



Link Up!

‘Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.’ Romans 12 v 2

Coming up in July

On Sunday 5th July we will be continuing our series in the book of Daniel looking at chapter 6 – ‘The writings on the wall’. This service will include communion.

On Sunday 12th July we will look at Daniel 6 – ‘The plot against Daniel’.

On Sunday 19th July we have a visit from Rev’d Simon Gray who is the minister on the Southern Counties Baptist Association team responsible for our part of the Association area.

And on Sunday 26th July we will complete our series on Daniel by looking at Daniel’s visions.

On Saturday 18th July from 1 – 4pm we will be holding our own garden fair in the church garden, hall, church and lounge. We will need people to help set up the event in the morning. We will need cakes to be made for the refreshments. During the event there will various games, a bouncy castle and refreshments to be served. We also need people to welcome those attending and give directions. A list is up in the Church Vestibule for you to offer help in whatever way you can. Publicity is available for you to use to invite your friends, neighbours and family members as well and this can be found in the church lounge and hall.

Winston Churchill famously declared ‘it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the other forms which have been tried from time to time.’ No one knows the true origin of this sentiment, but it was one that the ancient Greek philosophers of the Apostle Paul’s time and earlier debated. It acknowledges that democracy is messy, inefficient and subject to human flaws, but nonetheless it still outperforms more authoritarian forms of governance.

On Sunday 28th June we were visited by Alex Afriyie, the current President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Alex explained that this role is an elected, temporary position without any authority over Baptist churches or ministers, but rather he was called to speak prophetically about the things the Spirit had place on his heart. He spoke about the BUGB Declaration of Principle, in particular the first section which says, ‘That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.’

Other Notices:

Alissa Ford is still running her own cake making business and her price list and a selection of cakes she can offer are on the noticeboard in the lobby at church. Please complete the Order Form next to her list of cakes on the board including when you want your cakes by.

Don't forget that we are now recording the Sunday sermons and putting these onto our website. So, if you are missing from church on a Sunday you can catch up online during the week. The web address is www.longfleetbaptistchurch.co.uk.

Also, you can go to our YouTube channel to listen to a series of podcasts called 'Diving Deeper' where Ken discusses one or two of the bible study questions that the Monday and Wednesday Bible Studies look at with some of the folk who attend these groups. You can hear these by going to www.youtube.com and searching for 'Longfleet Baptist Church'.

It is the last part of that sentence which forms the basis for the way Baptist churches in Great Britain, including LBC, are run - which is known as 'Congregational Governance'. This is why we encourage people to become church members and why we hold regular members' meetings. We believe that each church has the freedom (liberty) to discern what Christ is saying to us (interpret) and to put that into practice (administer); and this is done prayerfully and carefully with the Holy Spirit guiding us. Of course this isn't the only way to run a church, and other denominations have far more formal hierarchies, with popes, and archbishops and bishops and priests. Others have even less formal governance structures; house churches or casual gatherings where no one is officially in charge.

Like democracy, congregational governance isn't perfect; it can be messy, inefficient and subject to human flaws. In LBC we have deacons - individuals elected from among the members to help lead the church. Other Baptist churches may have elders or deacons, or both, but the role is pretty much the same - to provide prophetic spiritual and practical leadership of the church, often in conjunction with a paid minister.

If you are already a member of LBC then I encourage you to take that duty seriously, to take an interest in the life and future of the church and to attend church meetings as often as possible. If you're not yet a member, then I ask you to prayerfully consider becoming one and helping to discern what Christ is saying to us about our church.

Rev Ken Adolphe