



Link Up!

‘Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year... At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year’s produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.’

Deuteronomy 14 v 22; vs 28-29

Coming up in September

On Sunday 1st September we will be holding our monthly Prayer & Communion Service where the theme will be Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath. Looking at Matthew 12: 1 – 15a with Ken leading our service.

Then on Sunday 8th September we will continue our series in the book of Acts with chapter 14 ‘The gods have come down to us!’

On Sunday 15th September we will look at chapter 15 of Acts ‘Difficult Decisions’.

On Sunday 22nd September our passage will be chapter 16 of Acts where Timothy is introduced.

Finally on Sunday 29th September our friends from Parkstone Baptist Church will be joining us in looking at chapters 17 & 18 of Acts ‘Uproar in Macedonia!’

When I took on the Treasurer role in April 2021, I spent time getting to know ‘how things worked’ – where money came from, and where it went. And it became clear to me the practice of tithing, setting aside a portion of one’s income, typically 10%, for the support of the local church, applies as much to churches themselves as it does to individual people in a church. This was something I had not always appreciated.

Longfleet has a strong history of providing financial (and non-financial) support to other churches and faith-based organizations. We tithe 10% of the giving received each Sunday morning, and through the monthly standing orders, and we share this between BMS World Mission, SCBA Home Mission, and Faithworks. In 2023, because of your faithful giving to Longfleet, we were able to give a total of £3,000 across these three organisations.

Alongside this, Longfleet has an Emergency Relief Fund from which we make occasional donations to other Christian organisations working to provide humanitarian relief in areas of need. We tithe 10% of the gift aid we receive each month as regular contributions into the fund, and from time to time we will have a special appeal. In 2023, we donated £250 to each of BMS World Mission (Turkey-Syria Earthquake appeal), Poole Foodbank (emergency donation), and TearFund (Middle East appeal). This year, we’ve been able to support Samaritan’s Purse with donations towards their Hurricane Beryl and Hope for Gaza appeals.

Also, on Sunday 29th September those of you who are Church Members should note that we will be holding one of our scheduled Church Members' Meetings after the service. As usual bring your lunch and our friends from Parkstone have also been invited to join us for lunch, then we will move into the church for the meeting. Agenda and other paperwork will be sent in advance of the meeting.

Midweek in September. Our Monday evening Bible Study group will start back on 2nd September and our Wednesday Night in Zoom meeting will start back on 4th September.

On Wednesday 11th September our Zoom meeting will have a visit from Benon Kayanga, one of our BMS Partners. Benon will be on a UK visit during that time. He will share something of the work for BMS that he is involved in back in Uganda, his home country. Even if you don't usually join us for the Wednesday Bible Study you would be very welcome to Zoom in to that meeting. Ask either Janet or Ken if you need to know how to do that.

Anyone who is a regular participant in the life of Longfleet can propose a donation from the church's ERF towards a humanitarian appeal. Donations are strictly apolitical and are made only through other Christian organisations such as those already mentioned. Do speak to me or one of the other Deacons if you think there is a particular cause we ought to be supporting.

Very soon, my thoughts will turn to the church's budget for 2025 which I will present to the church meeting in November. Like everyone else, our costs are increasing – especially energy costs – and it is a challenge to balance the books. Having a full-time Minister, provide a manse, and being able to keep the church building warm is not cheap. So, when the time comes, each of us will need to prayerfully consider how we will respond through our giving.

But however you give, and whatever you give, be encouraged by Longfleet's own commitment to giving. It is our regular giving to SCBA Home Mission, along with all the other churches in the SCBA region, which enables the development of churches such as the Ocean Church in Hamworthy run by John Good.

So, give thanks to God for His work in Hamworthy through John and the team at Ocean Church and continue to pray for them. Give thanks to God for the faithful giving of his people which has helped make this possible. And be encouraged in your own giving – yes, it helps provide for Ken and his family, and, yes, it helps to pay the gas bill – but it does much more besides...

Blessings

Stephen Chaloner