



**Sharing the love
of Jesus**

Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter

Sunday 23rd March 2025

Message from Alistair-

Charles Wesley wrote more than 6,500 hymns. Among his more well-known hymns are 'And Can It Be', 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing', 'Christ the Lord Is Risen Today', 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling', and 'Hark! The Herald Angels sing'. One of his hymns that may be slightly less well-known is 'Jesus, lover of my soul' often sung to the wonderful dark hymn tune 'Aberystwyth.'

Verse 2 of the hymn begins with a wonderful line- 'Other refuge have I none; hangs my helpless soul on Thee.' 'Refuge' is one of my favourite words. It's a word that pops up in a number of hymns and songs, and it was a favourite of King David in the Old Testament. And David uses the word 'refuge' particularly poignantly in Psalm 57.

David is on the run, being hotly pursued by Saul and hiding at the back of a cave. Trapped, lost in shadows and thought, nowhere to turn. But then he remembers he's not alone. And from the dark recesses of the cave he prays, 'Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed-' Psalm 57:1.

'Refuge' is a wonderful word, especially when we make God our refuge. Not our job, our partner, our reputation, our resources, our natural abilities, or anything else. And so make God your refuge. Let him encircle you. Let him be the foundation on which you stand. Let him be the one on whom you depend at all times and in all circumstances. And that foundation will support you, not only today and in the weeks and months to come, but on into eternity.

Our Service- Sunday 23rd March 25-

Our service on Sunday 23rd March will be at 10:30am at Sandbach Primary Academy. George Hill will be leading the service and Rev. Sue Thompson will be preaching. The Bible readings are John 1:1-5, 14 and John 14:8-10a. The title is 'Picturing God the invisible.'

Tea and coffee will be served after the service.

Our Activities- Week beginning Sunday 23rd March 25-

Monday- Welcome Bap-10:00am-12:00 Noon at Oasis.

Monday- Special Church Members' Meeting, followed immediately by our quarterly Ordinary Church Members' Meeting- 7:30pm at Oasis. [See notice later in the newsletter].

Tuesday- Tots and Co- 9:30am-11:30am at Oasis. Sue, Alison and Chris F are on the rota.

Tuesday- Encounter with God- 7:00pm-8:00pm at Oasis.

Wednesday- Ladies Fellowship- 10:15am-11:45am at Oasis.

Wednesday- Wednesday Group- 7:30pm at Oasis. Lent Study- Mark's Gospel- Jesus enters Jerusalem and teaches in the Temple (Mark 11:1-12:44).

Wednesday- Churches Together in Sandbach Business Meeting- 7:30pm at St. Winefrides, Sandbach.

Thursday- Thursday Evening House Group- 7:45pm by Zoom- The Romans Course- Session 7: Mystery. If God is sovereign, what is our role? {See notice later in the newsletter}.

Saturday- Saturday Prayer Gathering- 8:30am-9:15am at Oasis.

Saturday- Messy Church- 10:30am-12:00 Noon at Oasis. [See notice later in the newsletter].

If you would like to join any of the midweek groups, please contact Alistair and he will put you in touch with the group leader.

Wisdom for the Week-

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. *Galatians 3:26-27*

Father, thank you for lavishing your love upon me and adopting me into your family. How can I ever thank you enough for all that you've done to make me your child and a rightful heir to all the glorious riches of your grace. In the name of Jesus I offer you my praise. Amen.

News for the Church Family-

From Alistair and the Leadership Team- Combined SBC Special and Ordinary Church Members' Meetings on Monday 24th March 2025-

There will be a brief Special Church Members' Meeting, followed immediately by our quarterly Ordinary Church Members' Meeting, on Monday 24th March at Oasis at 7:30pm. Non-members are very welcome to attend but may not vote.

The Special Church Meeting is necessary for us to approve a single resolution required for the purchase of 36 Green Street, asking the Baptist Union Corporation Ltd to act as Holding Trustee for the property and adopt the appropriate Trust Model. Ian will explain what this means at the meeting before the vote is taken and this is a standard procedure when Baptist Churches purchase buildings and manses.

Please note that the Special Church Members' Meeting vote requires a 75% approval of the Church Members present, entitled to vote and voting.

The Ordinary Church Members' meeting will include a secret ballot to elect those new Trustees who were nominated by Sunday 9th March. They are Chris Nash and Susie Warburton.

You should already have received the following papers:

1. The combined agenda.
2. The Ordinary Church Meeting financial statement.

Please attend if you can, because if this meeting is not quorate we would have to call another Special Church Meeting, which could hold up the purchase of 36 Green Street (Oasis). Thank you.

Yours warmly in Christ Jesus

Oasis Privacy- from George Hill-

Will all Oasis key holders please note that some meetings held in Oasis require privacy and confidentiality for clients. Please do not enter Oasis without permission when meetings (particularly of non-church groups) are in progress.

The Oasis calendar is not publicised online for security reasons. However, I can provide an online link to anyone with a proper reason for having access to it. Or please phone me to ensure Oasis is free if you need to enter it. Thank you.

From Alistair [and Eunice and Susie]- Retirement-

As I'm sure you're all aware, it's my intention to retire at some point during 2025. The Retired Baptist Minister's Housing Association has bought a house in Ettiley Heath on our behalf and the purchase was completed and contracts were exchanged this week.

Before we can move in, the house will need a lot of work to adapt it. Social Services, the Housing Association and us are all responsible for different things, and so we are trying to contact all the relevant parties to arrange for the work to be done. This is likely to take a number of months! I hope to be able to retire when the work is done and we are finally able to move in. I'll keep you informed as to how things progress.

It goes without saying that we really value everyone's prayers as we try to get everything sorted out.

From George Hill- Walk around Alderley Park-

On Sunday afternoon 23rd March, weather permitting, there will be a stroll of about 1.5 miles around the Alderley Park Estate, Radnor Mere and woods (near Nether Alderley).

No steep slopes. Binoculars useful. Good paths, no special footwear needed. Limited facilities and shelter, bring rain-proofs. Buggies possible, dogs allowed, but not wheelchairs, sorry- see the farm event and limited mobility events later in the summer that are more suitable.

Drivers will need directions so please contact me if you are interested. Cars will leave Sandbach at 1:45pm. No unaccompanied under-18s please, and everyone walks at their own personal risk. Thank you.

From the Messy Church Team- Our next Messy Church Event- Saturday 29th March 25-

We would really value your prayers for our next Messy Church Event. It will be at Oasis on Saturday 29th March from 10:30am-12:00 Noon. The theme is 'Let's Get Ready For....Easter'. We have publicized Messy Church through Tots and Co, The Food Pantry, Sandbach Nub News, social media, other local venues and the church website.

Messy Church is a way of being church for families and others.

It's Christ-centred. Messy Church helps people encounter Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

It's for all ages. Messy Church is for everyone. And every element aims to be relevant and accessible to all ages.

It's creative. Messy Church reflects the creativity of God through crafts, songs, videos, activities and food.

It's hospitable. Messy Church is outward-facing. And it welcomes everybody to enjoy the hospitality and unconditional love of God.

It's a celebration. Messy Church reflects the God of joy who wants people to have life in all its fullness. Please support us with your prayers.

From Sandbach Community Church- First Anniversary Celebration- 4:00pm- 23rd March-

Come and celebrate our first birthday! It's one year since Sandbach Community Church started and we would love you to come and celebrate with us! Please join us at 4:00pm on Sunday 23rd March at Marriott House Bowling Club, Sandbach Park. Refreshments provided.

From Alistair- Thursday Evening House Group-

The next meeting of our Thursday Evening House Group will be on Thursday 27th March at 7:45pm by Zoom. We are studying Paul's Letter to the Romans. This week is Session 7: Mystery. If God is sovereign, what is our role?

The small group resources section of the Bible Society website has the teaching videos and the testimony videos. You can access the participant's guide online using the following link:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-romans-course/the-romans-course-home/small-group-resources/>

You do not need to pay to access the guide as the Church has made a donation. If you are struggling to download the guide, please let me know.

The Zoom link is in the email newsletter.

And finally....

My company is better at making sun cream than our competitors- but I don't like to rub it in!

Contacts-

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