

Sunday 4th
June 2017



“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9 NIV

We live in a world which longs for peace but lacks the ability to bring it about. However, we worship a Saviour who is the Prince of Peace, whose love knows no limits, a love which crosses every barrier and brought about peace in the most radical way. In our daily lives as Christians, while we don't directly experience war and major conflict in this country, we are nevertheless surrounded by conflict on a daily basis; some conflicts we have a part in and can be deeply affected by, others we see impacting the lives of those around us - relationship breakdown, workplace disputes, road rage etc. We encounter people who because of their experience of conflict put barriers up in their own hearts and lives as a defence mechanism, and sometimes we do the same.

Colossians 3:12-15 offers us the characteristics of those who make peace - compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, forbearance and forgiveness and ultimately love. These are the characteristics of the prince of peace, Jesus Christ - the fruit of a life lived for him in the power of the Holy Spirit. Of course, they are characteristics in which we often find ourselves lacking. It is often easier to take the path of revenge when conflict hits at the heart of who we are, of taking sides when we see its effect on others, and in doing so perpetuate and even exacerbate conflict. Others of us may just retreat all together, running away from conflict.

What did Jesus do? He stepped into conflict, he came into this world. But not to dispense justice and bring the vengeance of God upon a sinful humanity. Jesus didn't take sides either, apart from to side with humanity; to side with the oppressed, the broken, the needy, and yes, this did mean confronting those who oppressed others: the self-righteous, the powerful - mainly the religious teachers. However, Jesus would still accept these people as he did with Nicodemus; his offer of relationship was still open to them.

Jesus didn't come to enforce peace on people as if such a thing was possible but he made peace by taking human conflict upon himself, refusing to repay insult for insult or blow for blow but offering forgiveness instead and dying on the cross in our place. In doing so, he demonstrated the ultimate compassion, humility, love and all those characteristics listed in Colossians. I think this is why in the Beatitudes, it is the peacemakers who Jesus says will be

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called children of God - who will most clearly and visibly display the character of their Father and of their brother Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.

And also it is no coincidence that persecution directly follows in these verses, persecution for righteousness sake. When we cross barriers, when we step into places of conflict and engage, bringing the radical love of Christ, we are going to bear something of the cost of that conflict; we will need to be those who forgive, who repay evil with blessing, who love our enemies, who listen to - and bear with - the conflicted.

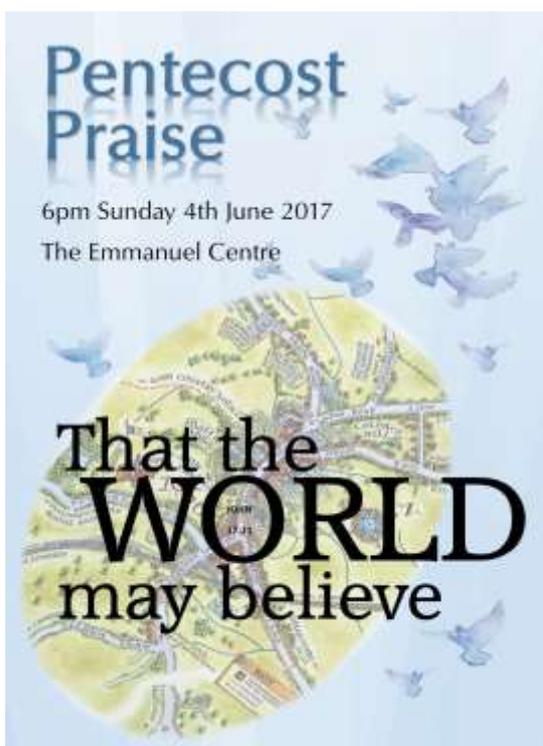
Sam Wells, a theologian and Anglican priest, said that the Bible is a story of conflict transfigured into glory. If you don't believe this, just look at the cross. We need to be peacemakers who are willing to live with the tension and persevere in the midst of personal conflict and on behalf of others, knowing that the Prince of Peace is with us and bears our burdens. We need to be people who see even in the midst of conflict, tragedy, pain and loss, the fertile soil where the kingdom of God can grow and bring hope, healing, restoration and new life. This is the unstoppable kingdom of which we are a part!

May God give you strength this week to walk through this conflicted world with the grace, humility and love of Christ.

Your servant in Christ,

Mark Hirst

News, notes and prayer-opportunities



- Everyone is welcome to join us tomorrow night as we meet to pray and worship God from 7.30pm in the Chapel.
- Next Sunday at 5pm we are showing the film War Room (PG).
- There will be a Thanksgiving Service here for the life of Alma Mann in the morning at 10.30am on 16th June.

Please keep Saturday 24th June free so that you can be involved with Battle Baptist Church in the Battle Carnival procession and activities at Battle Recreation Ground. Further details to follow next week.

What's on this week...

Caterpillar Preschool (Monday to Friday) and Caterpillar Crew (Monday to Friday) plus;

Sunday, June 4th. ● 8am Breakfast in the Manna House. ● 8.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 8.45am Chapel Gathering & communion plus Youth Group. ● 10am Refreshments in the Manna House. ● 10.20am: Pre-meeting Prayers in the prayer room. ● 10.45am Chapel Gathering. ● 6pm Pentecost Praise at the Emmanuel Centre Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL

Monday, June 5th. ● 9.15-11:45am Caterpillars Parent and Toddler Group. ● 7.30pm: Prayer and Praise.

Tuesday, June 6th. ● 9.15-11am Caterpillars Explorers Parent and Toddler Group. ● 9.15am: Prayer-for-Healing Group (prayer room). At 10.45am there will be prayer for all who come. ● 2pm: Tuesday Fellowship, Speaker: Francis Willoughby.

Wednesday, June 7th. ● 5.15-6.15pm: BBFC Youth training at the Rec. ● 7pm: Battle Baptist Runners meet at the church.

Thursday, June 8th. ● 9.15-11:45am: Caterpillars Parent and Toddler Group.

Friday, June 9th. ● 7.30am: Early Morning Prayer in the Youth Room followed by a 'do it yourself' breakfast. ● 9.15am Chatterbox for mums, dads and carers (upstairs). ● 10.45am: Coffee Club (upstairs). ● 12.30pm: Friday Lunch Club for retired people. (Advance booking *essential* on 772192, weekdays between 6pm and 7pm.) ● 3.30-5pm: After School Club. ● 7-9pm: 4:12.

Saturday, June 10th. ● Group depart for Holy Land (return on 22nd)

Sunday, June 11th. ● 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. ● 5pm Film Night - War Room (PG).

WANTED

Manager - Coach

for the under 14s team



If you have a passion for developing youth football as a ministry of the church and up to 4 hours a week (Weds evenings and Sat mornings) this position could be for you. In return you will receive support training to achieve FA Level 1/2 coaching badges.

Please speak to Andy Garlick for more information.

This week's prayer pointers :

- ◆ Pray for those going to the Holy Land next week to help run a **children's camp in Ramallah**. Pray they would effectively **communicate God's grace to the children and personally develop a deeper relationship with God through the experience**. Pray that God would protect and sustain them.
- ◆ Pray for Ed, Emma, Ewan, Evie and Ella as they return from holiday. Pray that God would bless them as a family and meet all their needs from His glorious riches.

Dates for your diary

- ◆ 10th-21st June Holy Land visit by 16 adults from BBC
- ◆ 24th June Battle Carnival
- ◆ 7th-9th July SOLID children's camp.
- ◆ 25th-29th August Soul Survivor
- ◆ 3rd September BBB10k run



Church maintenance issues: zionpremisesteam@gmail.com
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.
