



October 2021



Using freedom wisely

Jean and I try to keep Fridays free of appointments and commitments so that we can spend the day together. It doesn't always work out that way, and what we do is often determined by the weather. Our activities have been constrained at times over the last 18 months as COVID restrictions have removed or reduced some of the freedoms we used to take for granted. For many people, this has been a very challenging and stressful time. Freedom from legal restrictions has not removed all those challenges and concerns. We continue to pray for wisdom to know how to live with COVID.

As Christians living in the United Kingdom, we rejoice in our freedom to worship and live out our faith. This is a privilege not shared by millions of Christians throughout the world. It is our responsibility to choose wisely how we use these freedoms.

When Paul writes to the Christians at Galatia, he has concerns as to how they are using their newly found freedoms. He writes *"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery"* (Galatians 5:1). The Christians in Galatia has come to faith believing in salvation by grace but were being misled by false teachers who sought to reintroduce requirements of the Law, specifically circumcision. Paul has harsh words to say about those who are throwing them *"into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ"* (vs 7).

I wonder what Paul would make of the many different beliefs and practices that exist within Christian churches in Belper, let alone across the world. Paul instructs us to *"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all"* (Ephesians 4:3-6). Yet under the guidance of that one Holy Spirit and serious study of the scriptures, significantly different understandings have emerged and evolved regarding the priesthood, sacraments, baptism, and church practice and governance. Within Churches with fixed views on some or all these matters there will be different responses and attitudes to contemporary social issues such as sexuality and gender identity. It is a confusing picture to those beyond the church, and sometimes to us within it!

With freedom comes responsibility. Christians are called to engage in mission - to proclaim the love and grace of Christ revealed in the cross, the hope of resurrection, and his abiding presence through the Holy Spirit. Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will prepare hearts and minds to make a response in faith. I pray that we don't create confusion or pervert the gospel of Christ by implying that salvation is conditional on agreeing with our personal view on various other matters. A further significant responsibility is the call to discipleship. Through our own study of the Word guided by the Spirit we will grow in maturity and be able to nurture those younger in faith to discern God's truth as it is revealed to them.

I mention this because of a key clause in the Baptist Union Declaration of Principles embedded into our Church Constitution.

"That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws"

That freedom to interpret and administer God's laws represents a huge responsibility which falls on all church members as together we seek the mind of Christ. At the AGM on 13 October, church members will appoint a new leadership team. The fellowship deserves and expects that those appointed to positions of leadership will under the guidance of the Spirit provide leadership and teaching in these matters, and that their own lives will reflect that teaching - that they will lead by example. The leadership sets the tone for church life.

Nominations have been received and names are published within this edition of Inspire. Church members are asked to pray over each of those names between now and the AGM to discern God's calling and to vote accordingly. (Paul's first letter to Timothy contains some hard-hitting comments regarding the qualities to be expected from Elders and Deacons (*1 Timothy 3*).

The fellowship will then have an ongoing responsibility to pray regularly for the appointed leadership team. This is particularly important over the next few months as the leadership team progress the process for appointing a new minister. The leadership and ultimately the church members must discern who God has chosen for this key role.

Our freedom to choose those who lead and minister to us is a huge privilege that comes with responsibility. We pray that those chosen will enable God to build His kingdom here.

David Harvey
Elder



Election of Church Trustees 2021

The church constitution requires that at the first AGM of the church as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), all the trustees (except any Minister) must retire and new elections held to appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer (both annual appointments), and up to a maximum of 6 elected trustees who will serve in the role of Deacon (for up to 3 years).

The procedures for nominating and electing trustees are set out in the constitution and in the Church Handbook (Section 4.7 pages 9-11). The Handbook is easier to read and follow.

Completed nominations have been received for:

Treasurer	David Harvey
Secretary	Raymond Lesley
	Lorraine Bolger
	Liz Foster
	Jo Lambourne (not baptised)
	Jonny White

Election Process

- The election of trustees will take place during the AGM scheduled for 13 October 2021. This will be held in the Church building.
- Voting at the AGM will be by secret ballot of those attending the meeting in the building. **(We are considering opening up the meeting to Zoom, but only members in the building will be able to vote.)**
- To be elected, a candidate must receive votes from at least 70% of those members voting.
- Appropriate procedures will be in place to ensure a majority of the trustees are persons baptised as believers by immersion and to resolve any issues arising from there being more candidates than vacancies.

Dates for your Diary – October

Sunday 3rd Morning Service:10.30am: Leading - Jean Harvey, Preaching- Peter Worrall

Weds 6th Craft and Chat: 9.30-11.30am

Sunday 10th..... Morning Service: 10:30am: Leading – Greg Hall, Preaching -Derek Allan

Weds 13th Craft and Chat: 9.30-11.30am

Weds 13th AGM and Members Meeting 7.30pm

Sunday 17th..... Communion Service 10:30am: Leading - Jonny White, Preaching – Joel Gilmour

Wednesday 20th Craft and Chat. 9.30-11.30am

Sunday 24th Morning Service 10:30am: Leading – Jean Harvey, Preaching – David Harvey

Wednesday 29th Craft and Chat. 9.30-11.30am

Sunday 31st Morning Service: 10:30am: Leading – Greg Hall, Preaching – Paul Hone



ECCLESIASTES 3
To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven
(King James Version)



Masese Uganda - September
2021

"God Bless you abundantly"
Pastor Simon says !

15th August we heard of Pelepetwa's need for prayer and help after thieves burnt her work kiosk, stole her possessions including her sewing machines. For anyone this is awful, for a widow caring for nine children it is devastating. Belper Baptist Church immediately responded as a church and with many personal donations just a week later her kiosk was being re-built and a new sewing machine purchased.

– Praise be to God !



In other news Uganda has recently lifted many restrictions including Churches re-opening with limited numbers. This has come just in time for the wedding of Pastor Simon's son Julius to Loy on Saturday 2nd October – we look forward to colourful photos and news.

Blessings !

Mike & Jane.

Notices

REMINDER

There will not be another issue of Inspire for a month so please keep the Zoom login details to hand.

Sunday Services:

Sunday services have resumed in the building but any who cannot come in person will also be able to join via Zoom using the details below:

You can join by visiting <https://zoom.us/j/3431622013>

... or using the Zoom app and meeting ID 3431622013

... or phone (0330) 0885830 and enter the meeting ID 3431622013 then #

The meeting password is 1893

Please pray during the week for those who are due to lead, preach and cover the technical aspects of the service. Also please pray for all those who lead the online children's work before, during and after the service.

Prayer Meetings:

There will be daily prayer meetings at 7.30am every weekday morning and 9am on weekends and bank holidays – using the following Zoom details: Meeting ID: 899 0084 1018 /

Password: 1893

Food and Community Hub:

We have **many gaps** so if you are shopping in the near future and could donate one of these items we would be very grateful:

Tinned Potatoes and Packets of Mash 🍠

Tinned Fruit 🍌

Steamed Puddings 🍮

Rice pudding

Tinned Meat Meals eg curry, chilli etc.

Fray Bentos style pies

Vegetarian Meals

Corned Beef/Cooked Ham, Hotdog sausages

Toilet Rolls, in smaller packs preferably

Tea, Coffee

Sugar

Shampoo

Wrapped cake bars and biscuits

Tuna

UHT Milk

If you are able to donate any of these items, it would be much appreciated. All of the Co-op stores in Belper have donation points.