



**Sharing the love  
of Jesus**

# **Sandbach Baptist Church Newsletter**

**Sunday 18 January 2026**

## **Reflection for the week**

### **The Emmaus Road by Hilary Forbes**

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us” Luke 24:32

As we venture a little further into 2026, and all that lies ahead for SBC, it is perhaps a good time to reflect on the encounter with Jesus that happened on the Emmaus Road (Luke 24:13-35).

On the road to Emmaus the two – Cleopas and another - knew all about Jesus and the events that led to his crucifixion. They were downcast and grieving. As a stranger joined them on their journey, and asked them what they were discussing, they expressed astonishment that he had not heard about these things and with downcast hearts told him, including how Jesus’ body had disappeared from his grave. They welcomed the stranger’s presence yet did not recognise who it was. Jesus did not immediately tell them. In fact, he waited until *they* recognised *him* in his giving thanks, of breaking and sharing bread with them.

“Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.” (verse 31)

Emmaus was about 7 miles from Jerusalem and having walked to Emmaus they got up and went straight back to Jerusalem and no doubt at a much quicker pace. Did they even finish their meal first? That sudden realisation that Jesus is present, tends to change our priorities, doesn’t it?

The two on the road to Emmaus were changed by the presence of Jesus, *even when they had not recognised him*. Their downcast hearts changed to “were not our hearts burning within us ... as he opened the Scriptures to us” (verse 32).

Let us pray (or sing as we do on Sundays) this lovely blessing to the people of Sandbach and beyond, whom SBC walks with and accompanies on their journey, as the Prince of Peace walks with us all,

“Peace to you, we bless you now in the name of the Lord,  
Peace to you, we bless you now in the name of the Prince of Peace,  
Peace to you”

(Graham Kendrick)  
(Copyright © 1988 Make Way Music)

## Our Service Sunday 18 January 2026

Our service on **Sunday 18 January** will be at 10:30am at Sandbach Primary Academy (SPA). The service will be an All Age one taken by Dave Murphy. The theme will be 'tuna in food' and the bible reading will be 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

## Our Activities for the week beginning Sunday 18 January 2026

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

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

**Tuesday:** Tots and Co 9:30am-11:30am at Oasis  
Encounter with God 7:00pm-8:00pm at Oasis

**Wednesday:** Ladies Fellowship 10:30am-12:00noon at Oasis  
Wednesday Group 7:30-9:00pm at Oasis

**Thursday:** No Housegroup

**Friday:** Energize Games Night (Juniors & Seniors) 6:45pm – 8:45pm at the School

**Saturday:** Morning Prayer Gathering 8:30am-9:15am at Oasis  
Winter Social Evening (for Tek Ura fundraising) 6:00pm-9:00pm at Oasis

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

## A Refrain for the Week

Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.  
You guide me with your counsel, and afterwards you will take me into glory.  
Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.  
My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.  
Psalm 73:23-26

## News items for the Church Family

### From the Leadership Team: Exploring the future

As mentioned at the last Quarterly Church Meeting, we have engaged Rev Neil Brighton (a Transitional Minister with the NWBA) to help us whilst we are without a minister and particularly with the process of appointing a new one. Our next step in this process is that we are planning to hold three sessions to help us all think about where we are as a church and the things which will be important as we start to think about the future:

**Saturday 14 February 10:00am – 12:00noon at Oasis**  
**Session One: How are we doing?**

Our first session together will reflect on how we are doing as a fellowship. A healthy church is one that reflects the character and mission of Christ in its worship, community and witness. Our session will explore how we live by faith, live as a community and look to draw others in.

**Sunday 22 March 2:30pm – 4:30pm at Oasis**

**Session Two: What are our values?**

Our second session will look at the things we value as a church. Those things which give our church its character and vibe. As part of the discussion we will try and identify some key priorities for the future.

**Monday 30 March 7.30pm at Oasis**

**Quarterly Church Meeting**

This will be an opportunity to review discussions so far.

**Monday 30 April 7:00pm – 9:00pm at Oasis**

**Session Three: What sort of ministry?**

Our third session will dig into the question of what sort of minister(s) might the church need for the future? Partly to identify the core strengths a future minister will need, but also to ask questions about how we balance the need for a pastor, with our desire to reach the community and grow our work with young people.

The three sessions are open to everyone (so you don't have to be a member to come along), and we will use a mix of group activities so that everyone can have a chance to contribute. They are deliberately spaced out over several months so that there is also a chance for people to reflect on the process and feedback other thoughts, and we have tried to offer a mix of days and times to make them as accessible as possible. If people are not able to attend but have comments or thoughts please do share these with any member of the leadership team. We want this period of exploration to be as consultative and open as possible. The key parts will then be brought to Church Meetings for any formal decisions to be made.

The sessions themselves are only a part of the journey. Above all else we want to seek God's heart and vision for our future, to be attentive to the Spirit's direction, and to discern the mind of Christ for each step we take. Prayer, Church Meetings and gathering to worship on a Sunday are all important parts of this process as we listen to the Lord and to one another.

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**From the Leadership Team: Prayer Days Saturday 17 January and Sunday 8 February**

We plan to wrap the 'Exploring the future' meetings with a season of focused prayer, using different types/locations to fully seek God's direction for us. The first two will be:

**Saturday 17 January 2:00 – 4:00pm at Oasis**

Prayer Time at Oasis which will be a chance to reflect and pray about our future. This will be a mix of quiet personal prayer interspersed with shared prayer slots every half hour. We will obviously pray as the Spirit leads but the programme we are aiming at is:

- At 2:00pm Bernie will open the Prayer Time and we will start with a period of quiet personal prayer.
- At 2:30pm, 3:00pm and 3:30pm we will gather together for a short time of shared spoken prayer and reflection – as the Spirit leads but aiming at around 10-15 minutes.
- At 3:45pm we will end the Prayer Time with a short period of sung praise.

Please feel free to come to all of the time or just some of it.

**Sunday 8 February 2:00-3:00pm at Oasis**

Zoom Prayer Time which will be a further chance to reflect and pray about our future. The Zoom link will be shared nearer the time.

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### **From George & Christine Hill: Winter Social Fundraising Evening for TEK URA Saturday 24 January**

Our Winter Social Evening is at Oasis on Saturday 24 January from 6:00pm-9:00pm. This is the first of our 2026 fundraising events for Tek Ura ('At the Bridge') in Albania. There is no admission fee but donations are invited. There will be food at 6:30pm - offers of food to Christine Hill, please.

Please come and bring friends to enjoy our party games, quizzes and other fun activities. As in previous years, please make donations (now or anytime in the year) to our dedicated SBC Stewardship page for Tek Ura (or contact George Hill or Ian Parsons). The page is at: <https://www.stewardship.org.uk/pages/sandbachbaptisttekura>.

This page already shows the 2023 to 2025 amounts (totaling £6430 + Gift Aid = £6909) so whatever we add in 2026 will be the amount above these figures.

You can find more about Tek Ura Ura at <https://tekura.squarespace.com/> Please also consider booking for the Tek Ura 10th anniversary celebration in Leicester on Saturday 28 February. George has details of this.

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### **From Chris Hill: World Day of Prayer**

The World Day of Prayer this year has been put together by the women of Nigeria and their theme is 'I will give you rest, come'.

SBC will be hosting a service for this on **Friday 6 March at Oasis starting at 2pm**. (There will also be a Sunday evening service on Sunday 8 March which looks like being at St Peters Church but that has not yet been confirmed.)

All are welcome (men and women) and as we at SBC are hosting the Friday afternoon service it would be lovely to have a good attendance from our own church and an encouragement to those who prepare for this service. It is such a lovely opportunity to unite with many Christians around the globe and particularly those in Nigeria, as well as those in our own town!

#### **Church Contact:**

Bernie Williams (Elder): 07966 202913 [Church mobile]

If you have any items for inclusion in the Newsletter please pass these to Andrea Jones at [andrea.jones200@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.jones200@gmail.com) by 9am on Thursdays.