

Gorse Hill

BAPTIST CHURCH

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Reconnecting with God

Dear friends

Albert's sense of direction was never that good.

In those far off pre internet days, finding a route to somewhere he'd never been to before meant falling back on what (to him) were tried and tested routines.

It didn't seem to matter that setting off in the direction of Barley or Ashwell meant that the trip began in the opposite direction to where he needed to end up. There was, though, the potential reward of a little light refreshment on the way.

It's amazing how we ever got to play the cricket matches we did.

God invites us to join Him on a journey. Seeking His Kingdom and working alongside Him to realise the fullness of His plans for people and communities, means that we have to travel in the right direction, as well as getting our own lives in order.

His goal is transformation. It's personal change that goes far beyond minor adjustments, demanding a total change of perspective. There will always be times and places to rest on the way but they are only refuelling stops, not the final destination.

Over the course of the next few months we'll be committing more time to exploring the implications of following Christ. Our focus on Sundays will consider how we can develop our relationship with God, as we think about the role of prayer in forming and growing disciples.

At the same time we'll be looking at the broader Kingdom values that God expects us to live by and live with.

IN THIS ISSUE ...

RECONNECTING WITH GOD	1
THIS YEAR	1
PRAYING WITH PURPOSE	1
OUR MOTTO TEXT	2
GET PLUGGED IN	2
CHURCH: A HOLY COMMUNITY	2
DEVELOPING OUR PRAYER LIFE?	2
IMAGINE THIS CHURCH	2

Lord God, through this Year,

We entrust our lives to you afresh.

Be our beginning. Be our end.

Be our purpose, our energy, our action. Amen

Praying with purpose

... for our community: John and Ray our local councillors, for all who live and work In Gorse Hill

... for our children and young people at the start of a new school year

... for our fellowship that we may might make the most of the opportunities God provides to share His love

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impact the lives of others for eternity

(continued from previous column)

All of us have a vital role in expressing God's love through this local church. Each of us is gifted in a unique way, with a special story to tell of how God has changed us - a story that is sure to inspire, encourage and move others.

There are many ways in which we can serve God through a local church. The important thing is that we work with what we have, meeting the needs we know are there. It has, though, to begin with our inner resolve and commitment to Christ.

To be a follower of Jesus involves privilege, promise, partnership and prayer. We grow up in our faith by allowing God to have His way in our life and, in our meetings together.

God's message for us is disarmingly simple: love, follow, grow. Will we, will you, do that?

Every blessing in Christ

Steve

OUR MOTTO TEXT FOR 2017 ROMANS 12: 2

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould but let God re-mould your minds from within



Church: a holy community

What do you think when you hear the word "holy?"

Typical answers would range from a honest description of God ("holiness"), to a slight change with the cynical addition of two words. "Holier than thou" reflects the impression that, rightly or wrongly, some people have of the church

Even in the church we are not always clear what holiness is or what, practically, it might involve. Some may not make the connection that holiness is a spiritual goal for church and believer alike.

It's an old struggle and remains one which we all have to deal with on a daily basis. Shining our light means we are in the darkness, on life's front line where that all the brokenness and of the world hasn't yet been healed.

It affects us but does it change us in the sense that it deflects our mission and goal and away from Christ? Committing to holiness recognises the conditions in which we live, alongside the commitment to Christ we have made.

Pause for thought: Matthew 7: 1-7, 12 Developing our prayer life

Prayer: back to basics

- it focuses on God: we involve Him
- it's important for all believers
- it presents shared needs

What it's all about?

- an active relationship: ask, seek, knock
- a guaranteed response: receives, finds, opens
- a life changing gift: "how much more"
- it's not what we want but what God wants of us

How do we start?

- boldness: be specific
- persistence: don't give up
- care: looking for the right thing
- confidence: expect God to answer

Living by the golden rule (vv. 12)

- it has a spiritual foundation (God given)
- it is a positive declaration (unlike contemporary equivalents)
- it has a universal application ("in everything")

IMAGINE ...

... this church as being a place where ...

... children, young people and adults are helped to come to faith in Christ

....everyone is welcomed, loved, taught and guided

... everyone is confident in sharing their faith, and clear about God's call on their lives

... everyone serves one another and their community

... gifts are grown & leaders developed; all this through the ministry of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit



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Sunday Services
10.45 am Morning Celebration
6.30 pm Evening Worship

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