaders arranged with Pilate, the Roman governor, to have the tomb guarded. The bitterly opposed powers of religion and government united to ensure that Jesus remained dead and buried.

For Jesus' followers, then, that Saturday must have been the greyest of days and in our Easter thinking it is easy to dismiss it and to fast forward to the resurrection joy of Sunday.

Yet in contemplating Easter Saturday, I find something familiar about it. It seems to me to be a picture of where many, or most of us, spend a lot of our time. To various degrees we all experience dejection, frustration and oppression. After all, there is much to be dejected about. We look around and see that the world's a mess, that good people are getting a rough deal for being good, and that bad people are doing very nicely despite being bad. There is much that frustrates us.

Indeed, the more idealistic you are, the more frustrating the world is. We dream dreams and make plans but discover that events prevent them happening. We come up with goals and ambitions but, all too often, find that they end up beyond our reach.

There is much, too, that oppresses us. It is hard even trying to be a good person in our world. Many Christians are particularly conscious – perhaps increasingly so – of being discriminated against, marginalised and, in many countries, persecuted. We who believe that at the cross Christ defeated the powers of sin, death and hell are often disappointed in not seeing that victory when and where we need it.

Many of us have times when we feel we can identify with how Jesus' followers must have felt on that Easter Saturday.

If you can identify with this Easter Saturday experience it's important to see it in perspective. The great and wonderful news is that in Jesus, it's not the end of the story. Easter Saturday is not grey because the terrible shadow of Good Friday falls upon it; it is grey because the glory that is Easter Sunday has not yet shone upon it. But it will. This is a day that is not so much the day after Good Friday, as the day before Easter Sunday. For the believer, the triumph of Easter Sunday is never far away. Whether we go to be with our Lord, or he comes to us first, does not matter. The cross has defeated sin, death and hell, and all that remains is for its full and glorious triumph to be unveiled. Every believer in Christ can be confident that, however grey today is, it will give way to glory tomorrow.

[from the Baptist Union Website]



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Note from Karen (Editor):

Editing the Fellowship News is a privilege and one which to truly reflect our fellowship will benefit from your contributions and dates for the diary etc so please send to Karen1.parsons@uwclub.net by Wednesday each week.

The information contained in this newsletter is the latest at the time of pressing send