

# Weekly News

NEWBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

23RD APRIL 2025

## Conforming for Easter

Firstly let me wish you a Happy Easter! Christ is risen! Allelulia!

There is a tendency for Easter to be forgotten after Easter Monday (or after the last chocolate egg is eaten at home - whichever comes first!)

But much like Christmas Day, in the liturgical calendar Easter Sunday is only the beginning of the festival. I think the free church tradition largely succumbs to the influence of mainstream culture by tending to move on too quickly; always looking forward and rarely taking the time to dwell in the moment and enjoy the season for what it is.

Because there is so much to be enjoyed about Easter. After all, it gives purpose and meaning to our entire faith! It is a time of deep joy and celebration. The triumph of life over death and hope over despair. What God has done through Christ is the most momentous moment in history. So why do we usually zoom past it? Why are we in such a rush?!

This is where I think the church traditions which place greater emphasis on the liturgical calendar benefit. They mark Easter Sunday as the beginning of 'Eastertide'; a 40-day celebration of the resurrection, mirroring the 40 days Jesus spends on earth before the ascension. Maybe that's a tradition us nonconformists should consider bringing back?

Talking of nonconformists and denominational differences, it is also appropriate to mark the death this week of Pope Francis. While we wouldn't recognise him as the head of our church, he always struck me as possessing the qualities I would expect to see in someone appointed to such a major global position. His track record of caring for the poor, speaking truth to power and shunning many of the trappings of the papacy made him someone I admired.

He seemed to be the kind of Pope many unbelievers respected as well - more so than any other man to hold that position in my lifetime. I hope and pray the cardinals tasked with electing a new Pope will bear this in mind in their discerning, and in turn elect someone with a Christ-like heart who is filled with the Holy Spirit.

In our ever-changing world, let us commit to praying for the Catholic Church in the coming days.

*Peter*

# Notice board

## Church Meeting

The next church meeting will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> May, and is also our AGM.

No-one was nominated to stand as a deacon. Agendas and accompanying documents will be available from the Members' Area of the website one week before the meeting.

## First Aid Courses

One of the two First Aid Courses that we have booked takes place this Saturday (26<sup>th</sup> April) and still has some places available. The day runs from 9.30-3 at church. You will need to bring your own packed lunch, and wear comfortable clothing. If you would like to come along, please [book online](#) or speak to Emma in the office.

There are also some spaces on the later course which will run on 17<sup>th</sup> May. [Book online for 17 May.](#)

## First Thursday

We are looking forward to the next First Thursday meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> May. All are welcome to come along to worship and spend time together followed by a delicious meal. To book your place please [sign up on the website](#) or contact Daph.

## Men's Breakfast

Join us for our next Men's Breaksfast on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 8am in the church hall. For just £4 you can enjoy a delicious cooked breakfast and hear from this month's speaker who is definitely a Cutt above most!.... Simon will share about what it's like to be a father whose daughter is away working in a foreign land. [Please sign up online](#) to let us know you're coming.

## Exam Season

As the Easter holidays come to a close, our young people are returning to school and college – with many heading straight into exam season. Please do keep them in your prayers over the coming weeks as they revise and sit their exams. If you'd like a prayer timetable to guide your prayers contact Sarah D: [youth@newburybaptistchurch.org](mailto:youth@newburybaptistchurch.org)

# Prayer Space



## An Easter Prayer

Almighty God,  
through the raising of your Son from the grave,  
you broke the power of death  
and condemned death itself to die.  
As we celebrate this great triumph  
may we also make it a model for our living.

Help us to identify in our lives  
all that should rightly die -  
redundant relationships, tired habits,  
fruitless longings.  
Resurrect in our lives faith, hope and love,  
as surely as you raised Jesus Christ from the  
grave. Amen.

## Naomi Prayer Update

We've recently had another update from Naomi,  
who is serving God in the Middle East. She is  
thankful for a few days off over Eid, and the  
opportunity it brings to meet new people and  
catch up with friends.

**Please pray that these relationships would  
continue to develop, even when she cannot  
speak much Arabic.**

She is also grateful that her presentations have  
been going well, and that she is understanding  
more Arabic.

**Please pray for confirmation of some possible  
disaster risk reduction training in Belgium in  
May.**

**Pray that the writing up and publishing of some  
elements of her recent presentations would be  
well-explained and practical.**

**Pray that her Arabic lessons would continue to  
be fun and that her speaking would improve.**

## Prayer for the Catholic Church

Loving God,

You are the Good Shepherd who cares for your  
flock with unfailing care and attention.

We recognise that for many who put their trust in  
you, the death of Pope Francis is a distressing and  
uncertain time.

We pray that those feeling that way might put their  
trust in you and be reminded of your sure and  
steadfast faithfulness. May they recognise that all  
church leaders are temporary, but you are the  
everlasting God, and our allegiance lies ultimately  
with you.

We pray for Godly wisdom among those who will  
discern and elect a new Pope, and for that person  
to model faithfully the example of Christ to the  
world.

In Jesus name we pray, amen.

## Church Family Prayers

Please pray for the following in our church family:

Audrey & Brian

John P

Brian C and family

Beryl R

Jeanette H

Mary H

Nigel B

Jonathan E

Arthur & Reeta in Asia

The Mahon Family in Peru