

Issue 6
May
2021

Spring has sprung and as always,
with Spring we see our gardens blooming, our grass growing, the
weather becoming...changeable shall we say...

Change is always in the air in Spring. Also during this time we are seeing the Government leading us out of lockdown and as I write this the country has started step 2. Change is in the air.

Change can be a double edged sword. Change brings hope and change can also bring frustration, especially when the things we want to change don't and the things we aren't bothered about do change.

I am so hopeful for the future, not just for the fact the country is reopening, but because God is leading us on a path we haven't walked before. A way that God will lead us in.

This means that the future won't look like the past. I'm not longing for the past. I'm grateful for the past bringing us to this point but I'm more excited for what God will lead us into. Spring has sprung and God is leading us. In the last issue and over the last few months has been about hope.

My hope is firmly in the Lord. I long for Him and His ways. As we continue through Spring let us be a people that look and long for what is ahead, not what is behind, knowing God has a path for us and is already making a way!

Pastor Steve





I have been encouraged by Pastor Steve and others who have sent me their articles that are inspiring and challenging.

The first part of the history of Riverside Bewdley is on pages 11 to 13.

Due to the question being raised, the back page shows various ways of giving a donation, should you wish, to Riverside. I hope that helps.

Les the Ed

A Thought from Janice Young

My favourite Psalms is 139 and in verses 13-16 it says;

***“For you created my inmost being;
You put me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...
My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place.
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my
unformed body.”***

This is a quote by Derek Prince.

“The body is a divine masterpiece, planned in the secret depths of the earth and knit together in the womb by the creator’s invisible hand.

Again and again throughout history, men have sought to construct a building to accommodate God. At best however such a building can serve as a place to offer worship, never as God’s dwelling” (Acts 7:48)

God has a different plan. At the beginning of human history he fashioned a temple for Himself with His own hands, the body of man. He worked His plan of redemption by which the body, sanctified by faith in Christ’s sacrifice, could be offered back to Him to be a temple of the Holy Spirit.”

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.” (! Corinthians 6: 19-20)

Years ago we sang a chorus which said;
‘Thank you Father for making me me.’
We are all God’s creation.

Thank you Jesus

Janice



How do I Know I Never Walk Alone?

Everyone has their own personal experience of God. That's what I love about how relational He is. He knows us and connects with us right where we are.

How do I know that I'm not alone? I could share story after story where in my darkest moments I have called out to God and I have experienced a peace, a love or a presence that my circumstances or situation could not explain.

I've seen and experienced physical healings and seen God show up just when I've needed Him, whether directly to me, or through the other people I have in my life. But I really want to talk about how close I find God at the moment. God is our creator The creator. The creator of the world. The creator of everything that has been created.



That means no matter where I am, or what place I am in, I know that I am surrounded by God. I see His love in a smile, a gust of wind, the song of a bird, a drop of rain, laughter, the stormy day and the sunny day.

No matter where I look I can't stop seeing and experiencing the closeness of God's creation, and where I see creation I experience God. Yes, God is within me...but God is always all around me too. Look out, look up and see God. He's right there.

Pastor Steve

The Parable of the Cracked Pot



A story has been told that goes something like the following:

A Water Carrier was walking up the hill to his master's house with two pots on a pole across his shoulders.

One pot was perfect and one had a crack half way down so every day he only delivered one and a half pots of water to his master.

One day as he was walking up the hill the cracked pot started to apologise to the water carrier saying, *"I'm so sorry, so very sorry."*

"What is the matter?" asked the water carrier?

The cracked pot replied: *"Every day you carry us up the hill but you only deliver one and a half pots of water to your master because I never deliver my full load."*

The water carrier felt sorry for the cracked pot and said, *"Next time I walk up the hill have a close look at the path beneath you."*

The following day the cracked pot looked and noticed that the path on its side was covered in beautiful flowers. However, at the top of the hill it felt sorry for itself again.

The water carrier said, *"Didn't you notice there were only flowers on your side of the path? I knew you had a crack in you so I took a packet of seeds with me and planted the seeds on your side of the path so that your leaking water would water the seeds."*

For the past two years I have picked flowers for the master's banqueting table and without your crack supplying the water there would not have been flowers for the master's table."

This parable is a good example of how God can use us just as we are. We do not have to be perfect to be used properly for the purpose God has for the purpose God has for us. The cracked pot kept looking at the perfect pot, thinking, *"I need to be like that in order to fulfil the purpose I'm designed for."*

It missed the point that God had an intended purpose for it, just as it was. The water carrier could have mended or replaced the cracked pot, but God wants to use us as we are to bring love, blessings and beauty to others.

Just be who YOU are with your limitations etc.

He will use you - His power is in you.

You'll Never Walk Alone

Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 28: 20 *"I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

How can this be when Jesus is seated next to the Father in heaven?

Jesus says in John 14:15-18 *"If you love me obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate (Comforter, Encourager) who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who will lead you into all truth. No, I will not abandon you as orphans - I will come to you "*.

In John 16:13-14 Jesus says *" When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth."*

After Jesus ascended into heaven the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost and Peter preached to a large crowd. 3000 people were saved. They thought the gift of the Holy Spirit was only for the Jews so God had to sort them out.

In Acts 10 the Roman centurion Cornelius, who was a generous man and worshipped God, sends for the apostle Peter after being told to by an angel. Peter goes and tells them about Jesus and the Holy Spirit falls upon the gentiles - praise the Lord. If we have accepted the Lord Jesus as our Saviour, we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

I was born again when I was 11 but never really had any assurance of salvation and kept asking Jesus to come into my life. I never knew that I could be filled with the Holy Spirit because it was never preached at the church I went to. One Sunday evening a man preached at our church and told us how he had been filled with the Holy Spirit and it had changed his life. He asked people who wanted to be filled to

stay behind and he would pray for us.



He prayed for me and as he lay his hands on me I felt a warm surge go through my body. I felt wonderful and creation was more vivid and I had certain assurance that I was saved. The Bible suddenly opened up to me and I had new revelations of Jesus in the Word. I felt the presence in worship and wanted to really praise the Lord.

Now, we can't go by feelings because they can betray us. The world goes by feelings; their motto being ' If it feels good, do it '. Jan and I served God at a Pentecostal church in Tipton for many years and had lots of wonderful times in God's presence . We find that the more you put into God's work the more blessings you get.

I will just mention one such blessing on a Monday night in South Wales when I was leading worship at a meeting for pastors in the South Wales area. We had been there for meetings on Saturday and Sunday but had to be at work on Monday at 5 am. We could have said "Forget the Monday night meeting." but knew God wanted us there. We fought the fatigue and experienced a wonderful meeting. I was leading worship on a lovely Hammond organ and as the Welsh pastors sang 'How great thou art' I felt I was being lifted off the ground by the amazing presence of the Lord which filled the church as people fell down under the presence of the Lord.

It's fantastic to be in God's presence but I am afraid that unfortunately we still live in a fallen world and very often things go wrong. But, be encouraged , Jesus has promised to always be with us. Trust in his Word not in feelings, Amen.

Mike Parkes

HOPE

In the Easter Open Doors Hope of Easter Appeal they report about people like Suzan in northern Syria.

When she chose to follow Jesus, people in her Muslim community thought she should be killed.

“Some Muslim men came to my father, saying that his daughters were bad.” Said Suzan. *“They said we had a bad reputation and that we should be killed.”*

Suzan's decision to follow Jesus was considered particularly shameful for her Muslim family because she was a woman. Thankfully, Suzan's father refused to harm his daughters - but that was not the end of their persecution.

“I as out with my sister Maria.” Says Suzan. *“A group of men came to hurt us, to persecute us. We were afraid and both of us were crying. We were so afraid to be killed.”*

Amazingly, Jesus appeared to Suzan and told her not to be afraid - and the men dispersed.

“They even apologised.”* Said Suzan. *“That can only be God's work.”

This was not the end of Suzan's trouble. She had to flee the area because of the danger of further attacks.

Like so many Christian women in the Middle East, Suzan is persecuted because of her faith and vulnerable to 'honour attacks' because of her gender.

She was able to return home because, thanks to Open Doors supporters, she finds vital practical and spiritual support through a church run by Open Doors.

Interesting News in Barnabas Fund Prayer publication for March/April 2021

The lockdown in India last year has led to great blessing in some village Christian communities. Instead of meeting once a week in a big Sunday service, the Christians began to meet in small groups, each with its own leader—mostly new young leaders who had had no active role in the large-scale Sunday worship.

The small meetings enabled believers to draw close to the Lord in more authentic ways: the result was spiritual growth for the Christians and effective witness to non-Christians, with many giving their lives to Christ.

Give thanks to our God, who is in all things, works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Laughter

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.

Proverbs 17:22

Laughter

Author Barbara Johnson said, 'Laughter is like changing a baby's diaper. It doesn't permanently solve the problem, but it makes things more acceptable for a while.'

One day, comedian/author David Brenner was signing books. A young man handed him a newly purchased copy to be signed and said, 'I want to thank you for saving my life.'

Without giving it much thought, Brenner replied flippantly, 'That's okay.' But the young man stood his ground and said, 'No, I really mean it!'

Brenner stopped signing and looked at him. The young man continued: 'My father died. He was my best friend. I loved him and couldn't stop crying for weeks, so I decided to take my own life. The night I was going to do it, I happened to have the television on and you were hosting *The Tonight Show*. I listened to your opening monologue, and the next thing I knew I was laughing hysterically. I realised then that if I was able to laugh, I was able to live. So I want to thank you for saving my life.'

Humbled and grateful, Brenner shook his hand and said, 'No, I thank you.' The Bible says, 'A cheerful disposition is good for your health.'

Experts confirm that laughter boosts your immune system, enhances your memory and learning abilities, relieves tension, slows your pulse rate and blood pressure, releases endorphins that reduce pain, decreases anxiety and stress, puts people at ease, and brings unity. Furthermore, the effect lasts for eight to twelve hours. It promotes emotional healing, and best of all - it's fun.

That's why laughter is God's prescription for stress!

UCB Word for Today. 07/11/2020

A queue of men were standing at the Pearly Gates waiting to enter.

Overhead was a sign saying.

For Men Who Have Been Dominated By Their Wives.

The queue extended as far as the eye could see.

Close by there was another sign which said:

For Men who Have Never Been Dominated By Their Wives.

Just one man was standing underneath it. St Peter came over to him and asked,

"Why are you standing here?"

"I don't really know" he replied "except my wife told me to."



Some Handy Hints to keep you walking in step with God

Walking with God is an everyday action.
One that we intentionally make.

However, sometimes we can get so busy that we stop making time for God, or we think that because we have a busy day, we don't have the space for interacting with God. It's very easy to say, "I'm just too busy".

I know that I have been guilty of that in times of my life. One of my friends challenged me one day on my busyness and asked me how important God was to me. I told him that of course God is really important to me, but I just didn't know how to put God into my day.

My friend challenged me again, he said, "Steve, what does your day look like?" I walked him through the various meetings and work responsibilities and serving responsibilities I had and almost proudly stepped back and said, "See! I told you I was too busy for my time with God."

My friend looked back at me and again challenged me. He noted that I hadn't mentioned any mealtimes in my day. Surely, I eat? "Of course, I eat!" I replied, "I didn't think it was worth noting the essentials of life!"

My friend smiled at me and said gently, "Steve, isn't time with God an essential?" Here I knew God

was using my friend to speak to me.

Walking with God isn't an optional extra. Walking with God is an essential. Again, my friend challenged me, "Don't you pray for God to be your daily bread?" Of course, I do. "So why would you skip the most essential meal of your life...that with God?"

From that day onwards I have strived not to be too busy for God and each day I make small spaces throughout the day to follow my Spiritual Green Cross Code. Stop, Look and Listen.

In any day you can stop. In any given day, no matter how busy you are you can stop. Even for 5 minutes.

I've learnt pre-lockdown to do this in my car between meetings. I would drive to a car park or a lay by and stop. I would close my eyes and breathe slowly. I would stop and thank God for wherever I came from and thank God for wherever I was going. I would thank God in my stopping for the air I breathe as I kept breathing slowly.

In lockdown I don't do this in my car now. I do this wherever I am. I leave the room I was working in and take 5 minutes in another room and just stop. Breathe and give thanks. Then I look.

Again, pre Covid I would look around where I had parked. I would look at my phone, on both Facebook and the news and I would again speak to God. Just 5 minutes. I would give thanks for what I see on my phone, or quickly pray for whatever situations I would see in both of those applications. I would also look around, especially if I was in a lay by and pray for whatever area I found myself in.

Finally, I would listen. No more than 5 minutes. I would breathe slowly and ask God to speak to me, about anything I just prayed about or anything else in my day. I would simply breathe, wait and listen. And

sometimes I would hear God speaking to me. And sometimes I wouldn't hear His voice, but I would just know His peace.

15 minutes not just once a day but in between meetings and where I can. Stop. Look and Listen. I would do this often, because as my friend reminded me, if my relationship with God is essential, then I must make time for Him. I hope this helps. I encourage you all. Please, stop, look and listen. It'll do your relationship with God the world of good.

Pastor Steve



Banking Crisis Hits Japan.

Following the problems in the sub-prime lending market in America and the problems with covid world wide uncertainty has now hit Japan.

In the last 7 days the famous Origami Bank has folded, Sumo Bank has gone belly up and the Bonsai Bank announced plans to cut some of its branches.

It was announced that Karaoke Bank is up for sale and will likely go for a song.

Today shares in Kamikaze Bank was suspended after they nose-dived and 500 staff at Karate Bank got the chop.

Analysts report that there is something fishy going on at Sushi Bank where it is feared that customers may get a raw deal.

A finance spokesperson announced that the Origami Bank hopes their loss will only be on paper.

The Sumo Bank will help it's cause by selling stamps and the Bonsai Bank hope to nip their problems in the bud.

Only the Kamikaze Bank is expected to crash and a spokesperson for the Karaoke Bank claimed that 'They will survive'.

Riverside Mission News & Prayer

Some of Jacky Garbett's May edition.

Psalm 27 verse 1 says - The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?

The psalm continues in verses 13,14 - I am still confident of this. I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Let's use these verses in our prayers for these people and situations. Pray the LIGHT of the gospel, the LIGHT of Jesus 'will shine brightly. Pray that in every situation these people will know His strength and guiding as they wait on Him. Praise God that He always keeps His promises.

hope and kindness



Please continue to pray for Terry and Judi who are still here in the UK, and for good communication with the team in Kosele. Kenya which is still on the red travel list!

The number of covid cases in Kenya has been rising - please pray for the children and adults here in Kosele. Pray for those at the home / orphanage and for those at home with their families. Pray for protection and good health.

The school is closed at the moment till May 10th (this may change!!) though the leadership team at Hope and Kindness are still daily supporting the children and their families in the community. Pray that when the children return to school they will quickly settle into lessons, learning together, and begin to make up for all the time they have lost. Pray for patience and wisdom for the staff. This photo was taken on 2020, look at the children' faces as you pray for them. Each individual is precious to God.



Riverside Bewdley Elim Church's History

The foundation of an Elim Church in Bewdley was born in the early 1990s.

Kidderminster Elim Church's Senior Pastor at that time was Mike Reynolds and the church met in a building on Prospect Hill.

House Groups (now called Life Groups) met mid week and one of these was led by Harry and Pam Elliot at their home in Wribbenhall. About a dozen met who lived in and around Bewdley.

Harry and Pam shared with Pastor Mike that they felt Bewdley, based on their house group, should form a Bewdley Elim church in it's own rights. After much prayer it was agreed.

Important decisions were made.

- Before an official Elim Church could be agreed the house group would start to have **OUTREACH** meetings, midweek using a rented building.
- That the service would be 'low key', not as some might say 'happy clappy' and traditional hymns would be sung. That the Word would be preached
- Initially hundreds of leaflets about the new church would be distributed by hand to all the houses in Wribbenhall.

At this early stage Evangelist George Millar and his wife Hazel, who live in Bewdley, assisted Harry and Pam.

The first Outreach was on Wednesday 22nd April 1992 at Wribbenhall Community Centre. David & Angela Clarke's house group from Kidderminster dedicated their group to help Harry and Pam. At that first meeting 30 people attended.

Every Sunday morning Harry & David's House Groups continued to attend the normal Sunday Kidderminster Elim church service.

Throughout the rest of 1992 mid week meetings were held every Thursday at Wribbenhall Community Centre.

Over this period George Millar preached about every other month including, on three occasions, holding a Healing Service.

Other speakers were Pastor Mick Reynolds, Evangelist Neil Stevenson, Melrose Millar, Pastor William O'Leary and South African Oliver Raper who at one time worked with Evangelist Reinhard Bonke for Christ for All Nations.

In July a BBQ was organised one evening and at Christmas they held a Carol Service.

Linda Brant's memories at that time.

We were all stretched into roles we didn't think we could do because there was a need for somebody to do it.

David Clarke and Harry Elliott sometimes led worship. I played keyboards, not having touched them for 20 (yes twenty) years.

At one time we had 20 teenagers in the youth group that Paul Guille ran.

1993

On the first three Thursdays in January the midweek meetings continued at Wribbenhall Community Hall.

During the 1992 the Outreach had grown and in association with Mike Reynolds, George Millar the leaders of Elim officially agreed to announce on 31st January 1993 that

Bewdley Christian Fellowship was recognised as an Elim church.

The first church meeting was on Sunday 30th May 1993. They met at Bewdley Youth Club that was opposite the garage on Kidderminster Road. The building originally had been a former school and is now private houses.

Wribbenhall Community Centre

On the 6th of June the church started to meet every Sunday morning at the Community Centre.

The midweek OUTREACH meetings continued on Thursday evenings together with Harry & Pam and David & Angela's house groups.

In 1994 Harry and Pam decided to retire to Padstow in Cornwall.

The church held a retirement party for them and by that time the number of people at Bewdley Christian fellowship had increased to 80.

The original photo which, is about 200 x 300 mm (8 x 12"), hangs in Riverside's Dog Lane office.

A copy of the photo is on the next page.

Linda has tried to identify all those in the photo and if any reader can identify anyone whose name is a ? , Please let me know.

Bewdley Christian Fellowship 1994



Seated row.

Hazel Miller - Child? - Sandra (Melvyn's Sister), Pat Newey, Harry & Pam Elliott, Greta Bottrell, Child is Michael Neufeld, Child, Jacky Garbett & her son Matthew

Standing

Glen & Carole Caulwell, Barbara Guille, ? Steve Harris, Sue Stokes, Janice Young, Doreen Jones, Eileen Jones, Mr Bottrell, Vicky & Sarah Webb (Now Reynolds), Deborah Guille, Melvyn Garbett, Yoko Kurimoto, ??, ??,

Back Row

Man in cap, Paul Guille ?, ??, Tony in Glasses, Tony's wife Lyn, Barbara Guilles Dad, Lady, Chris Neufeld, Man, Man, Angela Clarke, Bald Man, Deborah Casewell, Tall child, Hugh Gregory, Chris Poulson (Behind Doreen), Paul Walker, lady, Elaine Webb, David Neufeld, Me (Linda Brant), Chris Webb, Christopher Neufeld (Tall Man), lady, Kate Neufeld, Lizzie Neufeld, David Neufeld (Behind Yoko), lady, Anne Jellis, Chris Newey, Terry Stokes.

You Never Walk Alone - A BIG THANK YOU



Over the last few weeks several “**Riversiders**” have shared a 5 minute thought on the topic of ‘How do I Know I Never Walk Alone?’. Before that thoughts on ‘Time for Hope’ were shared. Every thought was different and many different bible verses and passages were shared.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed over the months. I have found them thought provoking and encouraging, truly proof that we are not alone.

Yes, everyone shared that Jesus is always with us and our hope is in Him. They also show that we are all members of the family of God.

Although we may not live near to one another or may not have seen one another for months, these video and audio messages assure us that we are not alone. We have each other - we are scattered but together.

Thank you Riversiders. Thank you Steve & Liz.

I am always so encouraged when I read about Moses and Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:8

The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. (Also in Joshua 1)

In Matthew 28:16-20 the passage we know as the great commission, Jesus says;

And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

Jennifer



There was a Scottish decorator and painter named Smokey MacGregor who was interested in making a pound in anyway he could so he thinned down his paint to make it go further. For most of the time he got away with it.

A local church decided to have a big restoration project on the outside of it's building. Smokey put in a bid for the painting and because his price was so low he got the contract.

He set up his scaffolding, planks etc. and on buying the paint immediately thinned it down as usual with Turps. Whilst he was on the scaffolding painting and with the job nearly done there was a loud clap of thunder, the sky opened and very heavy rain poured down washing the thinned down paint from all over the church and at the same time knocking Smokey off the scaffolding where he landed among the grave stones and puddles of useless thinned paint.

Smokey was no fool and he realised this was a judgement from the Almighty so he got down on his knees and cried “Oh God, forgive me. What should I do?

A mighty voice of thunder spoke..... “Repaint, Repaint and thin no more.”

Josies Picture

Be sure to seek the Lord at the start of each day.

When I want a cup of tea I have to boil the electric kettle first. I fill it to the required level and plug it into the socket on the wall then press the switch down. It is a very elegant kettle with its glowing blue light and steam rushes out of the spout as I pour the water into my cup. It needs a powerful surge of electricity in order to achieve this.

I am reminded of our need to ‘plug’ into Jesus at the start of each day.

We cannot live our lives successfully without His power working in us. Without being connected to Him we struggle each day, becoming more and more exhausted as we do everything in our own strength. In reality we may not therefore have been doing His will at all. He says we can do all things through Him who gives us strength, but only if we are ‘plugged’ in.

“Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always. (Psalm 105:4)

Can you hear me?

I recently had my annual physical check up at the doctors and given the OK.


As I left the doctor said to me “Do you have any concerns?” I said “Yes. I think my wife is going deaf but she says she is OK and refuses to have a hearing test.”

The doctor replied I have a suggestion. The next time you see your wife at the other end of a room with her back to you go to the opposite end then, facing her back, ask her a question. If she doesn't answer walk quietly towards her and repeat the same question. If she doesn't answer go up behind her and ask the same question again. If she doesn't answer you will know she has a problem.

The next day in our living room I saw her sewing and facing the window so I did what the doctor advised and said, “Darling, what are we having for lunch today.” Complete silence. I went half way towards her and repeated the same question. Complete silence. I then went behind her and said again, “Darling, what are we having for lunch today.”

She turned round and said to me, “I have already told you twice, we are having sausage and mash.”

If you wish to give a donation to Riverside these are the various ways.



GIVING AT RIVERSIDE ELIM

Online giving through the Riverside website:
www.riversideelim.com/giving2

Cheques made payable to:
EFGA Re Riverside Bewdley

To find out about Gift Aid email:
liz@riversideelim.com



GIVING AT RIVERSIDE ELIM

SMART PHONE GIVING
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Your text is charged at your providers standard rate



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