

The Call to Service

Following our service on Sunday I walked around the corner to St. Nic's to share in the civic service of Newbury's new mayor. Many of you know that one of our members, Jo Day, is serving in this role for the second time, and that she has asked me to be her mayoral chaplain for the year.

It's a privilege to support Jo in this responsibility. My first task was to preach to the gathered councillors, dignitaries and wider community. I chose Mark 10:35-45 as my passage. It records an intriguing moment where James and John attempt to call shotgun on the best seats in heaven - either side of Jesus. It's a very human moment, and the response of Jesus is surprising. Instead of plainly rebuking them, Jesus reframes the request entirely.

He says to them and all the disciples gathered there: *"Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant. Whoever wants to be first must be slave of all."*



Cllr Jo Day, Mayor of Newbury

One of the titles bestowed upon the mayor is 'first citizen of Newbury', and in my sermon I asked what do we understand by that? According to Jesus, the answer is not first in honour, or precedence, or in being served.

It is first to serve.

In the Kingdom of God the first is the one who serves most completely. The measure of greatness is not the height of your position. It is the depth of your service.

The mayor is called to serve all in our town, and to pay particular attention to those on the margins, whose voices often go unheard and whose struggles are often unseen. That is of course true for all of our elected councillors, but it's also true for us as followers of Jesus.

As Christians, we understand that greatness looks very different to the version which many in our world have in their heads of riches, glamour, status symbols and power. Instead, it looks like Christ, the Son of Man who came to serve and was willing to model such a life, even when it came at the ultimate cost.

Part of our faithful service as Jesus' disciples is to try and see others as Jesus sees them. This is required if we are to serve as Jesus served. He noticed the marginalised and the oppressed, and gave them even greater attention than he gave those with status and power.

I offer the same encouragement to you as I gave to Jo and all our town councillors: Look for people around you who the community has stopped seeing, but who God sees.

In doorways. On the edges. Because it's there that real service takes place.

That's what it means to be first. That's what it means to be great.

God bless you this week,

Peter



by Peter Timothy - Minister

NOTICES



The Bible Course

It's not too late to join us for the "The Bible Course" either online (Monday evenings 8pm via [this Google Meet link](#)) or in person on (Wednesday evenings 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start at church).

It's an 8-week course (split into two 4-week blocks) which looks in depth at the bible, and what it means for us today. There is a video to watch and then discussion groups too. There is an optional book to accompany the course - [details here](#).

Please note - for this week only (13th May) the in-person session will meet in the CHURCH HALL. This is because we have other lettings happening at the same time and need to fit everyone in!

Second Minister Search Team Update

We received an application a couple of days ago and the team gathered last week to pray and discuss it. We collectively understood that the applicant's profile did not fulfil the essential requirement of the role, which is experience of working with young people. The next review date set by the Baptist Union is 30 June. Please continue praying through this process as we seek God's discernment and grow in faith and patience. We trust that God is in control and moving in our favour. We also wanted to thank you for your constant prayer support.

CAP Money coaching course

The next 3-week CAP Money Coaching course is starting today (May 13th) at NBC 7-9pm. If you, or anyone you know who would benefit from coming along, please [sign up for free here](#). We are also in need of a volunteer to make teas and coffees at the event. If you can help, or would like to know more about the course, please speak to Helen Andrews or David Clark.

Sonrise Christian Resources

Christian books and cards from Sonrise Christian Resources will be available to browse and buy at two events this month:

Thursday 14 May at the coffee morning at St Nicolas Church from 10am until 12
and Tuesday 19 May at Newbury Methodist Church from 10-12.

You can order ahead and collect on the day - www.sonrisechristianresources.co.uk or call 07396 825097.

COINS 30th Birthday Celebrations

COINS is celebrating our 30th Birthday this year!

We are holding a celebration service on Sunday 7th June 16:30-18:00 at St Mary's Church, Shaw. All are welcome for worship, celebration, cake and COINS creative activities.

Church Picnic

Join us on June 28th for our church picnic. After the church meeting which is planned for that day, we will make our way over to Victoria Park for 12.30. More details to follow, but for now please pop the date in your diary!

Want to include something next week?

Email Emma by Weds, 9am: office@newburybaptistchurch.org

PRAYERS

Prayer Update from the Mahon family

This week we received a new update from the Mahon family in Peru, with a number of prayer requests.

Dear Friends, we are pleased to be in touch with you again and want to thank you for your faithful prayers and support for us and the ministry here in Peru. With the heat of summer now behind us, we are grateful to be enjoying the cooler autumn mornings and evenings in Trujillo.

Last month, the Union of Baptists in Latin America (UBLA) celebrated its 50th anniversary in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The theme this year was *Legacy*, focusing on how we can support and prepare the next generation for mission and ministry. Dave had the opportunity to attend the four-day conference alongside our supported partner worker, Carlos Rodríguez.

The purpose of the visit was to further deepen our partnership with the Brazilian Baptist Mission Board (JMM). The speakers were encouraging, and it was a joy to see and experience such a shared passion for the gospel and mission across Latin America.

During the plenary by the General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance Elijah Brown, these statistics stood out: In the last 10 years, our Baptist Worldwide Family:

Europe and the Middle East – Decrease of 1%

North America – Decrease of 5%

Latin America – Growth of 13%

Asia-Pacific – Growth of 32%

Africa – Growth of 112%

This clearly shows where the church is growing numerically and encourages us as we continue to extend the Kingdom of God together.

Dave was especially moved to hear stories of mission work and gospel growth, often in very difficult circumstances. We would greatly appreciate your continued prayers for the Venezuelan Baptist Convention (UBLA) as they respond to the needs of the church and ongoing mission during this time of global challenge.

At home Dave is about halfway through teaching a module to our mission students at the Seminary in Trujillo. The students have had opportunity to reflect on the importance of the preparing for mission, looking at various aspects. We would appreciate your prayers for each of them whilst they manage their workload amongst a busy life and ministry.

Michele is about halfway through her doctorate and is currently visiting and observing female Peruvian missionaries; she is also interviewing them to learn more about their personal journeys of faith and their views on life and ministry.

Jonathan is currently preparing for his mock IGSCCE exams starting in the middle of May. It's a busy season for him and we are grateful for the help of a local tutor. We would value your prayers for concentration, confidence and calm as he sits each exam.

Ruth also is developing a good relationship with her tutor who has been working one to one at home since the beginning of the school year in March.

Phoebe is looking forward to her birthday on the 15th of May and has planned to invite friends from school and church to celebrate at new bowling alley in Trujillo.