

**The
Messenger**

STAFFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

The Green, Bailey Street, Stafford



February - March 2018

welcoming Teams



Feb 05	Linda	Derek
12	Connie	Janet M-W
19	Eslyn	tba
26	Nigel	Claire
March 05	Linda	Derek
12	Connie	Janet M-W
19	Eslyn	tba
26	Nigel	Claire



ROTA

Feb 05	Betty Wilson
12	Val Chakrabarti
19	Libby Davies
26	Jean Jervis
March 05	Rita Johnson
12	Penny & John Jarmaine
19	Gloria Knight
26	Mpume Mpofu

Lord, we ain't what we oughta be; we ain't what we wanna be; we ain't what we gonna be. But thank God we ain't what we was. ...

so prayed an old slave preacher, who was quoted by Martin Luther King in his "A promise unfulfilled" speech in 1962



There are some good headings there. We're not perfect, we fall short in all sorts of ways – **we ain't what we oughta be** – and we could each make a long list of our own, and we could make as long a list for ourselves as the church together.

Our desire is for something better – **we ain't what we wanna be**. I wonder what that might be? Sometimes we need to check our ambitions and our motives, so we can reject some of the selfish ones, but by and large we want to be better: more loving, more kind, less irritable; as a church we want to be more open, more welcoming, more free.

We know that we're a work in progress – **we ain't what we gonna be**. God hasn't finished with us yet and his work of new creation goes on – individually and together. God has his plans and purposes for us. *We ain't what we gonna be*, and that's good reason for patience and forbearance with one another; it's also good reason for guarding against settling back and accepting what is. Paul talks about **pressing on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus**. Ephesians 3:14

The celebration is that **we ain't what we was**:

Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-7

We ain't what we was, 'cos now we're goin' someplace – saved by grace, raised up with Christ. Life has hope and purpose and direction in the love and grace of God. Life is transformed now, and has God's future promise beyond anything we could imagine.

Perhaps the “**ain’ts**” are a good list to ponder, in confession, in prayer, in deliberate action, and in reassurance that God has already met us where we are. He’s moved us along from where we were, and as we trust and follow he’s still got much more for us. **I know the plans I have for you**, says the Lord God, **plans to give you a hope and a future.** (Jeremiah 29:11)

Use it as a prayer as we approach our AGM on 4th March:

Lord, we ain’t what we oughta be; we ain’t what we wanna be; we ain’t what we gonna be. But thank God we ain’t what we was.

... giving thanks for the way God is still moving us along, to be a living and loving church for the living and loving God, saved by grace through faith in Jesus, and called to be taking our place in his mission of love to Stafford.

Ron.

WHY GO TO CHURCH?

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the ministers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

Likewise if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead -- today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing.... God is UP to something!
Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment

Congratulations:

To:
Liz Stokes who celebrates her 50th birthday on February 3rd
Barry Jones who celebrates his 80th birthday the same day,
Derek Minnard as he celebrates his 90th birthday on February 13th; and
Harold Jeffries who is **100yrs old** in March.

Thanks:

Dennis would like to thank our ministers and friends who kindly sent him greetings for his 90th birthday, and also prayers, cards and support of different kinds - all sincerely appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support for PEPE in 2017. 29 parcels were sent over and the first 3 of 2018 are already on their way.

Here is the latest communication from Brazil.

*Dear Linda,
This week I received more three boxes that you have sent. Thanks a lot!
That God continue to use his life as a blessing
U big hug*



Tuesday evenings, 7-9pm at The Green, starting February 27th 2018.
Dessert, video and chat.
Come along and explore the big questions of life...

Kids Bible Wordsearch Plants of the Bible

Puzzle #5

Fit the words in the list into the diagram below reading forward, backward, up, down, diagonally, always in a straight line.

ALMOND
ALOES
APPLE
ASH
BALM
BARLEY
BEANS
CINNAMON
CUCUMBERS
DATE
FIG
FLAX



GARLIC
HYSSOP
JACINTH
LEEK
MELONS
MILLET
MINT
MULBERRY
MUSTARD
MYRTLE
RYE
SAFFRON
THISTLE

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MESSY CHURCH

family friendly, and for all ages together



Dates for Messy Church:

Sunday February 18th "Family"
and celebrating the 5th Birthday of
Messy Church at The Green

Sunday March 18th

Sunday April 15th

at **10.45am** - following 10AM Service

Message from the Associate Minister

'This little light of mine I'm gonna let it shine...'

I'm sure most of us will remember singing this song when we were younger, which may have been many moons ago! It was written by the American Harry Dixon Loes around 1920, and the likely inspiration for his lyrics are the words of Jesus found in Matthew 5:15-16

'No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.'

These verses were instrumental in my life in 2011 when God spoke to me through them (at the time I was resisting his call to become a minister!), but they carry a great and wonderful truth for us all – whatever our current situation or whatever our calling.

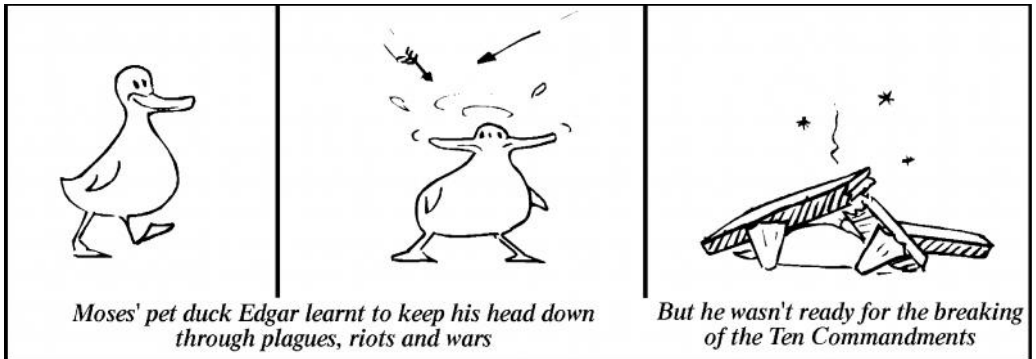
As Christians (people who have actively chosen to follow Jesus Christ) God's Holy Spirit lives within us and shines out of us, but it's all too easy for this awesome phenomenon to become familiar and lose its oomph! Just ponder this for a moment – the spirit of God who hovered over the waters at the creation of the world (Gen 1:2) and who brings revelation of truth (John 16:13) and restoration of wholeness (Phil 1:6) – now lives in you. You! And you take that light of God with you wherever you go, whether that be to paid employment, to the school gate, to the supermarket, to your voluntary job, to the care home, to the grandchildren/grandparents'

house, or to a Sunday service.

Shining for God doesn't mean preaching about Jesus, it means *being* Jesus to those around us. It means working as well as we can for our employer (Col 3:23), it means loving people even when they don't deserve it (Luke 6:27), it means not joining in with gossips (Ps 15:1-3), it means standing up for those issues that we care about (Is 1:17), it means being gracious even when we're being provoked (Col 4:6), and it means being able to share what makes us different when the comments and questions inevitably come (1 Pet 3:15).

Our responsibility is to simply fix our eyes on Jesus (Heb 12:2), and as we spend time with him every day (in prayer and with his Word) we'll become more like him and will shine even brighter! 2 Cor 3:18 says '[We] can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.' Amen and amen!

Danielle Leigh



FROM WITCH DOCTOR TO CHURCH PLANTER

The gospel is bearing fruit in India. BMS World Mission is seeing men and women from all kinds of backgrounds coming to find faith in Christ. Even witch doctors.

Selim* wanted to be a witch doctor since childhood. He was committed, studying under a master and honing his craft. He practised where he lived in West Bengal, making his livelihood selling potions and charms to heal the sick.

Selim's sister Maya* is a BMS-supported church planter. She always tried to convince her brother to come along to church with her. They would fight, and he would refuse. But then one day everything changed.

Someone in Maya's church had been severely ill for a long time. The man's family had brought him to Selim many times, but he'd been unable to help. The man couldn't walk, so the people of the village carried him to Maya's church one day and the congregation started to pray. After three days of prayer he was completely healed. He started walking and could do everything he had done before he got sick.

"I thought I was healing people by myself, with black magic," says Selim.



"But I knew I had witnessed something amazing; this was a miracle. My eyes were opened to the truth."

He started going to church, and Maya gave him a Bible. Selim soon decided to give his heart to God, getting baptised and even changing his name.

Now, Selim leads his own congregations and supports his sister in sharing the gospel. "I am thankful to the Lord for leading me to my new work as a church planter."

Selim and Maya's story is just one of many we could tell of how God is changing hearts and minds in India. We are so excited to be a part of this incredible work.

**Names changed*

Help us continue to plant churches and reach people across the world today. Donate here:

bmsworldmission.org/give

A RECIPE FROM THE GOOD BOOK

I wonder how many of you will know what the following ingredients are without having to check up on the biblical references. If you do need to check them it may be advisable to look at more than one translation as not all of them translate the same.

The ingredients.

1. ½lb Judges 5 verse 25
2. ½lb Jeremiah 6 verse 20
3. 1 tablespoon 1 Samuel 14 verse 25
4. 3 of Jeremiah 17 verse 11
5. ½lb Samuel 30 verse 12
6. ½lb Nahum 3 verse 12 (chopped)
7. 2oz Numbers 17 verse 8 blanched and chopped
8. 1lb 1 Kings 4 verse 22
9. Season with 2 Chronicles 9 verse 9
10. A pinch of Leviticus 2 verse 13
11. A teaspoonful of Amos 4 verse 5
12. 3 tablespoons of Judges 4 verse 19

(Note. Leaven probably means baking powder)

Method.

Beat 1, 2 and 3 to a cream. Add 4 one at a time still beating. Then add 5, 6 and 7 and beat again. Add 8, 9, 10 and 11 having previously mixed them. Then add 12. Bake in a low oven for 1½ hours.

February / March

February

- Sun 04 10.15 am Kids Zone Church
 10.30 am Morning Worship – includes communion
- Wed 07 11.00 am Friends Together
- Sat 10 8.30 am Men's Breakfast – Radford Bank
- Sun 11 10.15 am Kids Zone Church
 10.30 am Morning Worship with BMS rep. Mrs Penny Brown
 6.30 pm Songs of Praise at Drakeford Court
- Mon 12 10.30 am Prayers & Pastries
 7.30 pm Deacons Meeting
- Sun 18 10.00 am Morning Worship
 10.45 am Messy Church
- Sun 25 10.15 am Kids Zone Church
 10.30 am Morning Worship – includes House of Bread update
- Tue 27 7.00 pm Alpha Course begins
- Wed 28 7.30 pm Fellowship Prayer Time

March

- Fri 02 2 – 4 pm Women's World Day of Prayer
- Sun 04 10.15 am Kids Zone Church
 10.30 am Morning Worship and Covenant Service, Communion + AGM following service
- Wed 07 11 am Friends Together
- Sat 10 8.30 am Men's Breakfast – Radford Bank
- Sun 11 10.30 am Kids Zone Church
 Morning Worship
- Mon 12 10.30 am Prayers & Pastries
- Sun 18 10.00 am Morning Worship
 10.45 am Messy Church
- Wed 21 7.30 pm Church Meeting
- Sun 25 10.30 am BBGA Church Parade Service – Palm Sunday
- Wed 28 7.30 pm Fellowship Prayer Time

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Find us on 

Sunday Worship Services Every Sunday at 10.30 am

Full youth & children's programme every Sunday morning

Communion Services every 1st Sunday morning

'Sticky Fingers'
(parents and under 5's)

Thurs 10 to 11.30 am

Friends Together
(over 55's)

Monthly on first Wednesday 11 am to 3.00 pm

Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association

Thursday at 6.30 pm

Christian Book Shop

Monday and Friday - 10 am to 2 pm,
Saturday - 9:30 am to 2 pm.

Open Door
(A time for a drink and a chat)

Weekly on Friday 10 am to 12 noon