



Ackworth Community Church News Letter

www.ackworthcommunitychurch.co.uk

Issue 234
January 2025

Contact:
Church Leader

Michael Bellamy
07955657773



What's Happening This Month

Michael's Letter - Pages 2&3
Healing Ministry Team - Page 4
How Great Is Our God - Page 5
Verse of the Month - Page 6
The Spiritual Growth - Page 7
A Prayer to Keep God First This
New Year - Pages 8&9
Praying for Ackworth - Pages
10&11

Our Intimacy with God - Pages 12
&13
Book Review - Page 14
Coming Events for January - Page
15
Information Exchange - Page 16
Coming Events for February - Page
17
Small Group Meetings - Page 18
Preaching Rota - Page 19



Michael's Letter



I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7

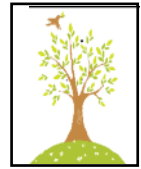
If you read the Bible in One Year with Nicky and Pippa Gumbel, you'll know that every year starts with Nicky telling you how at his gym they bring in extra equipment on the 1st of January and the place is packed solid. By the 7th Jan they move out the extra equipment and the gym returns to normal because those who'd set getting fitter as their New Year resolution had given it up by then.

The more positive point he goes on to make, is that every New Year is a new start. There is no secret to motivation. If you want to do something enough you'll do it. If you don't you'll soon find a dozen reasons not to. Of course the problem highlighted in Nicky's gym anecdote is people sometimes set themselves goal's to make helpful or necessary changes but their 'want' and their 'will' isn't strong enough to keep them from returning to their default pattern – in this case probably a comfy sofa!

What they need of course is to break goals down into a smaller, more manageable chunks and start from there. Or choose an activity they will really enjoy. A country hike might be far more motivating and burn far more calories than half an hour on an exercise bike.

So I hope you are feeling motivated as we embark on a new year together! If you need a spiritual nudge to get you moving, how about 2 Timothy 4:7-8:

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.



I hope the prospect of finishing well encourages you at your current stage in the race.

I have a vision to see every member of church at an appropriate stage in becoming disciple makers to the goal that everyone makes one disciple. What stage might you be at? Could you start praying for some people you know? Set a goal of starting a conversation with someone you meet during the week? Don't panic! In the coming months the Sunday programme and additional midweek input will endeavour to bring some helpful teaching and mutual encouragement, if your heart is to see people know and grow in knowledge of Jesus.

So be encouraged! For those who think this is a rehash of November's letter, I'd say 'yes' and 'no'. Actually, I'd see it more as continuing an important theme!

Much love
Michael

Prayer and Pastoral Support

Just a reminder that should a need arise; there are a couple of means of support available. Firstly, there is prayer support, so if you contact Ash or any of the elders with a prayer request then they can circulate it to people through e-mail and word of mouth.

Also, there is pastoral support, so again you could contact, Michael, Helen, Ash, Neill, Alyn or Denise and they will arrange some appropriate help where possible.



Healing Ministry Team

If you would like to receive ministry and prayer for healing, please contact Alyn or Carole who will arrange for members of the ministry team to come and wait on the Lord and pray with you. The healing ministry team are: Michael, Helen, Alyn, Carole, Brenda, Denise, Jacque, Dot & Ash.

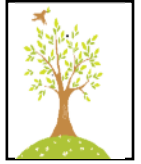
Birthday Celebrations

15th January - Linda

24th January - Ash

26th January - Carole

**A Very Happy Birthday From Everyone At
Ackworth Community Church**



How Great Is Our God

The splendour of a King,
 clothed in majesty
 Let all the Earth rejoice.
 All the Earth rejoice.

He wraps himself in light
 And darkness tries to hide
 And trembles at His voice
 Trembles at His voice.

How great is our God, sing
 with me

How great is our God, and all
 will see

How great, how great is our
 God.

Age to age He stands
 And time is in His hands
 Beginning and the end
 Beginning and the end.

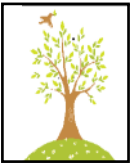
The Godhead Three in One
 Father Spirit Son
 The Lion and the Lamb
 The Lion and the Lamb.

How great is our God, sing
 with me
 How great is our God, and all
 will see
 How great, how great is our
 God.

Name above all names
 Worthy of our praise. My
 heart will sing
 How great is our God.

You're the name above all
 names
 You are worthy of our praise
 And my heart will sing.
 How great is our God.

How great is our God, sing
 with me
 How great is our God, and all
 will see
 How great, how great is our
 God.



Verse of the month...

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

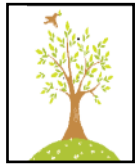
Colossians 3:23-24

Paul's advice to slaves in Colossians 3, gives a motivating encouragement for all servants of the Lord Jesus!

As we embark on a new year and a new start, what better way to set our efforts into perspective than these verses. It gives us a 'why' that comes from serving God and glorifying Him rather than serving our own interests and gaining personal recognition. Surely also, it inspires us to do all things well and to the best of our abilities. See how your perspective and willingness to serve is affected by taking this scripture to heart and applying it to daily life.

Memorise these verses if this is part of your rhythm of life with God, or keep note of it somewhere and remind yourself of it through your weeks this month. Note the changes you experience. Also, if it makes a difference keep it going!

Michael.



The Spiritual Growth and Transformation (SG&T)* Course,

The Spiritual Growth and Transformation (SG&T)* course, run at Whirlow, under the diocese of Sheffield, closes applications for its course starting in May. This is also of interest for people who may wish to train as a ‘Spiritual Accompanier’ (what used to be termed a ‘Spiritual Director’). If this piques your interest have a chat with Michael.

*SG&T provides formation in prayer and discernment. The course offers a safe and sacred space in which to explore, reflect and share experiences of our relationship with God. Themes include images of God, images of self, the spiritual journey and personal calling. Info from website.

Michael.



A Prayer to Keep God First This New Year

www.crosswalk.com/devotionals

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” - 2 Cor. 5:17

Dear God,

Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you for all that you've allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the hard things, which have reminded us how much we need you and rely on your presence filling us every single day.

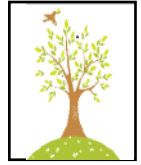
We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. We ask that you will guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else. We ask that you will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight. We ask that you would help us release our grip on the things to which you've said “no,” “not yet,” or “wait.” We ask for help to pursue you first, above every dream and desire you've put within our hearts.

We ask for your wisdom, for your strength and power to be constantly present within us. We pray you would make us strong and courageous for the road ahead. Give us ability beyond what we feel able, let your gifts flow freely through us, so that you would be honoured by our lives, and others would be drawn to you.

We pray that you'd keep us far from the snares and traps of temptations. That you would whisper in our ear when we need to run, and whisper in our heart when we need to stand our ground.

We pray for your protection over our families and friends. We ask for your hand to cover us and keep us distanced from the evil intent of the enemy; that you would be a barrier to surround us, that we'd be safe in your hands. We pray that you would give us discernment and insight beyond our years, to understand your will, hear your voice, and know your ways.

We ask that you would keep our footsteps firm, on solid ground, helping us to be consistent and faithful. Give us supernatural endurance to stay the course, not swerving to the right or to the left, or being too easily distracted by other things that would seek to call us away from a close walk with you.



Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our need for you, living independent of your spirit. Forgive us for letting fear and worry control our minds, and for allowing pride and selfishness wreak havoc over our lives. Forgive us for not following your ways and for living distant from your presence.

We confess our need for you... fresh... new... again. We ask that you make all things new, in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives, for this coming year. We pray for your refreshing over us.

Keep your words of truth planted firm within us, help us to keep focused on what is pure and right, give us the power to be obedient to your word. And when the enemy reminds us where we have been, hissing his lies and attacks our way, we trust that your voice speaks louder and stronger, as you remind us we are safe with you and your purposes and plans will not fail. We ask that you will be our defence and rear guard, keeping our way clear, removing the obstacles, and covering the pitfalls. Lord, lead us on your level ground.

We ask that you would provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favour. We pray for your blessings to cover us, we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed. We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but to say, "These are the ones that the Lord has blessed."

Help us to be known as great givers, help us to be generous and kind, help us to look to the needs of others and not be consumed by only our own. May we be lovers of truth, may the fruits of your spirit be evident in our lives - your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set you way before us. May all your plans succeed. May we reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing.

To you be glory and honour, in this New Year, and forever.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Praying for Ackworth – North, South, West and East

During a recent prayer meeting when we were praying for revival,
God spoke to us from Isaiah 43: 5-7

- 5 Do not be afraid, for I am with you;
I will bring your children from the east
and gather you from the west.
- 6 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'
Bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the ends of the earth—
- 7 everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

At the same time, we were led to sing the song 'Men of faith rise up and sing', which has a chorus:

Shout to the North and the South
Sing to the East and the West
Jesus is saviour to all
Lord of heaven and earth

Let us take up what the Lord is saying to us and pray for Ackworth. The prayer map on the opposite page may help you in praying for different areas, there are probably more to add, please let me know.

To get the directions, if you want to pray facing the right way, from the Parish Rooms, Pontefract is to the North, Barnsley to the South, Doncaster is East and Wakefield West.

Alyn.



NORTH

High Ackworth
Low Ackworth
Mount Pleasant
Hillside
Bell Lane

WEST

Holly Bank
Hayfield Estate
Strata Estate
Bracken Hill
Moortop

PARISH ROOMS

EAST

Doncaster Road
Doncaster Road Estate
Mill Lane Area

SOUTH

Charlestown
Orchard Drive
Howard Drive
Rhyddings Estate
Chiltern Drive

Please pray for:

Churches Together

St Cuthberts
Quakers
Methodists
All Saints

Schools

Howards School
Quarkers School
Mill Dam School
Bell Lane School
Oakfield Park School



Our Intimacy with God

One of our greatest needs is to know we are loved. Each of us has to feel certain, deep down in our hearts, that someone loves us, cares for us, and has our best interests at heart.

That is how God designed us. He wants us to know He loves us with a passionate intensity too deep for words.

God created human beings with fellowship in mind—first with Himself and then with others. But we cannot fully love one another until we have ourselves experienced the love of God. We experience His love when we willingly surrender to His call to be our Saviour, Lord, and Friend.

There are at least three reasons God seeks our surrender:

He loves us and desires our fellowship and worship.

As long as we hold something back from God, we cannot know Him completely or fully experience His love. When we surrender to Him, we get all of Him.

He wants our service for Him to be effective and fruitful.

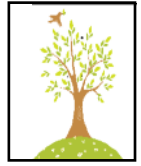
The more we know and love Jesus, the more effective our service will be. The closer we draw to God, the more impact our lives will have. The more energetically we nurture our relationship with the Lord, the greater the positive mark we will leave behind.

He waits for the freedom to bless us.

God is omnipotent, but He will not violate His own principles. He draws us to Himself so we can experience His love and forgiveness. He asks for our willing surrender so that He can give us the best blessings He has to offer.

So why do we resist? With all this in mind, why does anyone resist surrendering to God?

Pride is the key reason most people resist surrender. They think they know better than God and that they can handle their lives better than He can, so they keep Him at a distance.



Others do not surrender because they fear what God will do (or not do) for them. They think that if they give Him control, He'll make them do exactly what will make them most miserable.

Still others refuse to surrender to Christ because they believe Satan's lie, which tells them God is judgmental and will punish them for their mistakes.

All of this is completely false! God always has our best in mind. He will refuse us no good thing when we gladly submit to His will (Romans 8:32). He tells us, "I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11).

It only makes sense to surrender to God, because when we do, we grow close to Him—His highest priority for us—and we begin to have an impact on our world.

Fulfil your destiny. Anne Graham Lotz once told an interviewer about the many trials she had faced in previous years, including her parents' serious illnesses and her son's battle with cancer. She finally came to the point where all she wanted was Jesus. "Just give me Jesus," she declared.

Anne realized that if she had a personal, intimate relationship with the Saviour of this universe, then whatever problems she faced, He would face them with her. He would bring a sweet resolve and a peace to her heart.

Is this the cry of your heart? Do you want to know the Saviour and live in the fullness of His blessing each day? You can. David wrote, "They who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing" (Psalm 34:10).

When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, He not only forgave you but also made you into a new creature. You were no longer standing at a distance from God but were then able to draw near to Him.

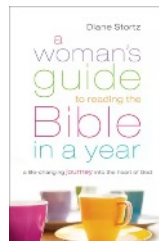
If you have drifted in your devotion to the Saviour and feel as though you grow more distant each day in your relationship to Him, then pray that He will draw you near once more.



Book
Review
by:

www.eden.
co.uk

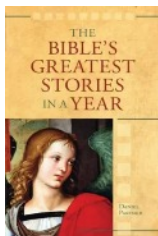
A Woman's Guide to Reading the Bible in a Year £9.32



When Diane Stortz was invited to join a study to read the whole Bible in a year, she went for it. It changed her life, even though she'd been a Christian a long time. Now, more than ten years later, she still reads through the Bible every year with a group of friends.

"I didn't start to really know God until I made knowing him my goal as I read the Bible. Getting to know God changed me. It changed how I think and what I do. It changes me still."

God put the Bible together for you. Reading it through in a year helps create a rich experience and a focused understanding of what God wants to reveal about himself. And with week-by-week reading plans, easy-to-use reference material, and stories of encouragement from women like you, A Woman's Guide to Reading the Bible in a Year is the perfect companion for this life-changing practice.



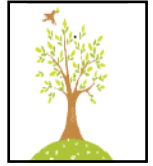
The Bible's Greatest Stories In A Year £13.35

The people, places, and happenings of scripture come to life in this collection of 365 retold Bible stories

Quick and easy to read, these "greatest stories" provide a clear overview of the Bible, putting the most important events into a helpful chronological context.

From the story of creation to John's visions of heaven, from Adam and Abraham to Zacchaeus and Zechariah, the most important passages of scripture are carefully retold--for readers of all ages.

Just a few minutes each day with The Bible's Greatest Stories in a Year can, over the course of twelve months, be a surprisingly informative biblical education.



Coming Events for January

Wednesday 15th January

Toddler Group restarts

Monday 20th January

All articles for the News Letter must be received by Lisa.

Friday 31st January

The Spiritual Growth and Transformation (SG&T)* Course, run at Whirlow, under the diocese of Sheffield, closes applications for its course starting in May.

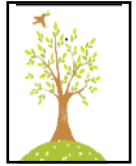


The Information Exchange

This is a place where you can request prayer for yourself or others, share your need /request for help, exchange surplus goods, or if you have some spare time, help someone with gardening, housework, shopping etc. You can use this section also if you want to say anything to the Church. Just ask Lisa to place your request.

Remember to Recycle

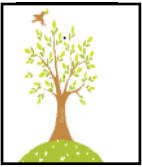
Please remember to recycle your empty Ink Cartridges. (HP, Cannon, Lexmark, Dell) and Stamps. Lisa is collecting them, each item donated will raise money for a Charity.



Coming Events for February

Monday 24th February

All articles for the News Letter must be received by Lisa.



Small Group Meetings

Do get involved in a mid-week group and let us know which one you're hoping to be part of.

Alpha Groups

There will be no post alpha groups until further notice.

Thursday Lunch Group led by Denise

Meet on Thursday 9th January, Thursday 16th January, Thursday 23rd January & Thursday 30th January at Dot's home at midday.
Continuing the series on 1 Peter.

Thursday Evening Group led by Alyn (Zoom 8pm)

Meet on Thursday 9th January, Thursday 16th January, Thursday 23rd January & Thursday 30th January. **Completing the series on Revelation and then a new series to be announced.**

Sunday Evening Prayer Meeting at 6pm, venue to be announced.

Prayer Diary

Please pray for each other.

If you would like to be on the prayer list please let Lisa know.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1 John & Pat	2 Neill, Sue, Grace & Hope	3 John & Lilian	4 Jacquie	5 Michael & Helen
6 Lisa	7 Kevin & Jeanie	8 Denise	9 Matt, Cheryl, Oscar & Georgina	10 Ash, Di. & Ceryws	11 Dimytro, Natalia & Denys	12 Ann
13 Julian & Valerie	14 May	15 Stan & Moira	16 Joel & Holly	17 Neil & Eileen	18 Andrew, Kimberley, Hannah & Joanna	19 Brian & Linda
20 Maryna	21 Tony, Jilly & Family's	22 Brenda	23 Adrian & Anne	24 Amanda	25 Julian & Caroline	26 Dot
27 Alyn & Carole	28 Anne- Marie & Alison	29 John & Pat	30 Neill, Sue, Grace & Hope	31 Elders		