

Spring Lane Baptist



Welcome to the October edition of NEWS VIEWS & PRAYER

An email from Lawrence & Sarah Leigh Ballew

Hello from Macau where there is the slightest hint of Fall in the air. Last week we celebrated Mid-Autumn Festival (based on the lunar calendar) and this week the weather has changed. Interesting?!

What hasn't changed is that we continue to wait on the visa process as we anticipate moving to England. This week I want to share some of what we're learning through this season of waiting. Because we all wait, perhaps you will find something helpful here.



Which of these images captures your concept of waiting?

Our perspective on waiting goes a long way in shaping our experience of waiting. One way to see waiting is as though we are attending to the Lord as our dinner guest. Through our work with Hospitality Staff, we know the best trained staff are those who can anticipate the needs of the customer. Standing, paying attention, waiting. Waiting is an opportunity to learn to pay attention to the Lord.

"Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord." — Psalm 27:14 (NLT)

Three stories from Scripture have been helpful for us in the waiting:

1. **Waiting as a Journey** — Ex. 13:21-22; 23:20-22

In waiting we are learning to journey at the Lord's pace.

2. **Waiting as Sabbath** — Ex. 23:10-12; Lev. 25:1-13; Mark 2:23-28

In waiting we are learning to relinquish control of our calendar to the Lord.

3. **Waiting and a Jar** — 1 Kings 17:8-16, 18:1

In waiting we are learning to anticipate and savor the Lord's daily provision and care.

Thank you for praying with us as we anticipate the provision of a visa at the right time, the Lord's time. May your seasons of waiting be full of blessing, as ours continues to be.

In anticipation

We begin our Autumn afternoons of service and worship! Opening at 3.30pm

- **6th October, Afternoon Tea**, with a free piece of cake, where we can move into our afternoon service around four pm. Many have asked about 'Harvest Festival' and so Gordon will guide us through this time of year and celebration
- **20th October**, We have a coffee style 'Bring and Share Communion Service' bring something sweet or savoury to share. We'll provide drinks etc. We welcome Revd. Richard Alford who will lead the service.

There will be time before each service to talk with friends over tea or coffee.

We encourage those who can to visit the 'Café in the Park' on the 13th October a small group perhaps!

Faith matters

A couple of windy days and many of the leaves on the trees around where I live have become unglued from their branches. All, that is, except our magnolia tree. Here they hang on with determination. In the spring the magnolia flowers first and then the leaves arrive somewhat late, so I suppose they just want their full life span.

The wind which causes many a leaf to fall is absolutely unpredictable. It may be a whisper or a gust, brief or prolonged and from any direction at any moment.

Jesus spoke about the mystery of the wind. One night he was in deep conversation with a man named Nicodemus, a religious minister akin to a Bishop. Jesus was telling him that a personal, valid and life-changing experience of God was dependant on the move of God's Spirit, and no amount of earthbound religion could provide this. The dead foliage of this man's spiritless religion needed to be blown clean away by God himself!

Jesus said: "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." "How can this be?" was Nicodemus' earnest question. How indeed? When someone comes to personal faith in God, there is a mystery present because ultimately it is a miracle from God.

If we hear and feel within our own heart the wind of God's Spirit, which is essential and can't be predicted anymore than can the wind, our part is not to hang on to the branches of our doubt as do the magnolia leaves to their branches. This is why God, through the pages of the Bible repeatedly says, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts...' Rather we should yield and exercise our trust in Jesus. God has so fixed it, that if there is the fall of autumn there will be new life in spring. We can receive that spiritual springtime today.

Stephen Richards
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Community Prayers

Week beginning 6th October

Pray for those who live in:
Aylesbury Close

Week beginning 13th October

Pray for those who live in:
Aylesbury Road

Week beginning 20th October

Pray for those who live in:
Belton Close

Week beginning 27th October

Pray for those who live in:
Blackberry Avenue

Baptist Union Prayer Diary

October is Black History Month, and the annual Sam Sharpe lecture takes place on 24 October. Please pray for the work of the Sam Sharpe project in reflecting on and responding to the impact and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade.

At the start of Prisons Week, we pray for prisoners and their families, for prison staff and those who work in the criminal justice system, and for victims of crime and all those wounded by the actions of others.

Please pray for the Hong Kong response project as it moves into a new phase, and for Coordinators Sharon Shek and Londy Chan. The project is aiming to set up 10 hubs around the country to build up a long-term support for Hong Kongers through our Baptist churches.

This week we pray for the South Eastern Baptist Association, seeking to be a community of God's people praying and working together to see an outpouring of God's Spirit in South East England.

Prayer Is!

“Prayer is nothing else than a sense of God’s presence.” ~ Brother Laurence (lay brother, Paris, France 1614-1691)

“Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God.” ~ Mother Theresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

“We have to pray with our eyes on God and not on the difficulties.” ~ Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)

“I (Jesus) tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, will be yours.” ~ Mark 11:24

In this month of the Season of Creation, as ever God, you call us to live in harmony with nature. You will that ours are the hands to do this – where we are. We give thanks for all local projects, whether big or small, healing our wounded earth and changing attitudes to the use and abuse of your love-gifted resources meant for all.

Creator God, bless and multiply these efforts so your will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

With every news bulletin, despair and fear looms. Floods in Europe, UK, Nigeria and central Africa; hurricanes and tropical storms devastating communities from Mexico to the USA to Mozambique to Japan; drought continuing in South America is affecting Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil. This is paralleled in Africa in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Yemen. Climate change is wreaking havoc on every continent.

Creator God, you have given wisdom to the First Nations how to live in harmony with nature. Give the rest of us the humility to learn from them and be co-guardians of this beautiful, resilient but fragile planet you have provided for us all.

Instead of food for all, feasting and celebration with hospitality for all visitors and strangers, we hear the desperate, pain-filled cries of starving children and people of all ages falling into whimpering, then silence as they die for lack of food, clean water, and sanitation. We hold before you, God, all those suffering in Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen, Afghanistan, the Sudans, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Lesotho, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Mexico, and in refugee camps across the world where violence and political turmoil prevent humanitarian efforts. Shamefully in our own countries, due to the twisted methods of our economic and political systems, we leave people choosing between food, heating, rent, or medicine.

God of all, you provide all that is necessary for all our needs not wants. Too often our thoughtless selfishness and greed demand an obscene number of choices and amounts which our planet cannot produce and which we don’t need. Our over-indulgence creates massive health issues which can be solved by a change of our attitude, and would release food so all, everywhere, could have food.

Creator God, you have given wisdom to the First Nations how to live in harmony with nature. Give the rest of us the humility to learn from them and be co-guardians of this beautiful, resilient but fragile planet you have provided for us all.

Instead of birdsong, the cries of the spheres, gurgling streams and splashing waterfalls, we hear tanks, drones, bombs, missiles, artillery firing and cries of agony and grief. Our medics are overwhelmed by the broken, mangled, burned bodies of people of all ages whom they are trying to help, often with minimal resources. Yet world-leading governments choose to continue to arm those on all sides who are committing genocide. But it is not in their countries. If it were, would they think and act differently?

Old men with dead eyes and power-greedy souls cause young men to do things they should never see or do – leaving them with deadened eyes and souls.

Lord, you are the Savior of all. You faced down evil with love on Calvary. We pray for the humility to walk your way of peacemaking confronting evil with the greatest power on earth, Love. You know the way we should go to bring this about through the power of your Holy Spirit. Guide us to listen to your prompts and dare to listen to and follow Jesus, the Prince of Peace. So your kingdom will come on earth as in heaven.

Creator God, one-in-three, help us remember to live out that the Gospel is not:

“God so hated the world that he predestined it to eternal damnation.” (John L. Bell, 10 things they never told me about Jesus, Wild Goose Publications, 2009)

The Gospel is:

“God so loved the world that he sent his son.” (John 3:16)

AMEN.

Unanswered Prayer

When sitting down to focus on something to write my mind wanders off in all directions. Things I'd read or thought about during the week just disappear in a mist and won't come back. So what should I write about? *Unanswered prayer!* OK Those who know me well will know my views on prayer. (I'm not talking about prayer in worship, rather everyday prayer or intercession prayer. I'd call it TLC Prayer. **Talk, Listen, Communicate.** I've noticed recently an advisement that suggests when things get rough and we think OMG then PRAY: but what are people expecting God to do? I believe that God has put the answer to prayer in our hands. Jesus said "*I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.*" If you believe this then prayer should be active and alive in your daily lives. We become the answer to someone else's prayer. How do we know what to pray for? Look around you, listen to others needs, and spend some time with someone lonely, or someone sick, and tell them of the Fathers love. Many of those who read the advertisement and cry OMG will only find unanswered prayer because we failed to answer it.

Derrick Hancock
Parish Magazine 2018

Bread and Fishes

As I was a walking' one evening' in spring I met with some travelers on an old country lane
One was an old man, the second a maid, The third was a young boy who smiled as he said

Chorus:

We've the wind in the willows, And the birds in the sky,
We've a bright sun to warm us, Where ever we lie
We have bread and fishes and a jug of red wine
To share on our journey with all of mankind

I sat down beside them, with the bright flowers around, And ate from a table spread out on the ground
They told me of princes, of prophets and kings And all of the one god who knows everything

I asked them to tell me their name and their race so I might remember their kindness and grace.
My name it is Joseph, this is Mary my wife and this is young Jesus, who is our dear life
We have travelled this whole world o'er land an o'er sea Telling the people how they shall free.

Sadly, I left them, in an old country lane for I know that I never would see them again.
One was an old man, the second a maid And the third was a young boy who smiled as he said
We've the wind....

Irish Melody ([Tommy Makem](#))

At the Baptist Church:

Sunday October 6th Afternoon Tea and worship 3.30
Wednesday 16th October Lunch with a Harvest Flavour. 12.30
Sunday October 20th Bring and Share service 3.30
Don't miss these dates PUT THEM IN YOUR DIARY

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