



Link Up!

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

For the rest of March

Sunday 17th March, is our Contact Group Anniversary service, when the speaker will be Rev Duncan Ridgeon

Sunday 24th March will be our Palm Sunday service when Stephen Chaloner will be preaching.

On Good Friday, Ken will be leading our reflective service at 11.15am to give time for any who are joining the March of Witness and Open Air in Poole Town Centre to get back to church for the service.

The Good Friday March of Witness from our part of Poole will leave St Mary's Roman Catholic Church at 9.15am to walk along Wimborne Road and into Poole Town Centre to join with those coming from other parts of the town in the area outside of Sainsbury's supermarket for an open-air act of worship. Do either join the March or meet up with us in town if you can.

On Easter Sunday, Ken will be leading our Easter Service which will also be a Baptismal Service when Holly Ashley will witness to her faith through the waters of baptism.

Induction News

Don't forget that the service starts at 2.30pm on Saturday 23rd March.

Looking forwards, not backwards...

Many of you know about my connections with Parkstone Baptist Church. It's where I came to know the Lord and commit my life to His service. It's where I was baptised. It's where I served as a Sunday School teacher, Youth Club leader, Boys' Brigade Officer, church member, and Deacon. I owe much to the teaching of Arthur Mitson, Reg West, and Paul Holmes. Longfleet Baptist Church is my home now, but I will always hold a special place in my heart for the folk at Parkstone, and I've been very blessed by the joint services we have held with them over the last couple of years.

I remember the time I was welcomed as a church member at Parkstone, and the bible verse given to me by Reg West. It was Joshua 1:9, and it's a verse which has stayed with me since then, over 30 years later, and one I've been reflecting on again very recently.

Moses was dead. The great leader who took the Israelites out of slavery to the brink of the promised land was no more. The one who had interceded with God on their behalf on so many occasions, the one through whom God performed miracles, the one who had received the law and built the temple, was gone. And, as God appoints Joshua, He starts with the words, "Moses, my servant, is dead.". No pressure then...!

Maybe Joshua needed reminding! Or perhaps he didn't want to face up to the fact things were about to change. The time for mourning and looking back and wondering what was going to happen next was over. It was time to move on and embrace God's plan for their future. It was a watershed moment for God's people and for Joshua, and I doubt he looked forward to the task. But God reassures Joshua – of His promise (v3), of His provision (v4), His protection (v5a),

Additional Church Meeting

We will be holding a short Church Members' Meeting straight after the morning service on Sunday 24th March to consider applications for church membership from Holly Ashley and Andrew Ntiamoah. We are doing this so that Holly, who is being baptised on the following Sunday, can be welcomed into membership at our April Communion Service on 7th April.

A.G.M. Notices

Our Church Members Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday 14th April after our morning service and a break for lunch. Bring your packed lunch along and we will provide drinks. The agenda and other paperwork will be sent in advance of the meeting.

At our AGM there will be the opportunity to elect Deacons to the leadership of our church. Janet Matterface has come to the end of her current term of three years' service and is eligible and willing to serve again if nominated. If there is anyone else who feels that God may be calling them to serve in leadership then a booklet giving an explanation of the role of Deacon along with all the relevant forms can be collected from Janet. Nominations need to be handed to Janet by Sunday 24th March.

Bible notes

I will shortly order the next set of Daily Bread bible notes for April to June ready to bring to church on 24 March. If you want to change your order, or indeed want to order for the first time, please speak to Stephen Chaloner by next Sunday 17 March. Cost is £5.75 for the quarter, a large print version is available at no extra cost.

and His presence (v5b). Then God encourages Joshua – three times He says, “Be strong and courageous” (v6, v7, and v9). Then He affirms – “For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

I'm not saying Longfleet is on the verge of its own Canaan, or Ken is our version of Joshua. This might be a bit of a stretch. But I do believe Longfleet is facing a watershed moment, about to take a new direction, and change is coming. Change is rarely easy or comfortable, but it is often necessary and, when done for the right reasons, is a good thing. And it takes strength and courage to see change through and for it to succeed, and it can be difficult and painful.

Thankfully we have a God who is the same today as he was with Joshua 3,000 years ago. The same reassurance He gave to him then – His promises, provision, protection, and presence, is as true and reliable now as it was back then. As we move into a new stage of Longfleet's life, we need to stop looking back and mourning the past and look forward in anticipation of what is to come. God encourages us to be 'strong and courageous', not to be afraid or be discouraged, because He will be with us, and we will be successful if we focus on Him and His plans rather than our own desires. Let us face this opportunity together with confidence – not in our abilities, but in God. His character, His trustworthiness, His faithfulness, and His presence. When we do this, we have nothing to fear and everything to look forward to...

Blessings

Stephen Chaloner



“Fasting” I just love Fast foods.