

WEEKLY NEWS

Newbury
Baptist
Church

Wednesday 24th July 2024

TOO OLD FOR GOD?

A few days ago, following much clamour and debate, US President Joe Biden announced he would not seek re-election in the Autumn. The growing concerns about his capacity to govern and lead at 81 years old finally reached fever pitch, as it became increasingly likely he would lose the election to (the not-exactly-youthful 78-year-old) Donald Trump.

Ahead of the Olympics beginning in Paris on Friday, I recently watched a documentary on Daley Thompson. As one of our greatest Olympians, it was interesting to see how he coped with no longer being the world's top decathlete, as age and injuries caught up with him.

In the Bible, Moses was famously 80 years old when he told Pharaoh to free the Hebrew slaves (Ex 7:7), and following a 40-year ministry, he died at 120 "with his eye undimmed and his vigour unabated" (Deut 34:7).

With the apparent exception of Moses, the reality of growing old is that it presents various challenges, especially concerning our physical health. The frustrations of limited mobility, or even just the realisation that something you used to do without thinking suddenly requires effort, is not always easy to accept.

I am always inspired when I visit and listen to older folk who remain positive and reliant upon God, even when it seems like they're fighting so many battles and have so many reasons to complain.

I am reminded of the words of Isaiah 46:4, which says:

"Even to your old age I am he, even when you turn grey I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save."

There is much we can learn from the older generation in church life. Not least that dependance upon God is crucial to our daily lives. We are constantly told by advertising to stay young, and that we have the power to defy the ageing process if we just buy *this* cream, eat *that* superfood, or subscribe to *their* workout plan.

But the reality is that our trust in all these things will ultimately be misplaced. Only in God's hands are we truly saved; only through Jesus will we inherit an eternal life freed from sickness and pain.

Our recent exploration of the armour of God in Ephesians 6 reminds us that it is possible to be spiritually strong, even when we are physically, mentally or emotionally weak.

To return to the truth of Jesus and the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" is a powerful thing indeed. A reminder of where our faith is placed can become our shield, while a commitment to righteousness (literally *right living*) acts like a spiritual breastplate, protecting us in those places where we are most vulnerable.

I hope you will find comfort and strength in those passages, and be reassured that you are never too old for God.

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CHURCH NEWS

MUSIC TEAM REQUEST

The Music Team are in need of an iPad to help with the transition from paper to electronic music. If you have an unused 10" iPad that you would be willing to donate, we would love to hear from you.

Please speak to Philippa or email musicleaders@newburybaptistchurch.org

Thank you.

FAMILY SUMMER HOLIDAY SOCIALS

We know the summer holidays can be tough for parents. We are planning a couple of fun afternoons to 'lighten the load' and encourage our children to play together and burn off some energy!

You are very welcome to join us at either/both of the following:

Friday 9th August: Anytime from 12:00 near the splash pad in Victoria Park.

Bring a picnic and some swimming things if your kids plan to get wet!

Tuesday 27th August: Anytime from 1:30 by the picnic area at Snelsmore Common.

Bring any ball games or suitable outdoor games and the kids can play and build some dens!

Please speak to Sarah for any further information: sarahm@newburybaptistchurch.org

SUMMER HOLIDAY SUNDAY SERVICES

In order to give our brilliant youth and children's leaders a well-deserved break, we will be having all-age services throughout the school holidays.

These will be around 45 minutes long and run on Sundays from 28th July - 1st September.

The theme this year is 'Bible-lympics', where we will be looking at six key people/groups from the Bible and exploring their connection to an Olympic sport using craft, games and activities. We will of course also spend plenty of time in sung worship, reading the Bible and praying together.

Please note there will be no Communion shared in August.

Following the final service on 1st September, we will have our very own 'Closing Ceremony', finishing with a Church Picnic and games in Victoria Park. We hope you will be able to join us for a time of fun and fellowship together.

SUMMER GROUP MEETINGS

Please note most of our regular groups are taking a break during August. This includes Giggles & Wiggles, Men's Breakfast, Ladies Breakfast, Ignite and all of our Sunday school groups.

The exception is **FIRST THURSDAY**, which is meeting on Thursday 1st August at 12:00.



FAMILY PRAYERS

If you have something you'd like the NBC Church Family to be praying for, please let us know by emailing the Church Office: office@newburybaptistchurch.org

DAVID CORRY

An update on David from his wife Sue, following his heart surgery last week:

David came out of hospital on Sunday evening, and is now recuperating at home. Please continue to pray that he will receive complete healing, and join us in giving thanks for the surgeons and nurses who cared for him.

Thank you for all your prayers, encouraging messages and emails - it really has meant a lot.

BEN C

Pray for Ben, who is currently in Serbia on a short term mission trip with UCCF (Universities & Colleges Christian Fellowship). Ben has asked for prayer to adjust to the different culture (particularly the different food), and for it to be a really fruitful trip of teaching English and sharing the gospel.

BETHAN C

Please also pray for Ben's sister, Bethan, who is also about to travel on a mission trip!

Bethan is heading to South Africa for four months with Operation Mobilisation, as part of their REACH program. This involves bible training, cultural acclimatisation and outreach. It often acts as a gateway to a longer internship, and would allow Bethan to utilise her Masters in Humanitarian Aid.

Please pray for the final arrangements being made, that Bethan secures the remaining funding she needs, and for a fruitful and safe time in South Africa.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS!

Many schools break up for the summer today (Weds), so please be praying for the families in our church who will be juggling their usual work commitments with extra childcare responsibilities.

Pray too for all our teachers and school workers who are due a well-earned rest from the classroom. May they find the space to rest and be recharged. For those with their own children, we pray for a sense of joy and peace in households over the next six weeks; for siblings to get on well; for any holidays taken to be times of fun and making memories.