

Issue 14

February 2023

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At the AGM in
November I shared
some verses that we
believe are really
important to us as a
church.



Hosea 10:12 is key to us moving forward but two
truths stick out of this verse for me.

1. We need to break up our unploughed ground.
2. We need to seek God whilst we do this.

Interesting that the verses don't say that God
will break up our unploughed ground – but we have
to!

Sometimes we look to God to do everything for
us, but in relationship everything is two ways. God
wants us to tend the soil of our lives so that He can
plant good seed into us. But breaking up
unploughed ground takes time, intentionality, work,
and effort, but without it we may never see the
amazing fruit God has for us in our lives.

Let us be a people who keep breaking up our
unploughed ground, so that God can do what He
needs to do in our lives.

Pastor Steve



A belated Happy New Year and Spring is round the corner.

I am sorry for the delay of this edition of From the Waters Edge being published. Due to, what I call Winteritus, many of those who had planned to send me articles had challenges and unable to get them to me.

However I was blessed when others, at short notice, came up trumps to enable me to publish this edition.

In Nehemiah 8:10 it says, *“The joy of the Lord is your strength.”* This verse is from the Old Testament, but it’s still relevant today. The joy of the Lord comes from Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and it has the power to give us strength in difficult times.

When we’re faced with trials, it’s easy to become discouraged. But if we focus on the joy of the Lord instead, that joy can empower us to keep going. It can give us hope and a sense of purpose when nothing else seems to make sense.

I include jokes in these publications because it is a strong medicine. The medical profession states that laughter strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. Humour lightens your burdens and also helps you release anger and forgive sooner.

Les the Ed



We had a great Christmas at Riverside in 2022.

We did 5 Christmas on the Road events where we engaged with nearly 150 people from the community and were able to not only have fun and celebrate Christmas together but share the true meaning of Christmas and bring the gospel to peoples communities. This was a lot of fun and a lot of the communities we engaged with seemed to enjoy it too!

Not only that but we had well over 100 people turn up to Jubilee Gardens on Christmas eve to sing carols and hear the Christmas story be told. It was a real joy to be singing those carols together and be glorifying God together.

We also did our first Riverside Community Christmas which saw over 100 people gather at St George’s Hall. Here we sang together, played games together, crafted together, talked together, ate and drank together and heard the gospel together. There was a great mix of people from Riverside and the wider community here and it is an event we look forward to developing together as we head into 2023!

Pastor Steve

A New Year Message from Liz Craven



During the last few years whilst caring for Val I was often to be heard singing a chorus called 'Faithful one'. The chorus includes this line
"all through the storm your love is the anchor".

I used to sing "all through the **STORM**" with great gusto and always noticed the word storm in any choruses we sang at church.

Having lost my dear friend Val in October of this year I was rather dreading December and all that lay ahead.

However my nephew Keith (55) had other ideas. As well as working full time he is the sole carer for his wife who has M.S. Well Keith had a heart attack and needed some help with Sandra. So..... Auntie Liz to the rescue. Keith had a stent fitted and is now back at work (amazing) but that call for help was timely for me. Spending time with family was restorative and being needed a great tonic.

Now my Christmas plans took on a new urgency as all my arrangements needed reorganising. So in the midst of all these goings on I sat mid December reading Romans chapter 15 and I was drawn to these words in verse 13

"May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that through the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope".

When I finished the chapter I revisited that verse and thought how lovely those words were and promised to remember them!

The next day I visited Angela Clark and she gave me my Christmas card with this very text splashed all over the front of it! That made me pay attention! Within a day or two the Hope and Kindness fortnightly prayer letter appeared and concluded with the same verse. I asked Ange if she reckoned this was a 'Christmas' verse but she didn't think so.

Then my brother sent me the exact same card and I think I finally realised God was trying to tell me something!!

This is my verse for 2023. I have not understood how I have survived Christmas and the New Year with such a cheerful disposition and the only explanation is the power of the Holy Spirit abounding me in hope. Hope for today hope for tomorrow and hope for eternity. Unseen and yet certain.

It dawned on me today on the way to the first Wednesday church of the new year that as I sang "all through the storm your love is the answer, my **HOPE** is in you alone".

The Lord has changed my storm into **HOPE.**

My emphasis was no longer on storm but on hope. Abounding Hope with all its uncertainties when powered by the Holy Spirit is all I need right now.

So while I consider my future and recover from my past I will abound in hope.

May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace so that through the power of the Holy Spirit you will abound in hope.

Romans 15:13 (ESV)

Are You a Lert?

The Country Needs Lerts.



On 7th December 1940 the Japanese attacked, unexpectedly, the U.S.A's Naval Base at Pearl Harbour in the Pacific.

At the end of the attack 19 Battleships were sunk at their moorings, hundreds of aircraft destroyed and 2,000 people were dead. The American military were unprepared even though there were severe tensions between them and the Japanese. They were not **alert**.

It led to the U.S.A. entering World War II having first ignored the danger to the world of Japanese & Nazi military intentions.

In both the Old and New Testaments the word **alert** is often mentioned. In the New Testament Jesus taught his disciples about the end times Matthew 24:4-5

"Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen

Jesus went on to explain in Mark 13:33

Be on guard! Be alert ! You do not know when that time will come.

Paul also wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

But you brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a

thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.

In the present time we also need to be alert. The apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:8

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in your faith....

No, we are not living in Africa where lions roam and watch and wait, then pounce on their unsuspecting prey and another creature becomes the lion's lunch! But our enemy the devil comes in many guises and is **ALWAYS** on the prowl.

As Christians we are in a spiritual battle, not a physical one and if we are not **alert** we become the devil's lunch!

This teaching is picked up again by Paul when he urges us to be strong and put on the full armour of God so we can stand against the wiles of the devil and urges us in Ephesians 6.18

...to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.



I LOVE our Sunday morning spaces, but we are nearly full.

In 2023 we will be trialling something and calling it Café Church for want of a better word. So what is it?

Once a month on the last Sunday of the month there will be a service at PM on a Sunday. This will be church light. A place where people can come and ask their questions, delve into the Bible and grow community.

There won't be any sung worship. Worship will be speaking about what you're thankful for and giving thanks together. The word WILL be the same as the morning but a 10 minute version of it. Instead there will be someone who shares for 10 minutes based on the main scripture of the morning and the bulk of the time is reading the Bible and asking questions on tables. There will be a craft table for children so families can come and bring their children and this is a chance for people to ask questions, read the Bible, grow in the Bible together and talk together.

This will be an excellent space to bring people exploring faith to and a great way of developing the Sunday morning space, providing another opportunity which may then provide more room on a Sunday morning.

It will run on the last Sunday of the month at 5PM. There will still be a service on that Sunday morning too for people to come to as well. I believe that God doesn't want us to replicate spaces but for us to develop spaces where we can reach different people with different needs. This is another opportunity to do that for each other and another space where we can INVITE the community!

Please, if you're walking with people who want to know more about faith, or just have no faith, invite and bring them! You may think they're not interested but please, we don't need to be a people who say no for others. Let's be a people of INVITE and walk with them. Remember, people who you're inviting won't walk into a room without you usually. So invite and COME WITH THEM. Jesus walks WITH us and we need to be a people WALKING WITH OTHERS!!!

Pastor Steve



Pastor Steve's AGM Report LOOKING FORWARDS

I mentioned in the AGM report that Liz and I have been here over 3 and a half years. At this point Liz and I are the second longest serving pastors that Riverside has had over the last 30 years. And whilst, in this period we have been in lockdown for 2 years we have managed to launch a lot of things. New lifegroups, discipleship courses, the drop in has developed, Just Love @ Clementines and Christmas on the Road amongst other things. That's a lot to have started and consolidate in a time when we have had little time to gather.

This has been intentional. I believe Bewdley and our communities have needed to see that no matter what is happening in the world the body of Christ needs to be continually reaching out. This town and our communities need to know that Jesus is for them and is open to them, but if we stop reaching and engaging then they will never know that. We have been intentional in reaching and I believe as we move forward together we **MUST** keep this idea front and centre.

I believe God's calling us to be a people who persist and are consistent. I shared this with some of the ministry leaders of the church recently and there was a real sense in that meeting that God is leading us into a season of persistence and consistency. To be a people who are **PERSISTENT AND CONSISTENT**. These are not glamorous words. But these are essential words if we are to be a church that is Christ centred, a church that cares for each other, a church that reaches with compassion and a church that connects to each other and God. Persistence and consistency.

There is a verse that we believe as a leadership that God has given us for this coming season, and it is one that we have prayed over as a leadership and will continue to pray over and speak in to in the coming months. This verse is Hosea 10:12, which says,

*Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love,
and break up your unploughed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD,
until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.*

We believe that this is a season, where instead of just launching 100 new things we need to pause, take a breather, focus on being persistent and consistent with what we are doing. But that isn't all. We believe, following these verses and our prayer and conversations together as a leadership that in this season we need to dig in together. Again, digging in is not a glamorous job but one that needs to be done if we are to prepare the fields for the harvest. As a church, instead of moving straight into the new season we will be digging in together.

Not only do we believe we have heard this clear direction as a leadership on this and in conversation with some of the ministry leaders, but there have been numerous words spoken across the western world at this time that we are being led into a season where there will not only be a sifting in the church, but a shaking of the world. A shaking where the things of this world will greatly shift but that shaking will also affect the church world wide. If we don't make time to not only persist and be consistent but if we don't make time to dig in to God too as the body of Christ together, our roots could be shaken by this too. We need to be ready, we need to be digging in together.

A shaking where the things of this world will greatly shift but that shaking will also affect the church world wide. If we don't make time to not only persist and be consistent but if we don't make time to dig in to God too as the body of Christ together, our roots could be shaken by this too. We need to be ready, we need to be digging in.

If we are going to sow seeds of the kingdom of God effectively, especially in the coming seasons of shaking and sifting, our ground needs to be dug and ready. If the ground isn't ploughed when we sow we will never see the fruits of unfailing love in our lives or as a church.

We need to be a people SEEKING THE LORD, individually and together and in doing so we will be breaking up our unploughed ground. If a field isn't ploughed there will be no harvest in the next season. If we want to see God's harvest in the next season we have to do the unglamorous job of breaking up our unploughed ground. When we do this and persist we are consistent in seeking Him I believe as a church we WILL see God shower His righteousness on us and we will see the fruit of His unfailing love. BUT we have to DIG IN, PERSIST AND BE CONSISTENT.

These are not glamorous words. But these are essential words if we are to be a church that is Christ centred, a church that cares for each other, a church that reaches with compassion and a church that connects to each other and God. Persistence and consistency.

Turn over to page 3

What does this mean?

It means we are going to persist with all the ministries we are running and seek to be consistent in ensuring they are run and keep reaching, continually. We will be pushing small groups again again and again. If you're not engaging with other Christians outside of a Sunday, why? It is essential to our walk. We need to persist and be consistent. Does life and the world keep pushing in so we push God to one side or meeting other Christians to one side. In this time and in this world this is something I believe we need to prioritise. And hear me... this isn't about bums on seats...we just need to be a people that gathers somewhere and reach somehow...will we?

So, please engage with the opportunities we have presented before you. I believe through both persistence and consistency we will see the breakthrough of God, just as we have in the community drop in.

Also, to help you to do this we will be holding 2 digging in weeks in January and February. For me these are really important weeks, where we need to put time in our diary and dig in together. These will be spaces to help you in digging in and breaking up your unploughed ground. In some of these spaces we will be equipping you and helping you to dig in. In some of these spaces we will simply, as a gathered people, we digging in to God collectively together, something I believe we really need to do.

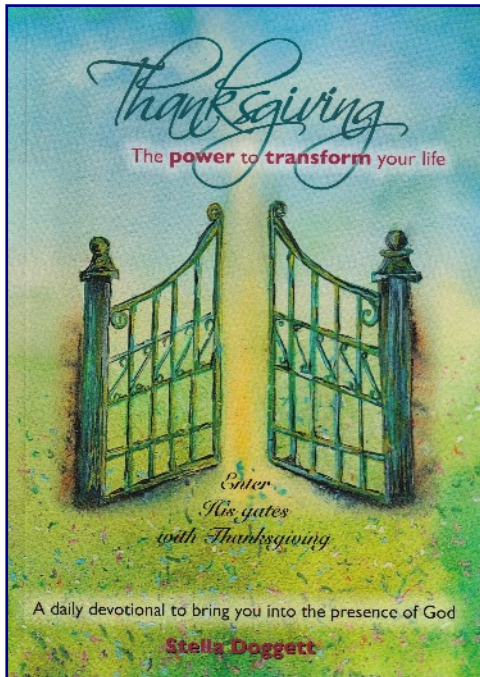
There will be calls to fast, prayer meetings, worship meetings, communion sessions and even some teaching to help you further dig in and break up your unploughed ground. This is something that we need to prioritise and make spaces for. We know everyone has different rhythms and people have work so we will run sessions in the day and repeat the same sessions in the evening for people who have daytime commitments. This is something I believe that if you call yourself a part of Riverside we need to be engaging in together and a DIGGING IN CALENDAR will come out for you to help in this. Will you dig in and break up your unploughed ground as we walk into the next season with us? If we want to see the breakthrough of God I believe we must be a people who does this.

Pastor Steve

Thanksgiving

The **POWER** to transform your life

This is the title of a book written by my sister Stella. After leaving school and university she trained as a school teacher. Later she went to Bible College, became a counsellor and life skills trainer.



She has been and still is involved in Christian leadership pastoral care, preaching and prophetic ministry. She loves to encourage God's people in their walk with the Lord Jesus. She and her husband Mark have a retreat in the Midlands where they are currently part of a missional community.

Stella says "Having posted several blogs during the 2020 Covid 'Lockdowns', I asked the Lord what He was wanting to say to His people in 2021. I was surprised and excited that He wanted to release a spirit of gratitude over His people. He wanted to shift the mindset of His followers to embrace gratitude as a lifestyle."

This book contains 91 "thoughts" about giving thanks to God. It will be followed by 3 others to complete 365 thoughts for a year of daily readings. The days are not dated so can be read in your own time scale.

Psalm 100 says "Enter His Gates with thanksgiving and His courts with Praise".

LETS DO IT!

The second book in this four part series will be available early Spring 2023

Jennifer Dutfield

| Seeking God Devotion |

Why don't you spend a week simply seeking God?
Below are some scriptures for each day, a prayer to pray and in italics something you can do off the back of the prayer.

Day 1 – Read 1 Chronicles 16:11

Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

God I need you. Your strength is greater than anything in this world can provide. Please, I look to you and pause, please fill me with the strength I need to face the day. I need you. Amen.

Why don't you write a list of all the places you know you're going to today, people you plan to see or contact and things you want to do today and then for each pause over each one and ask God to give you the strength for whatever is required in each of them.

Day 2 – Read Jeremiah 29:11-13

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.
You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

God, thank you that you do have a plan for my life. Sorry when I put my limits or timeframe's in your plan. Please Lord, I come to you, I seek you, fill me with your patience and help me to enjoy my present with you now instead of looking always at what is to come. Amen.

Why don't you schedule 3-5 times today where you can stop for 5-10 minutes, be still and seek God, simply enjoying the peace of His presence for those moments as you seek Him?

Day 3 – Read Psalm 63:1

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you;
I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

God, I need you. I need you like I need water and food. I long for you. Please meet my need today. Amen.

Do you feel desperate for anything today for God to do and break in to. Spend some time calling out to Him about this.

Seeking God Devotion

Day 4 – Read Psalm 9:9-10

The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.
Those who know your name trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those
who seek you.

God, thank you for always being a source of safety and security for me. Thank you
for being reliable and faithful. God I seek you today, I need your safety and
security. Help me Lord. Amen.

*What are you afraid of today? Write it down, pray over it, acknowledge out loud that
God is bigger than it and throw this in the bin. Do this for all your fears today.*

Day 5 – Read Psalm 14:2

The LORD looks down from heaven on all mankind
to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

Lord, thank you that you're looking for me always. You're not distracted and
ignoring me. You're waiting for me to seek you. Thank you for your attention!
Amen.

*Simply spend some time this morning looking to God and thanking Him for who He
is, for His love and for His attention.*

Day 6 – Psalm 119:10

I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.
Lord, thank you for your word. Thank you that your word leads me in your ways,
so that as I keep seeking you I know how to be obedient and live my life.
Please lead me through your word on how to live.

*Spend some time today simply reading the Bible. Either continue your reading plan
or if you have none try reading the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and ask
God to reveal to you if there is anything you need to do today to be walking more
His way.*

Day 7 – Read Lamentations 3:25-26

The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him;
it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

God, thank you for wanting to spend time with me. Fill me with your patience so I
will keep waiting on and with you. Amen

*Again, schedule some times of quiet today with the only agenda to seek and
wait for Him. Write down what you hear!*

MONK'S TRANSLATION

A young monk when arriving at a monastery was assigned to helping other monks in copying old canons and laws of the church by hand.

He soon noticed that all the monks were copying from copies, not the original manuscripts so he asked to see the head abbot. He pointed out to the head abbot that if just one monk made even a small error in the first copy, it would never be noticed and the same error would be in all subsequent copies.

The head abbot replied, "We have been copying from copies for centuries, but your observation makes sense, my son."

After the young monk left him the head abbot went down into the dark caves underneath the monastery where the original manuscripts were held in a locked vault that hadn't been opened for hundreds of years.

Hours went by and the monks wondered where the old head abbot was.

The young monk was also so worried he began searching the monastery and eventually found the head abbot banging his head against the wall and wailing,

"We missed the **R**!" - "We missed the **R**!" - "We missed the **R**!"

His forehead was all bloody and bruised. He was crying uncontrollably.

The young monk asked the head abbot, 'What's wrong father?'

With a choking voice he replied.

'The word was **CELEBRATE!!!**



A Dad said he'd make a deal with his son, "You bring your grades up from a C to B average, study your Bible a little and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about getting you a car" The boy thought about that for a moment, decided he'd settle for the offer and they agreed on it.

After about six weeks Dad said to his son, "You've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

His Dad replied, "Did you also notice that they all walked everywhere they went?"

Eating in the 1950s

- Pasta was not eaten.
- Curry was a surname.
- A takeaway was a mathematical problem.
- A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.
- Crisps were plain. The only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.
- Rice was only eaten as a milk pudding.
- A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.
- Brown bread was something only the poor ate.
- Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.
- Tea was made a teapot using tea leaves and never green.
- Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days and was regarded as being white gold. Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.
- Fish didn't have fingers.
- Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi.
- None of us had ever heard of a yoghurt.
- Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
- People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.
- Indian restaurants were only found in India.
- Cooking outside was called camping.
- Seaweed was not a recognised food.
- "Kebab" was not even a word, never mind a food.
- Prunes were medicinal.
- Surprisingly, muesli was readily available, it was called cattle feed.
- Water came out of a tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock!
- And we never had on our table in the 50s and 60s were elbows or mobile phones.

A few One Liner Jokes

- "A man walks into a chemist's and says, 'Can I have a bar of soap, please?' The chemist says, 'Do you want it scented?' And the man says, 'No, I'll take it with me now.'"
- My wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.
- I was wondering why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger, but then it hit me.
- I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.
- Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician.
- Never trust atoms; they make up everything.

Bewdley's History Part 3

River Transport

The River Severn was vital to the economy of the town. Trows were used to transport goods to and from Bewdley. These boats had a flat bottom to sail in shallow water and a hinged mast so they could pass under bridges. The trows could carry up to 100 tons of cargo which was covered in canvas for protection against water and weather damage. In addition to sail power, up to 12 men called **bowhauliers** would haul the trow up the river from the tow path.

Bowhauliers were often hired at the Mug House on Severn Side North for 2s 6d (12½ p) per day and two good meals as their wages. The deal was sealed with a mug of ale.

including Rivalries existed between the bowhauliers of Bewdley, Worcester and Gloucester. Bewdley bowhauliers were frequently attacked and forced to pay illegal tolls.



Over the years many Industries developed around Bewdley including -

Pewter

In 1697 **Christopher Bancks**, a pewterer from Wigan settled in Bewdley. His business continued under various names until the late 19th century. Bewdley became an important business centre for it's pewterware and became famous world wide. Over half it's production was used in Britain.

Pewter production ended in the 1830's when cheaper materials such as brass became widely available.

Bewdley's History Part 3

John Duncomb set up his own pewter business in Birmingham in the early 1700s. In 1720, he established a new pewter business in Bewdley which became the largest concern in the trade. The firm continued to flourish through the mid-18th century under John's son **Stynt**. He died in 1767 and left his business to his nephew, **John Ingram**.

Ingram & Hunt

John Ingram was born in 1731 and was apprenticed to his uncle, Synt Duncumb. He later went into partnership with his brother-in-law **Charles Hunt**.

To the right.

A photo of a 9 ½ " dish made by Ingram & Hunt.



Around 1807, Ingram & Hunt's business passed to **Crane & Stinton**, and then onto John Carruthers Crane. He ran it until his retirement in 1838, which marked the end of large scale pewter production in Bewdley.

To the left.

A photo of a spire flagon made by William Banks in 1780.

Capping

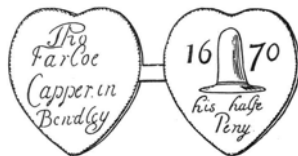
Bewdley was an important centre for cap making. Over 160 craftsmen are known to have worked as cappers in the town between 1520 and 1855. The caps were usually knitted from wool and were widely worn between the 15th and 18th centuries.

Trade Tokens

Trade tokens were issued by traders because there was a lack of coinage in the late 17th century.

There were 2 different tokens issued by Bewdley cappers

On the left was one issued by Walter Palmer. The reverse of the coin shows an image of a cap. On the right a cappers token.



Bewdley's History Part 3

Horn Working

The hornworking business was a by-product of the thriving butchering trade in Bewdley and was well established by the 17th century. The local tanneries and butchers shops provided a plentiful supply of the raw material for the industry - cattle horn.



Horn is a useful material - it is a natural substance which can be heated and reshaped, rather like a modern plastic. Local traders used horn to make a variety of household goods. Spoons, cups, drinking horns and tobacco boxes were all very popular. Although the process of horn-working was a smelly one, horn products were keenly sought after by both individuals and industries.

In the 19th century, a local business, **G.J.Humpherson and Sons**, adapted an old snuff mill at Tickenhill to cut the teeth of horn combs which were in great demand.

Bewdley was very successful in the making and selling of horn leaves. Many surrounding areas needed them to make lanterns or "lant horns" as they were then known. They were translucent and resistant to the heat of a candle.

G.J.Humpherson & Sons Horn Works, Bewdley was established in 1749. The business moved to Gloucester in 1912, where it took on the name of Abbey Horn Works. The



Humpherson's hornworks in the late 19th century.

Steve and Liz were invited in November to attend a Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue service awards evening on behalf of the church.

Riverside Elim were awarded with the Chairman's Certificate of Commendation for the support we gave to the emergency services during the floods in Bewdley in January 2021 and February 2022.

During the floods we opened up the back room of the church which the emergency services and Environment Agency used 24/7 during the flood peaks.

This was all aided by lots of you providing hot meals, cakes and other food goodies as the staff pulled long shifts in helping our community and also in you all being flexible and accommodating to them as some of the Dog Lane building was not as accessible.

Thank you all for helping us to provide this service to them and as this is written we are hosting the teams once again during this most recent flood barrier deployment.



Let God take the Ordinary and create something Extraordinary

You probably know the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarepath.

In 1 Kings 17 God tells Elijah to go to Zarepath, where he will meet a widow who will give him some food. He goes and meets the lady who says she has only enough flour and oil to make a last meal for herself and her son, that they 'may eat and die.' She is desperate but Elijah tells her not to be afraid; to trust him and make some bread, for him, and then for herself and her son. Elijah then gives her God's promise that the flour and oil will not run out until the rains come again.

This happens, just as Elijah had said - as she continues to use the flour and oil, they never come to an end. There is always flour in the jar, and oil in the jug. I wonder how this lady felt during this time? When she first met Elijah and he told her God's promises?

Her needs were met, maybe because of her compassion on Elijah, her obedience to his request, maybe her trust in God's promise to her.

Ordinary flour and oil became an extraordinary supply of flour and oil. They continued to bring life and feed this family.

This is a reminder to us - that God promises to meet our needs, and He keeps his promises. Maybe he will use the ordinary to do something extraordinary for us.

I think of the work of our local foodbanks - giving more and more, meeting the needs of local people.

Think about the OCC shoebox gifts - ordinary shoeboxes but they become an extraordinary tool in the hands of pastors and churches, and national OCC leadership teams.

There is the amazing story of a small church in Moldova, not far from the Ukrainian border that was given a delivery of shoeboxes for all the village children, and through generosity, love, and prayer, this church grew from 8 to over 100 in 3 years. (and I have been there!!)

Think about the local ministry of Riverside church through RiverBabes, the Drop-In Coffee Morning, the Youth work and Wednesday Church. Ordinary events run by ordinary people but through which God is doing extraordinary things.



Let God take the Ordinary and create something Extraordinary

Let me share another story with you. [Kwale's Story](#)



This is the story of a boy called Kwale who lives in Tanzania, with his parents, in a very poor area of their town. In Tanzania children are not allowed to attend school if they do not have shoes.

This was a problem for Kwale as the time came at the age of 11 / 12 when his shoes had fallen apart, and his mum could not afford to buy him new ones. Poor Kwale suffered the ridicule and taunts of the other children, and even some of the teachers in the school.

His mother encouraged him to pray, and ask God to provide him with a pair of shoes. Mum prayed, Kwale prayed and his Mum encouraged him always to not lose hope, to keep on trusting that God would provide. Kwale began to lose hope however, and his heart began to turn away from God, but his mum kept on praying and believing.

One day when he went to church with his mother, the children were all very surprised to find that this was to be a very special morning, when all the children were to receive a gift. A huge pile of boxes was waiting for them, and yes, each child went home excitedly with their very own shoebox gift.

When Kwale arrived home, he and his mum opened the box, and yes, I am sure you have guessed the happy ending to this story! There in the box was a pair of new shoes, and of course, because God is a good God, the shoes were the right size for Kwale. You can imagine the joy that this brought both for Kwale and for his mother. Kwale's heart was turned back towards God in thankfulness, and he gave his life to God. Kwale's father was so affected by what had happened and by God's love and faithfulness, that he too became a Christian.

Look, see, what God will do when you give him your ordinary, and let him create something extraordinary.

Prayer changes things!

Jacky Garbett

Part 3. How Well do you know your Bible?

Question 5. What was the name of PHANUEL'S daughter?

Question 6. What is the name of the individual Paul stated "For he risked his life for the work of Christ and was at the point of death while doing for me what you couldn't do from far away"?

The answers will be in issue 15.

Answers to Autumn Issue on How Well do you know your Bible

Question 3. Where in the Bible is a Gentile ruler said to be anointed.

Answer

Isaiah 45-1 This is what the LORD says to to **Cyrus**, his anointed one, whose right hand he will empower. Before him, mighty kings will be paralysed with fear. Their fortress gates will be opened, never to be shut again.

Question 4. Who was the prophet that another prophet foretold would die that year because he had preached rebellion against the Lord?

Answer

Jeremiah:28:19-15/17 Then the prophet Jeremiah said to **Hananiah** the prophet, "Listen, Hananiah! The Lord has not sent you, yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies. Therefore this is what the Lord says: 'I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against the Lord.' "

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