



Link Up!

'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.'

1 Thessalonians 5: 11

For the rest of August:

On Sunday 23rd August with Ken still away, Stephen Chaloner will look at 'God and Money'.

Our service on Sunday 30th August will be a joint service with Parkstone Baptist Church at our church when we will look at 'Women in Leadership'.

Looking forward to September:

On Sunday 6th September we will be looking at the Hot Topic of Immigration. The service will include communion.

Then on Sunday 13th September we will be looking at the topic of Same Sex Marriage.

On Sunday 20th September we have a visit from Michael Cooper from Samaritan's Purse.

And on Sunday 27th September we will be looking at the topic of Sex.



Our news this summer has been filled with film of the wildfires that have raged across not only our own country but also much of Western Europe. Areas of France, Spain, Italy and Greece have all been devastated by wildfires as these extended, extremely hot and dry weather conditions have continued for the last three months. The UK Government estimates that by mid-August 23,359 hectares (57,720 acres) of land in this country have been affected by these fires. The news reports generally talk of these figures in terms of 'football pitches' probably because we all have a picture of how large a football pitch is. Almost always these fires are started because of human carelessness, portable barbecues, carelessly discarded cigarettes or vapes. One fire began when a group of young people set off fireworks to remember a friend who had died by drowning earlier in the summer. Of course, even when the fires have been extinguished the long-term damage to wildlife and habitats will last for years and some rare species may never recover.

Other Notices:

Our dear friend, Bronwen Blake passed away on Wednesday 29th July. Please remember her sons Paul & Keith and their families at this sad time. The Funeral will be at Harbour View Long Barrow on Wednesday 26th August at 2.30pm followed by refreshments.

For those who have taken up the opportunity to have a free meal at Parkstone United Reformed Church this has now been arranged for Monday 7th September. The church needs to know how many want the meat option and how many the vegetarian option. Please let Ken know by Sunday 30th August.

Don't forget that we are now recording the Sunday sermons and putting these onto our website. So, if you are missing from church 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/@longfleetbaptistchurch6537

But the thing about fire is that it can be a good thing. Indeed, we wouldn't have survived as a species if early humans hadn't discovered how to make a fire to cook food and keep warm. We went on to use fire to make tools, power machines, power transport and so on. Used responsibly and thoughtfully by humans, fire is a positive element in our world.

This reminded me of what the Apostle James says in his letter. In chapter 3 verses 5 – 9, he likens the tongue to a small spark that can set a forest burning. In fact, he doesn't have anything very positive to say about how we humans use our tongues (speech). He describes it as a world of evil which corrupts the whole body which can't be tamed. I can't help wondering what sort of speech he had experienced in his interactions with other Christians that made him write so negatively! In many ways I do agree with his argument that the things we say with our mouths can have a devastating effect of those we speak to. How many of us remember some long ago comment or criticism said to us that still lingers in our memories even after the person who said the words has long passed away? There are people whose whole self-confidence and sense of self-worth have been affected by a constant negative message from others.

But in the same way that what we say to others can do harm and damage like wildfires, we can also use our speech to encourage and build other people up. We live in a time when more than ever before there is a culture of criticism and negativity. As Christians we need to be careful that don't pick up the habits of the world by being negative and critical of others or indulging in gossip. Instead, the example we set others of encouraging and building up people, not just in the church family, but those we meet in our daily lives, is one that can make a positive impact on our community. Let's take the words from 1 Thessalonians to heart.

Janet Matterface