

Sunday 12th
February 2017



Problems or opportunities...

On the 31st January, at the church half night of prayer, Brian Mills led us in prayer for four countries that all started with 'I' - Indonesia, Iran, Iraq and Israel; four countries with more than their fair share of problems. But perhaps it is radical Islam that poses what some may see as the biggest threat in these countries at the moment.

We can so often focus on problems and issues in this world. The media constantly want to make us aware of threats to our national security; there is a certain brand of journalism that would have us imagining terrorists or ISIS hiding round every corner. It is clear that certain political stances concerning refugees have emerged from fears about certain people groups.

What we are seeing is a world that is increasingly divided and where suspicion and fear trump compassion and hope. It is a shame that the ***most*** wealthy, the ***most*** secure, the ***most*** privileged, the ***most*** powerful, can be those who turn their back on the ***least*** fortunate because all they can see is the risk to their own circumstances and resources. ***In some ways, the 'powerful' who take these decisions are actually the most insecure of all; the weakest of all.*** With the disappointing decision taken recently by our government to halt the reception of the most vulnerable child refugees to this country under the Dubs amendment, it is clear that our society is no stranger to these attitudes.

Of course, what the media don't tell us about are the amazing ways God's Kingdom is moving in the midst of the colossal changes our world is going through. The Muslims who are finding faith in Jesus Christ, the renewal of previously dying churches in Germany that are being filled with new converts and seeing baptisms every month because of the move of God among refugees; the dozens of house churches being planted in Iraq and the hope demonstrated by Christians there which is amazing even ISIS. Elsewhere, it is thought that the church in Iran is the fastest growing church in the world with millions who have come to faith in Jesus in recent decades.

On the 31st January, Brian asked us what do we see - 'a problem, or an opportunity'. ***Indeed, in any time of change, whether in the world, the church or our personal lives, do we focus on the problems or the opportunities?*** The evil one wants nothing more than to see increasing division and hostility in this world, and for us to either be a part of this expansion of his false and illegitimate kingdom,

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Bringing Life to the Heart of 1066 Country, and beyond

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or to sit back and do nothing. He wants us to focus on the problems, on all he is doing, and to be trapped by fear, anxiety and worry. He wants to fool Christians into believing that the Kingdom we are a part of is somehow threatened by him and that he is the one who is most powerful in this world. But of course, this is all a deception.

We want to be the people who focus on what God is doing. Who celebrate the ways in which His Kingdom is advancing in this world. Who seek to be a part of this movement. This means remaining true to Christ's teaching and recognising that loving our neighbour means crossing the barriers that others erect, sacrificing our resources, taking the risk, because we recognise Christ in those who are in need. It means feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and sharing the gospel with the poor. ***God's Kingdom is not threatened by those of other cultures who do not yet know him, but it is undermined by Christians who go the way of the world and reject those in need.***

How do we respond? Let's make every effort to show solidarity with those others reject, whatever their background. Let's recognise true humanity in the people that others wish to dehumanise. Let's reach out with Christ's love in whatever small way we can, knowing that our God can use these things in a mighty way.

Your friend

Mark Hirst

News, notes and prayer-opportunities

- Last October, we as a Church agreed to go ahead with the **Battle Soccer & Netball School** from 5th to 9th April. So, on Sunday 5th March there will be your opportunity to sign up to support this exciting and popular mission event. For example, hosting coaches from the North, coaching the kids, catering etc....&/or give a special offering to cover church costs.
- An exciting new **Alpha course** begins at the end of February. There will be two separate groups (Thursday evenings & Friday mornings) covering the same material and running for 5 weeks. Please prayerfully consider who you would like to invite and use the postcards as invitations. Please speak to Pat if you can help with a crèche on any or all of the Friday mornings.
- Tomorrow, 2pm at Hastings Crematorium there will be a short service in remembrance of **Jenny Lockwood** to which everyone is welcome. Tea will then follow at the Manna House from about 2.45/3pm.
- **Food Bank Update:** Please continue to give generously to the foodbank as donations are low (please see the basket in the lobby).
- **The Churches Together unity prayer meeting** will be a week later this month on Wednesday 22nd February at 12.30pm in the prayer room here. *Everyone* is

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What's on this week...

😊 Half Term 😊

In line with local schools we are taking a half term break from many of our usual activities. Please note carefully the schedule this week.

Sunday, February 12th. ● 8am Breakfast in the Manna House. ● 8.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 8.45am Chapel Gathering plus Youth Group. ● 10am Refreshments in the Manna House. ● 10.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 10.45am Chapel Gathering and communion plus Sunday Club and Creche. ● 5pm Informal Worship in the Chapel with Creche, Sunday Club and Youth Group. Refreshments from 4.30pm and after the service.

Tuesday, February 14th ● 9.15am: Prayer-for-Healing Group (prayer room). At 10.45am there will be prayer for all who come. ● 10-11.30am Clothing Exchange. Bring good quality clothing suitable from babies, children or adults and take away whatever you can use.

Wednesday, February 15th. ● 10.30-1.30pm Games Emporium. £1.00 refreshments provided. ● 5-6pm: BBFC Youth training. 6pm: BBFC training at Claverham 3g. ● 7pm: Battle Baptist Runners meet at the church.

Friday, February 16th. ● 7.30am: Early Morning Prayer in the Youth Room followed by a 'do it yourself' breakfast.

Sunday, February 19th. ● 8am Breakfast in the Manna House. ● 8.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 8.45am Chapel Gathering plus Youth Group. ● 10am Refreshments in the Manna House. ● 10.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 10.45am Chapel Gathering Sunday Club and Creche. ● 5pm Informal Worship in the Chapel with Creche, Sunday Club and Youth Group. Refreshments from 4.30pm and after the service.

Saturday 25 February. 1.30 pm kick off. Battle Rec.

Please come & support Gary Walsh's BBFC first team who play in the quarter-final of the National Christian Cup.

Our team includes "two of our own" Trystan M & Finlay G.

We play Clean-Slate from Milton Keynes, who play in a league higher than ours.

It will be a tough game where we need home advantage to count.

So why not be there to support our lads & see them through to the semi-final (also at home).

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welcome. ● Esther and Charles will be running an **OpenDoors** course during lent, focusing on the persecuted church. Each week there will be a “meal” from a different country, a chance to hear about challenges faced by Christians in those countries and a fasting challenge. There are limited places so please contact Esther or Charles if you would like to attend. Tuesday evenings from 28th February at 6.30pm in the Manna House, £3 suggested donation. ● Save the date: The next **church teaching weekend** is 10th - 12th March focussing on discipleship. ● **Andrew Phillips** says “Thank you to everyone at Battle Baptist for your very generous gift of £1105, made to Parchment Trust from the Christmas offering. The staff and service users are very appreciative of the support that Church has shown through this donation. We would much appreciate your continued support for Parchment Trust in prayer during these very challenging times. If you would like more information about our work with people with disabilities, please feel free to speak to Andrew Phillips, or visit the website – www.parchment-trust.org.uk.

This week's prayer pointers

- ◆ Pray for the Christian Union at Claverham. Thank God for the numbers who attend. Pray for Mark and Hannah as they lead and host the group.
 - ◆ Pray for Ed, Emma and family as they approach the 1st year anniversary of coming to BBC. Pray that God would meet all their needs, protecting and blessing them as they serve Him here.
 - ◆ Pray that the youth football team would appoint a manager for next season, that adult players would attend alpha and that players would be regular in attending training and listening to the gospel talk.
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Dates for your diary

- ◆ 7.30pm: 21st February Church Meeting
 - ◆ 10th - 12th March Church Teaching weekend
 - ◆ 1st April Men's breakfast.
 - ◆ 7.30-9pm: 2nd May Church AGM
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Battle Baptist Church is part of Life with Hope Trust; registered charity 1134288, Mount Street, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0EG. • Website: www.battlebaptistchurch.org.uk • Telephone and answerphone (01424) 774825 • Email: office@battlebaptistchurch.org.uk • Caterpillar Preschool direct telephone line: (01424) 774997.



Ed Jones (Pastor) Francis Willoughby and Mark Hirst (Associate Pastors).
Our other elders: **John Southam (Church Manager); Rob Duffill (Treasurer); Andy and Jo Garlick; Ben Garlick.**
