

St. Mildred's Church Newsletter



April - May 2024

Tom writes...

**The privilege of prayer
and how to enjoy it.**

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Justice and...

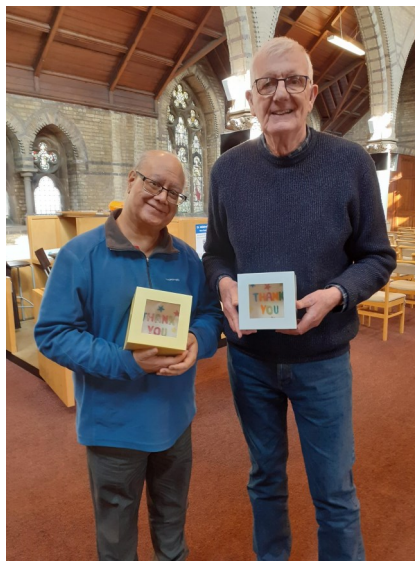
**Henry takes a look at
justice in the Bible and
what this means for us.**

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Cuppa & Cake

**Cuppa & Cake say good-
bye to Paul and Henry.**

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Cuppa & Cake ... Page 7

**The call of God on our lives at St. Mildred's is
to make and equip disciples of Jesus Christ locally
and globally in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

www.stmildreds.org.uk



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Newsletter Articles

Anyone who regularly attends St Mildred's can contribute articles to the newsletter.

The next Newsletter will be the June – July 2024 Issue. The deadline for contributions is 17 May.

Any queries regarding newsletter:
Email: newseditor16@gmail.com

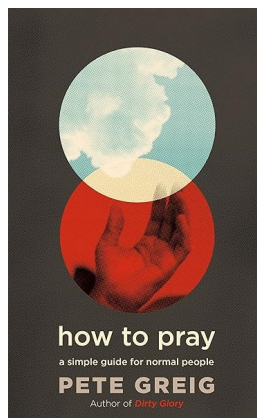
Over Lent we have been studying the Prayer Course by 24-7 Prayer. There are 3 sessions left restarting on 15th April.

I have been struck by a number of things so far as we've looked at the material, heard many stories, and been encouraged by Pete Greig, the founder of the 24/7 prayer movement.

Firstly, is the great privilege of prayer and how much we should enjoy it. Pete writes:

"It's...important to make your daily devotions as enjoyable as possible. Most days I look forward to my moments of quiet, alone with the Lord, clutching a big mug of coffee in the morning, pausing to pray the Lord's Prayer at noon, and then strolling out under the stars at night. There is an excitement about opening my Bible thinking, 'I wonder what the Lord is going to say to me today?' It's a privilege to be able to discuss my concerns with the living God."

Pete encourages us to make *adoration* a significant part of our prayers:



adoring the God who has made us his children. He says a key reason people avoid prayer is because we imagine God *"scowling, perpetually disapproving, invariably disappointed."*

Instead, Jesus teaches that *"the God to whom we pray is extravagantly kind; a father*

who comes running towards us with arms flung wide."

This has really blessed me. Not that before doing the course I hated prayer or imagined God as terribly angry (though we all struggle with these things). But being reminded of the privilege of approaching a loving father who is worthy of our adoration has been tremendously helpful.

Secondly, is Pete Greig's encouragement to have the faith to ask God for specific



things in line with his will for a person or situation. The idea is to seek God based on the promises he has given us in his word and believe that he will answer us when we pray.

It is possible only ever to pray so generally that we are never able to know if our prayer has been answered, and our faith is not stretched too much. For example, one of the most general prayers is, "Lord bring world peace." But once we start praying more specifically, we make ourselves more vulnerable, and this requires greater trust.

Praying generally can be important, of course, but it also good to be more specific about what we're asking God and base our requests on the promises he has given us. And grounding our prayers on his promises enables us to know that we are praying in line with his will.

The book that Pete Greig wrote, on which the course is based (*how to pray*) is very good; I recommend it. I could talk about many other things that have struck me, but there isn't space here.

As we enter April 2024, we are at a critical moment in our building project. We have to trust God and seek him to provide for us in ways that surpass our imagination. It is a huge ask and requires great faith and prayer. It will also require considerable effort.

So during April we are all invited to join in prayer about this and, at the annual meeting in May, we will be thinking about how we can get involved in taking things forward.

We have seen God do amazing things for us in the past; and we need him to do them again. So let us approach our loving father, rely on his promises, make specific requests according to his will, and give him glory when he answers!

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21.



**Tom Lake -
Vicar**



For Lent this year we are running the Prayer Course by 24 -7 prayer.

This is an online course on Zoom as it is difficult to find a time to use the church building.

The course will run at 8pm on Mondays on Zoom for 1 hour. There are three evenings remaining, after Easter:

15, 22, 29 April

You can watch a trailer for the course here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNLIkFykoBfY>

Justice And...

When I'm at 'Parents and Toddlers' sometimes I have a muse (it's quite painless) and one thought that struck me recently was; when will the children there say, if they haven't already mentioned it, those immortal words, "It's not fair!". The phrase must be one of the most uttered ones in human history. ("No es justo" in Spanish, "Nuk është e drejtë" in Albanian, "Kāore i te matatika tēnā" in Maori. Etc.) What it shows is that a feeling of injustice is natural in adults and children. There is a thought amongst people and places throughout history that there is a right and a wrong and perhaps those societies that blur those distinctions are in trouble. But that's another discussion.

The Bible is full of references to the necessity of justice. Such as Exodus 23:6 "Do not deny justice to your poor people". Or 1 Kings 10:9 "He has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness". Or Proverbs 29: "By justice a king gives a country stability". Or 2 Corinthians 7:11 where Paul commends that church for their "readiness to see justice done". Jesus himself condemns the Pharisees for neglecting justice Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42.

It's quite interesting that the mammoth Internet Movie Database (a vital source for film nerds like me) lists 16,986 films where justice is one of the plot points. That figure will only grow. The 2024 Oscar winning film 'Oppenheimer', the popular TV series 'Reacher' and of course every variation of the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) franchise has an element of doing justice. One day they will do 'CSI Catford' but I digress. God also values justice. The Psalms (What an amazing book Psalms is!) say "The Lord is known by His acts of justice" (P9:16) and "For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice" (P11:7) and "Your justice like the great deep" (P36:6) which is a striking image denoting depth and size. So humans and our God are all in favour of justice.



Unfortunately there is a problem here if we seek justice for ourselves from a God who is our judge because all have fallen short. Let's face it, we are all sinners. Don't let pride tell you otherwise. Compared with the holiness of God we don't deserve to be in his presence, let alone dwell with him forever. One day the whole world will be judged and no one will escape being judged. Not a comfortable thought.

But God is not only a God of justice but a God of mercy. And for that he sent Jesus. It is at the cross at Easter that justice and mercy met. The only reason any of us will stand before the throne of God without fear (though I except there will be trembling at His awesomeness) is because of Jesus. Because on the cross he took for us the justice we all deserve to give us the mercy we don't deserve. Just accepting that is one of the foundations of being a Christian. If you don't now, I hope you do sometime. Then all your Easters will be happy ones.

Henry Girling

(With grateful thanks to Bob for his help.)

Reading the Book of Acts

The word “Acts” translates the Greek word “Praxis”, which means “practice”. These evidence-based events are the Gospel truth “in action”-theory put into practice. Luke, a doctor by profession, is writing the second volume of a treatise to Theophilus, “Mr. God-friendly” of whom we know nothing, (although the theory that he might have been the lawyer to represent Paul -the Roman citizen-before the Roman Emperor, in Rome, is fascinating). In Acts 1 Luke says that in his Gospel he wrote of all that Jesus “**began** to do and to teach”- implying that Acts is all about Jesus, now in Glory continuing “to do and to teach” through His servants on earth in the power of the Holy Spirit. Although the word “Apostles” is in the title, the book mainly covers Peter up to chapter 12 and Paul from then on, (The deacons Stephen and Philip get more coverage than all the other Apostles put together).

Since the Gospels finish with the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension, we need Acts as a link between the Gospels and the Epistles. Without Acts we would know little about Paul, and little about the Church (only Matthew uses the word in the Gospels). We begin to see right from Pentecost the mind-blowing outworking of the death, resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. Jesus the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit pours Him out upon the Church, just as the Father had poured Him out upon Jesus Himself at the beginning of His public ministry, and the result in both instances is that all Heaven is let loose!

In fact without Acts we could be very confused about Baptism altogether. Acts makes it very clear that repentant believers must be baptised in water by human agency and then that all believers need to be baptised in the Holy Spirit by divine agency. Receiving the Spirit in Acts is always accompanied by evidential signs. It is never just a case of changing a doctrinal opinion. In Acts 19 we actually read about three different Baptisms as Paul meets some who only know about John’s Baptism (this is at least 20 years since

John was executed!) Paul teaches them the full Gospel and then baptises them in water “into the Name of the Lord Jesus”, he then lays hands on them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them, they speak in tongues and prophecy – the usual evidence in Acts that the Holy Spirit is present. Now while all four Gospels mention Baptism in the Spirit, only in Acts do we get to see what this looks like.

Acts also gives us various insights into what was preached and taught, how companies of believers were formed and planted – usually in strategic places. The Greek word for “church” is “ecclesia”, an assembly of people who have been “called out” for a purpose (from the rest of the world.) They owned no special buildings, ministry was authorised by the “laying on of hands” and they were more interested in a person’s Anointing rather than their Appointing! They spent their money on supporting the poor and financing further mission. In chapter 1 Jesus says that after the “Holy Spirit comes upon them, they will have power to be His witnesses from Jerusalem..... and to the ends of the earth.” Over the next 30 years or so, those who heard these words brought the Good News from Jerusalem (the sacred capital of the world) to Rome (the pagan capital of the world).

Acts is a book full of the activity of the Holy Spirit, (as also is Luke’s Gospel). Yet even in the first 13 chapters when the Holy Spirit is mentioned 40 times, the name of God Himself is mentioned 100 times. The Holy Spirit comes to reveal Jesus, just as Jesus Himself came to reveal the Father. Both the Gospels and Acts describe the coming of God’s Kingdom – Truth drives out falsehood, wisdom drives out folly, healing drives out sickness and frailty, deliverance drives out evil powers and supremely the Divine Life reverses the process of physical death. God’s will is being done “on earth as it is in Heaven.” The Church in Acts seemed to work (and pray) on the basis that whatever was permitted in Heaven could be prayed down upon earth!

Now Luke as a doctor records all this. He has researched all these things and come across “many convincing proofs”– today’s experts compliment him on his historical writing style, on his attention to detail, especially in medical matters and everything to do with ships and travelling by sea – it is clear that in chapter 27 Luke is actually with Paul during the shipwreck off the coast of Malta. Also in Acts, two people are raised from death. One of them, Eutychus, died when Luke himself was present (Ch20). Luke knows that this resurrection is “impossible” but he himself saw him come back to life. The miraculous is not only the

source of great, positive blessing – it can also be frightening because it challenges the very ground on which we think we stand. Acts not only tells how the Spreading Flame of the Gospel moved across the ancient Mediterranean world (as a missionary manual), but also that those involved dared to believe that impossible things can happen on earth when faithful and faith-filled people seek to co-operate with the God of Heaven. In other words, Jesus continues “to do and to teach”.

David Nicholls

Thank you Pete

Pete has had a long relationship with St. Mildred’s.

His time with us as a paid youth worker has come to an end. It is not goodbye, it is a new season in his life.

We remember Pete launching the Light Party and re launching the Easter Fun Day last year! His re-vamp of the upper room has been enjoyed by our youth people.

Prayer for Pete:

“We pray for Pete in wherever he serve, now and in the future. Thank you Lord that You have plans for him that he will bear fruit that will last for eternity. We ask that Your Spirit of wisdom and understanding, Your Spirit of counsel and strength, Your Spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord would rest upon Pete.”

Pete prays for St. Mildred’s:

“Thank You Lord for the gifts you give to us, we pray that we use them in your service. That faithfulness in prayer, works and loving You will abound more and more through the years. That anything started in Your name will continue and be a mighty witness to who You are and the love You have for everyone in this nation. ”



Tom thanking Pete during the Sunday morning service.

Cuppa & Cake

Friday 8th March was the last date C&C was held on a Friday before we move to Wednesday. Jenny's delicious baking had an Easter theme and the Simnel cake was especially popular!



Jenny, Carol and Julia

Henry and Paul with their cakes.

Sadly, it was also Paul and Henry's last day on the team.

It seemed only fitting for us to show our appreciation by presenting them each with a special cake made by Jenny.

Louise



Cuppa and Cake has become part of **Warm Welcome Space**.
We look forward to welcoming you on 10th April under a new name:

Refresh

Every second Wednesday of the month

Drop in any time between 11am and 3pm

Enjoy homemade cakes, tea and coffee.

Scrabble and Dominoes available as usual.

A space to chat and relax. A space to pray. A place to work.



Diary ~ April 2024

Wednesday	3	11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space
Friday	5	8.30am Prayer meeting
Sunday	7	10am Holy Communion
Monday	8	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Wednesday	10	11am-3pm Refresh@WWS
Friday	12	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	14	10am All Age Worship 12pm-2pm Jesus, Life and Lunch
Monday	15	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm-9pm Lent Course
Tuesday	16	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Standing Committee
Wednesday	17	11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space 8pm Prayer meeting
Friday	19	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Saturday	20	10am-12pm St Mildred Ladies Meet up
Sunday	21	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	22	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm-9pm Lent Course
Tuesday	23	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	24	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	25	8pm Home Group
Friday	26	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	28	10am Morning Worship 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six

Monday	29	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm Lent Course
Tuesday	30	Parent and Toddlers 8pm PCC Meeting

Diary ~ May 2024

Wednesday	1	11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space 8pm Prayer Meeting
Friday	3	8.30am-9am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	5	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Tuesday	7	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	8	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Refresh@WWS 8pm Home Group
Thursday	9	7.30pm Ascension Day Deanery Service 8pm Home Group
Friday	10	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	12	10am All Age Worship 12pm-1pm APCM with lunch 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	13	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	14	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Standing Committee
Wednesday	15	11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space 8pm Prayer Meeting
Friday	17	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Saturday	18	10am-12pm St Mildred's Ladies Meet up
Sunday	19	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six

Diary ~ May 2024

Monday	20	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	21	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	22	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	23	8pm Home Group
Friday	24	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	26	10am Morning Worship 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Wednesday	29	11am-3pm Warm Welcome Space 8pm Prayer Meeting
Friday	31	8.30am Prayer Meeting



Some of St. Mildred's women meeting up for coffee and chat and a rather delicious looking waffle as a centre piece.

Bible Reading Plan

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Beginning						
01/04/24	Acts 27:27-44	Acts 28:1-16	Acts 28:17-31	Job 1	Job 2	Job 3
08/04/24	Job 4	Job 5	Job 6	Job 7	Job 8	Job 9
15/04/24	Job 10	Job 11	Job 12	Job 13	Job 14	Job 15
22/04/24	Job 16	Job 17	Job 18	Job 19	Job 20	Job 21
29/04/24	Job 22	Job 23	Job 24	Job 25:1-26:14	Job 27	Job 28
06/05/24	Job 29	Job 30	Job 31:1-23	Job 31:24-40	Job 32	Job 33
13/05/24	Job 34	Job 35	Job 36	Job 37	Job 38:1-18	Job 38:19-41
20/05/24	Job 39	Job 40	Job 41	Job 42	Song of Songs 1:1-17	Song of Songs 2:1-17
27/05/24	Song of Songs 3:1-11	Song of Songs 4:1-16	Song of Songs 5:1-16	Song of Songs 6:1-13	Song of Songs 7:1-13	Song of Songs 8:1-14
03/06/24	Psalms 135	Psalms 136	Psalms 137	Psalms 138	Psalms 139	Psalms 140

Prayer Page

We pray for political leaders with conflicting versions of what is right and wrong.

We simply lift up to you the victims of war ... babies and children in Gaza facing starvation, violence and death.

For the people of Haiti, Sudan and Ukraine, for those held against their will.

We cry out to you for peace makers to be a bold and shining light in the darkness.

Soften the hardest of hearts.

Lord in your Mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for anyone suffering, waiting for test results and treatment. We pray for their families, friends and health care providers. May the Spirit of the Living God bring healing in mind, body and spirit.

Pray for those attending Alpha.

Pray that these evenings together are blessed.

“let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

We give thanks for all the effort made behind the scenes to move the development project forward.

We pray that you use them for your glory in the development project.

We pray for all Homegroups that they will be places of encouragement and growth.

We pray blessing for friendships old, new and yet to be.

Be lifted up, O God, higher than the heavens, let your glory be over all the earth.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”

Ephesians 1:3

Pray for all who attended Easter services and the fun day. May they all be blessed by their time spent at St. Mildred's.

Pray for all our young people that their families, friends and schools be secure, happy places in which to flourish in mind, body and spirit.

Lord we pray for the Church here in the UK and in every part of the world. We pray for those entrusted to minister to your church as they sense your will .

Pray for those for whom attending church is dangerous ... that they be reminded that you are the rock they can cling to and nothing can separate them from You Lord.

Pray for Keiko's family

for God's protection over them as well as the gift of salvation for them.

We thank you Lord for her safe return to us.

We ask you Lord to step into situations of conflict in our families, work places and wider world. That we might all be your peacemakers.

Lord, we thank you for AWM

Please, show us where and how we can share your good news.

We pray for the protection of AWM workers and for all they reach through media and in person ministry.

We pray for peace as Eid approaches. We pray that dialogue between individuals and communities be guided by wisdom that comes from you.

Businesses to pray for



**April
to
May 2024**

Please continue to pray for our local businesses

Classy Design

Co-op

Coopers Lane Primary School

CPJ Field, Funeral Directors

Clifton Consulting

Daniel Mercer

Dulux Decorator Centre

Engineering Minds

EyeKon computing

Vikas Wine Merchant

Wellness Hub

Woodvale Nursery

Wine and Such (new business)

Wolseley Plumb and Parts

YESS Electrical (Rexel)

Favorable Chicken

Flower Shoppe

Great British Accountants

Gokul Chemist

Golden chicken

Hither Green Station

Howden Joinery

HPS

Hyperion Records

Hunters

Screwfix

St Winifred's infant / junior

St Winifred's Nursery

Streakers Dry Cleaner (Kay)

Soldo hair

Tom Brown Florists

LEAVING CHURCH

SOMETIMES IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO LEAVE AFTER A SERVICE BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN HAVING SUCH A GREAT TIME. THESE ARE SOME OF THE TACTICS THAT THE CHURCHWARDENS ADOPT:



JANGLING KEYS



TURNING OUT THE LIGHTS



APPROACHING PEOPLE WITH A ROTA



ORGANISING A WORK PARTY



THE COMMENCEMENT OF A GROUP HUG



SOME ODD OR UNPREDICTABLE BEHAVIOUR

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<https://cartoonchurch.com/cc/mypew-large/leaving-church.gif>

St. Mildred's Church Welcome Space

Warm ♦ Safe ♦ Welcoming ♦ Free



Every Wednesday @ 11am - 3pm the church is open and warm.

The kettle is on!

You're welcome to sit, chat, work or pray.

No pressure, just a warm welcome.

Free Wi-Fi

www.stmildreds.org.uk

Prayer with fasting

6pm Wednesday 24th April to
6pm Thursday 25th April

Seeking the Lord together

Annual Church Meeting



After the service
12th May 2024

With lunch afterwards
Nomination forms at the back of church.

The Back Page



Healing Words

Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

A recent study has shown that encouraging words from a health-care provider can help patients recuperate faster from their ailments. A simple experiment exposed volunteer study participants to a skin allergen to make them itch and then compared the reactions between those who received assurance from their physician and those who didn't. Patients who received encouragement from their doctors had less discomfort and itching than their counterparts.

The writer of Proverbs knew how important encouraging words are. "Gracious words" bring "healing to the bones," he wrote ([Proverbs 16:24](#)). The positive effect of words isn't limited to our health: when we heed the wisdom of instruction, we're also more likely to prosper in our efforts (v. 20). So too encouragement buoys us for the challenges we face now and may encounter in the future.

We may not yet fully understand why or even how much wisdom and encouragement bring strength and healing to our daily lives. Yet the cheers and guidance of our parents, coaches, and colleagues seem to help us endure difficulty and steer us toward success. Similarly, the Bible brings us encouragement when we face trials, equipping us to bear up under even the most unthinkable circumstances. Help us, God, to be strengthened by Your wisdom and to, in turn, offer the healing and hope of "gracious words" to those You've placed in our lives.

By: **Kirsten Holmberg**

Reflect & Pray

**Who has spoken "gracious words" into your life?
Why is it vital for you to share words of encouragement with others?**

*Dear Father, thank You for
Your words of healing and hope.*