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Ukraine Crisis Update



CONTENTS

- 3 MY PERSPECTIVE**
War
- 4 UKRAINE**
An update on what is happening and how we can help
- 8 BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES**
New online classes
- 9 FAMILY NEWS**
 - Great Barr Bible Seminar
 - Growth in Kirkcaldy
- 10 AROUND THE WORLD**
 - Ghana post covid experience
- 11 DIRECTORY UPDATE**
 - Leeds
 - Leytonstone (London)
 - Luton
 - Great Barr (Birmingham)
- 13 APPEAL UPDATE**
 - Cebu typhoon relief
- 14 NOTICES**
- 15 DIARY OF EVENTS**
- 16 THE FINAL WORD**
15th-23rd April



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Above: Ukraine war refugee by Lola Anamon from pixabay.com



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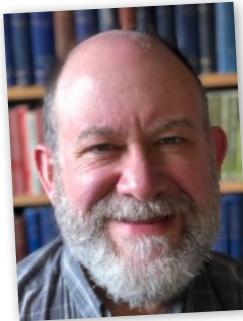
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MY PERSPECTIVE



There's
a war
going
on

War

You can't watch any newscast just now without seeing the war in Ukraine and the devastating effect it is having on the Ukrainian people. We realise that this war is also affecting our brothers and sisters in Christ in Ukraine as well, both in their being displaced and in their lives being threatened.

When I see the bombing, devastation, and loss of life, I am reminded of a song by Edwin Starr that was popular when I was growing up, which was an anti-war song. Perhaps you remember it as well. Here are some of the lyrics.

*War – what is it good for?
Absolutely nothing!*

*War, I despise
'Cause it means destruction of innocent lives.*

*It ain't nothing but a heart-breaker
Friend only to The Undertaker.
War – it's an enemy to all mankind.*

*Life is much too short and precious
To spend fighting wars each day.
War can't give life
It can only take it away.*

As far as this war is concerned, as well as most human conflicts, these lyrics so well apply. As we look at what is happening in Ukraine we can well ask what is the purpose of this? Why the aggression? Why the animosity towards this small country by a huge country? How will it all end?

As much as I have come to despise war and the effect it has on defenceless people, there is a war we need to be concerned about and taking an active

role in fighting. Paul wrote about our lives in terms of being at war.

"Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand." (Ephesians 6:11-13 NIV)

There is a war going on that we all need to be involved in. It isn't a war against people but a war against Satan and his forces. This is a conflict in which we cannot afford to lose ground – we must stand and fight, using the weapons and armour that God gives us: truth, righteousness, the good news of peace, faith, salvation, God's word, and prayer (Ephesians 6:14-18). In physical conflicts these would not be regarded as useful or effective, but in our spiritual conflicts these are the weapons and armour that will defend us and allow us to be victorious.

Notice that the only offensive weapon is "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*". We should then be asking, "how sharp is our sword?" How well do we know God's word? Can we effectively use it to defeat whatever Satan throws at us? And don't underestimate the power of prayer! "*With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*"

Jon



For years I have maintained that every Christian votes twice a week about the church and about their faith. First of all, they vote with their feet by actually attending as often as possible. Secondly, they vote with their wallet; perhaps the widow's mite may have to apply but the desire to give is there.

Over the past month the British Churches of Christ have voted and demonstrated their hate for war and their love of their brothers and sisters in Ukraine. Daily I have received emails and phone calls from people wanting to know what is happening and how they can give. Christians and their friends want to open up their homes to invite strangers in. Those who are unknown to us right now are our guests and friends we have just not yet had a chance to meet.

We encourage each congregation to make this war with all of its horrors a matter for prayer. For those assemblies that have members hosting guests from Ukraine please, please be a support both to the guests and importantly to the hosts. We must bear one another's burdens and everyone must be a blessing. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

The amount given by individuals and churches through the Christian Worker account to date is...

£65,849

To date we have assisted congregations in Ukraine, Poland, Belgium, France and Greece. Dozens of people are being helped in all of these places. We are partners with them. We also are working with four families to come to Britain and talking with several more. Please read the following pages. Lives may depend on your reactions.

Pauline and I have been on an emotional roller coaster talking with brethren here and over in Europe. The generosity of everyone has been overwhelming and tears of thanksgiving have filled our lives. Thank you.

Guidelines for everyone

We did think that refugees would come to the UK in a big group and would then be sent out to stay with our volunteer hosts but that did not happen. Our government was careful and slow to implement the visa process but now it is working. Trevor and Pauline have collected the names of those willing to host and the number of rooms/beds they can provide and they will try to match these up with a family wanting to come. It has to be by mutual agreement and so they have to make contact with each other first then fill in the application form with information from both parties.

Next the government checks the Ukrainians to see if they are genuine and hold a passport. Our local council also checks on our housing to see if what we

are offering is suitable and they also do a CRB check. Then a visa is issued and they can come to UK but this process takes time.

Gov.uk.homesforUkraine is the site to find out more about it.

In order to prepare our hosts for receiving visitors we have sent out letters offering suggestions of things they might think about before committing themselves to hosting and to suggest various websites offering help.

Those coming are traumatised people who have had to leave their husbands, parents, and even children in a war situation and have escaped to a free country. They will need peace and shelter and a degree of normality with the family members they have with them. They will need 24-hour access to the internet so they can be in contact with loved ones in Ukraine. Sleep patterns will be upset and there will be mood swings, tears and anger. They will need a space to retreat to and privacy when they want it. Always let the mothers parent their own children. Allow them to cook and prepare the food they are familiar with; find out where they might buy familiar foods. Allow them to wash their own clothes, bedding and towels. They will feel isolated when they arrive. If possible try to find out where other refugees are in the local area and provide a meeting for them.

In all of this those hosting them will need support too, as things might not go quite as you expected. We have never done anything like this before and we will be learning how to do 'refugees'. Make contact with others who are hosting, compare notes, see what works for others.

Have you talked this adventure through with your extended family and are they happy with the arrangements? They need to be included in your decision.

This is the time for you to think about what sort of family makeup is good for you and your accommodation. Who can you cope with? A baby and mother? Two or three small children and a mother? A single young woman or two? Teenage children and a

mother? Are schools within walking distance or is there transport available? And the list could go on.

Think again now: 'Do you really want to do this?' It is not for a long weekend it is for six months. However, as a refugee they can claim universal credit, they can work and earn their own money, they will be entitled to all services of the NHS, and the children can go to school. These people are not wanting to come here forever and they are leaving family behind. Many of the older people, parents and grandparents, their husbands and sons are still there so they will want to be reunited as soon as the war is over.

What they need is a place of refuge, a safe, welcoming, peaceful place. Their frustration about their position may come out in anger, depression, or tears, so be prepared for it and run with it. Give them space and don't ask too many questions. They will tell you all once they get to know you.



Ask around in your community for things going on specifically for the Ukrainian refugees such as get together with others or English language lessons. Public libraries all have computers and internet access that they can tap into and community centres offer different activities.

Once your neighbours know that you are having people stay with you they will offer all kinds of help but remember

not to accept other people's old clothes unless you would wear them yourself. They will need their own new underwear and toiletries so take them shopping to places like Primark or Matalan. Lots of treats will be needed, so think wider than normal. ukrainewelcome.org has a video in Ukrainian to explain how things work in the UK; a YouTube video by Sanctuary Foundation gives some very helpful advice, as well.

The focus is all on the refugees coming to us at the moment but in a month's time you might be the one needing some help or attention. Get someone who you can go to and share your problems or compare notes with others who are hosting from UK congregations; this is all a new thing to most of us.

Here is another update. It has been a week since the government opened up the new scheme to allow refugees from Ukraine to come here. However, the actual process of getting visas is very slow and the form filling is difficult.

To enable our Christian brothers and sisters to come and stay in our homes we need to have a few details from them and these are slow in coming through at the moment. There are still many people wanting to get to a safe place and there does not seem to be any relief from the war.

The easiest way for them to come to the UK is to fly and we will try to arrange flights to the nearest airport to you. When they arrive they should be given £200 to obtain essential personal items. Things might be different in Scotland and Wales. Through the generosity of our British brethren we now have funds to help guests settle in.

Thank you for your patience and consideration to these people. It will be quite upsetting for them to leave their country and their husbands, fathers and sons to cross the water for

refuge. Most want to stay in Europe because they are just a train ride away from their homes. As you and they get used to a new way of life there will be difficult times and that is when you will need the support of others in your family, your congregation and community. You will need your own time and space as they will too.

We are ready and waiting and hopefully it will not be long before we can welcome them.

Updates from those already receiving refugees

We have been in daily contact with congregations in Ukraine and with the churches that are temporary refuge centres in other countries. These are some of the comments on Facebook that have been made.

“It was just three weeks ago today that we began this group, ‘Pray for Ukraine’. And it is likely that this ‘most important, most impactful group on Facebook’ will surpass 10,000 members—precious people who are committed to praying for our amazing and unjustly besieged friends in Ukraine.”

May your next prayer be the one that leads to peace in Ukraine!

From Lviv

If this face looks pained, it is because it is! Recently having undergone spinal surgery, she is in lots of pain. Add to that her personal emotional strain: she is in one of those tragic families where close members are on opposite sides of this conflict and, like us, she dearly loves her family. Add to her discomfort the fear of the unknown when you leave your home and head out to a foreign country hoping someone will help you and leaving behind those nearest and dearest to you; in her case, her son and two other close family members in Mariupol, site of some of the most severe fighting in all of Ukraine.



For twenty-two days she has not heard from her son. She wakes, lives, and sleeps with her phone near her in case he gets a message out but for twenty-two days and nights there has only been silence.

Yesterday during our staff meeting, we were in the middle of some discussion and I noticed Brandon pick up his phone and read a message. Immediately his face changed and he clapped his hands to get our attention. “Natalia has heard from her son!” Her son had called and the phone connected for seconds, only seconds. But before it went dead, she heard these words, “Mama, Mama! We are alive!”

That’s why we keep a box of Kleenex on the table during staff meetings.

From Poland

Thanks to all of you who have encouraged us with your kind words, who have offered prayers on behalf of these hurting displaced people. You might like to know that since 25th February, the church in Sopot, Poland has hosted 95 evacuees from Ukraine. Thirty-one individuals (seventeen family units) have received assistance and moved in to semi-permanent or permanent housing and forty-one have moved on to other cities or countries, including Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Croatia, Cyprus and Turkey. We have fed, clothed, slept, bought shoes, toys, school supplies, washed clothes, counselled and comforted.

We have only been able to do this because of the generosity and gifts of our Sopot community, neighbours, church members and the overwhelming outpouring of support from our brothers and sisters in America, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom. The daily thanks that I receive from all of these dear people is really yours.

From Romania

If you have anything to be shipped into [#thewarzone](#), we will be glad to help by taking it to Cernivtsi.

If you have specific needs that we can fulfil, we will be more than glad to take it there, depending on the volume. If you have people that we can take back to Romania, send to Europe, or anything else, we can help with ten seats in cars, and lots of volume in the trunks and the trailers (since we will come back empty with two cars). We can take them back to Cluj, provide housing and food here for short term, or help in regards to starting a new life in Romania, or get connections to the rest of Europe, the world, out from Cluj.

We will take today to Ukraine the camping mattresses, blankets and pillows which were vacuum packed. They will be used to create more bedding for those who

stay like sardines in the safe buildings.

The plan is to purchase today the rest of the supplies requested here in Cluj although many stores were out of stock here. Canned food, instant soups and cereals, baby supplies, nappies and ladies goods are requested by Ukraine on a regular basis. We only take what they request.

We are all just tools in God's mighty hand, and sometimes a lot of tools are put together in a small toolbox 😊. There may be a little friction between the tools that are packed like sardines in that toolbox, but all serve the same mighty Handyman! All the glory goes above! (Cluj is in Romania)

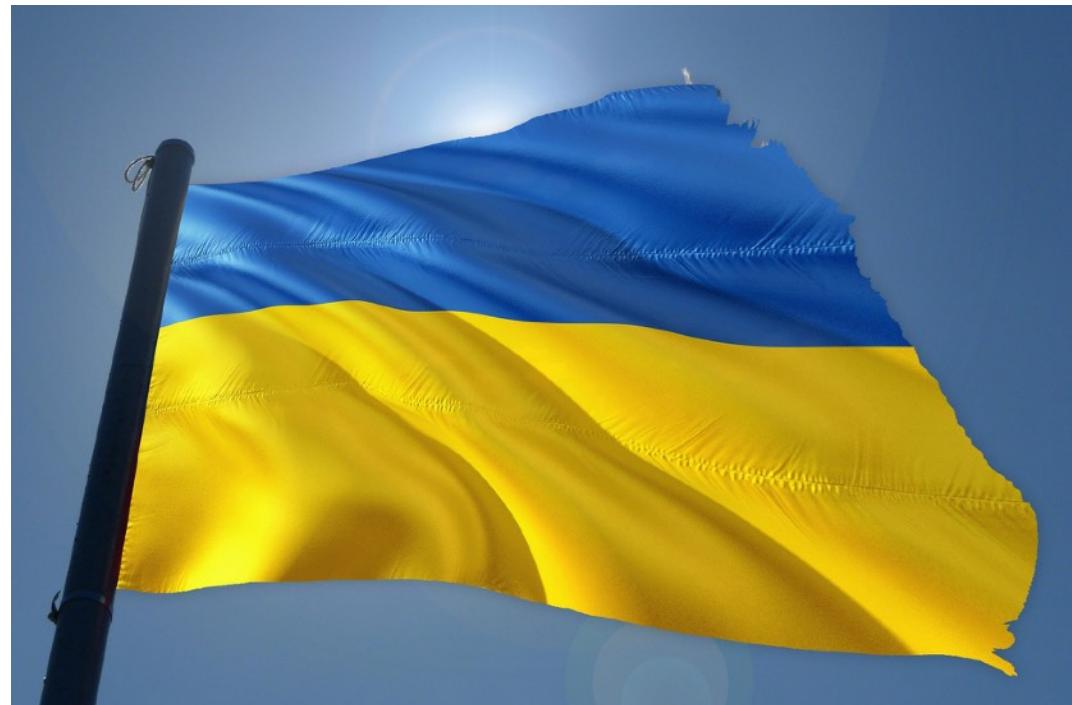
We have also had the amazing news that there have been many people who have surrendered their lives to Christ and have been immersed. God be praised.

We also want to thank our brothers and sisters around the country who have worked with us to provide extra information and for being our encouragers.

Some of our brethren are preparing their places of worship to be refugee centres – these can offer places of comfort, discussion, friendship, a place for the children to play, to learn English, and simply to be together and drink good coffee. Thank you.

We have now started to work with another ten families who are thinking of coming to the UK.

Trevor Williams





BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

New
online
classes

The Saviour of the World
a short study of the Gospel of Luke
Mondays at 8.00 pm
from 4th April ... for 12 weeks

Beginning next week a new round of online classes will be offered online by the British Bible School.

"The Saviour of the World"

The Gospel of Luke is the first of two volumes written by the most prolific writer of the New Testament Scriptures. In this twelve week study we will try to discover what is the significance of this Gospel as we explore some central themes, meet a number of intriguing characters and consider its particular relevance for our own times. With an

emphasis on the needs of the whole of humanity, Luke shows most clearly that the salvation of God is for all, regardless of class, culture, social standing or any other human distinction.

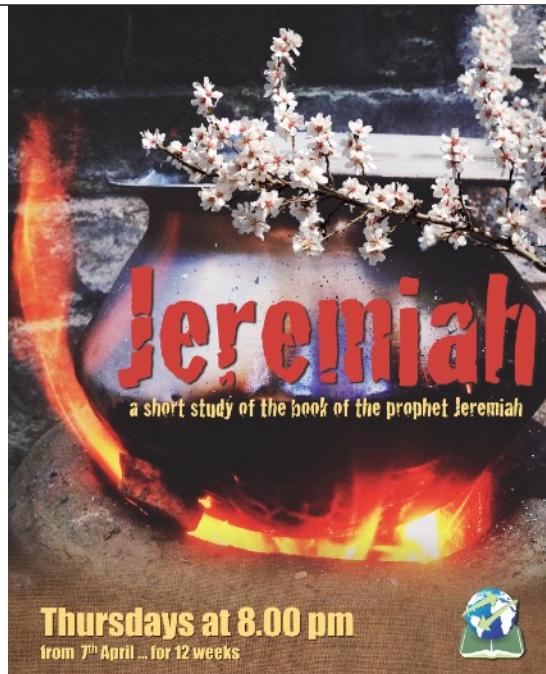
Jesus truly is the Saviour of the world.

Patrick Boyns will lead this

study each Monday evening beginning on 4th April.

"Jeremiah"

Jeremiah lived through a great time of reformation under good King Josiah. When Josiah died, so did the religious reformation. The prophet pleads with the people to acknowledge their sin, turn from idolatry, and stop depending on the ceremonial rituals of their law. Whilst announcing judgement for their



sin is coming, he also sees a time when a spiritual people shall worship the Lord spiritually. The symbols of the ceremonial law will be gone. Jeremiah emphasised then, as we should also understand now, God wants relationship, not rituals.

Mark Hill will lead this study each Thursday evening beginning on 7th April.

Quiz Night

Some light-hearted, educational, entertainment! This really is for everyone – nothing too testing (promise!). You might want to have a pen and paper handy – plus a box of choccies to award yourself if you happen to win – or even if you don't. We'd love to present these personally, but under the circumstances...

For the current period we hold this every first Friday of the month. Our quizmaster is Steve Whitehead.

Details for all of these can be found on our website and social media platforms.

Patrick Boyns
britishbibleschool.com



FAMILY NEWS

GREAT BARR (BIRMINGHAM)

On Saturday, 5th March 2022, the Great Barr congregation held an online Bible Seminar via Zoom. The theme of the programme was 'The Beginning of All Things' which was aptly expressed in two lessons.

The first lesson was presented by Graeme Morrison from the Corby congregation. He spoke on 'The universe in the beginning'. In his truly comprehensive discourse, he presented veritable evidences to support the origin of life and the universe in general using both Science and the Bible. He also deployed the arguments of evolution theorists to expose the weaknesses and senselessness of such assertions.

Mike Glover from the congregation meeting in Aughton presented the second lesson which centred on 'The grace and loving kindness of God from the beginning'. Mike gave a brilliant exposition of Psalm 136, expressing the eternal love and kindness of God towards mankind as demonstrated in the sacrifice of Jesus. He asked an array of rhetorical questions which helped to focus the minds of the participants.

In the third session, a great amount of time was devoted to reading from various relevant passages of Scriptures and a good number of the attendees participated in the session. Afterwards, we had a very interesting group discussion that lasted over an hour where further thoughts on the lessons presented were freely expressed.

There were several who attended connected from 29 devices at the peak of the programme with an old friend joining from Ohio in the United States.

All praise to God for such encouraging and spiritually rejuvenating lessons on creation, God's grace and loving kindness. We offer our thanks to Graeme and Mike for the excellent lessons carefully prepared and brilliantly presented; and also, to all those who took time to attend the seminar.

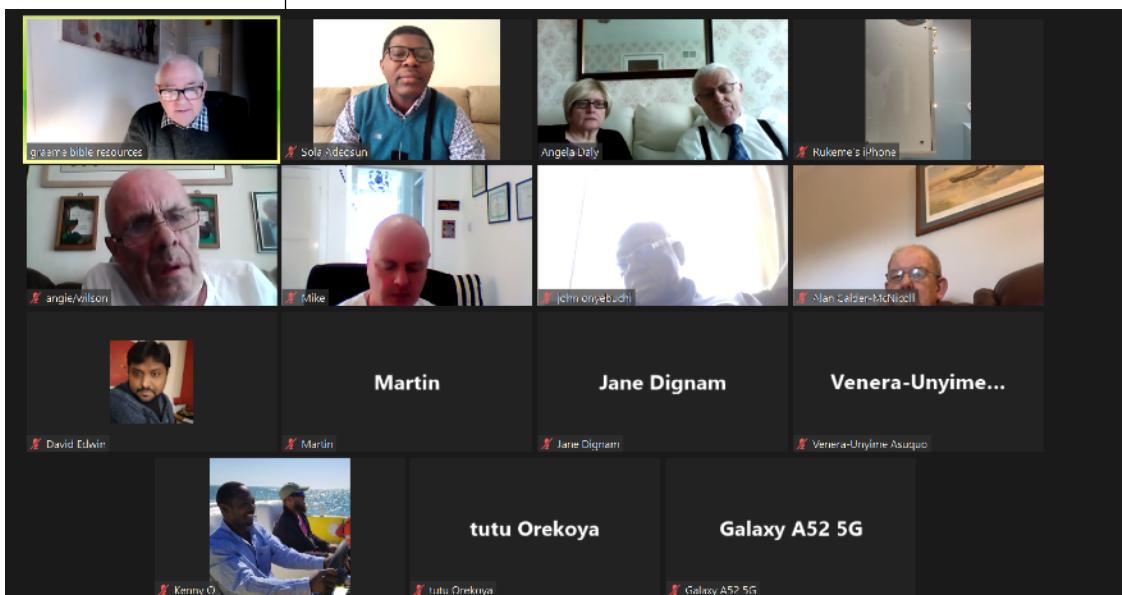
Sola Adeosun & John Onyebuchi

KIRKCALDY

Some good news from Kirkcaldy. We have had several additions (five in total) to the congregation during February

2022. Three were welcomed into fellowship (Robert Roberts and Les & Pam Carter) and two came to us from other congregations (Gail Stevenson & Moyra Strachan).

Alan Moyes





AROUND THE WORLD

GHANA: Post Covid Experience

We bring you greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus who by his mighty hands has seen us through one of the greatest challenges in our lifetime – the Covid-19 pandemic. Our experiences are not different from that of any except that medical supplies (PPE's) were not available on time to help save lives. This resulted in the loss of many lives which included loved ones! COVID-19 shocked the foundations of every society, from which we are yet to recover!

Another area of concern which proved to be a challenge was that of food supplies. Due to the pandemic and the associated shutdowns, agricultural production and supplies were cut off. Imports were not available to boost local production as the country's borders were closed. The pandemic took everyone by surprise and, as a result, there was little or no preparation whatsoever.

The pandemic resulted in the closing down of all businesses, schools and religious activities similar to what happened globally. After nine months of shutdown, the rules were relaxed a little and churches were permitted to hold two-hour meetings. Some businesses were opened as well as schools. Critical to these was the need to observe the prescribed protocols of social distancing, the wearing of nose masks, hand washing and sanitising rules. These were strictly enforced.

The situation still remains unstable and the observance of protocols are still in place in churches, market places, schools, etc.

With vaccinations, the vaccines came in slowly. Friendly countries assisted with donations which were airlifted to Ghana. The few doses that were received were administered nationwide. There was rush and as such not many were able to be given due to the limited quantities available. Additional doses have been received and we are told nearly half of the population has now been vaccinated.

It is still an ongoing exercise.

Daily updates are posted to the health authority's website indicating active cases and recorded deaths.



Though the health authority continues to warn the public of the existence of the disease, public response to the observance of the protocols has remained the greatest challenge. In both city and rural communities strict compliance remains a challenge.

As I write businesses, churches and schools are in operation, but none are back to normal as the pandemic destroyed every foundation. Most churches (larger congregations) conduct two worship periods each Sunday. Attendance however has yet to pick back up to pre-Covid levels. It has not been easy and we solicit your prayers as we do for you.

John Tamakloe
Tema, Ghana



DIRECTORY UPDATES

LEEDS

Place of worship: Glass merchants building, 403 York Road, Leeds LS9 6TD

Time of worship: Sunday, 10.00 am

Number of Christians: 30

Contact: Mr. Opoku (07469 943003)

LONDON (Leytonstone)

Meeting place: Nexus Center, 3 Snowberry Close, Leytonstone London, E15 2AH

Time of worship: Sunday, 10.00 am

Thursday, 8.00 online

(<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/onechurchofchrist1>)

Contacts: Kwame Nkansah (07860 621578), nkansahi28@yahoo.com

Joseph Osafu (07894 467829), Akwasi.kankam@nhs.net

Kwame Gyebi (07956 863020), kwame.gyebi@yahoo.com

LUTON

Over the years, there have been several attempts to establish a Christian fellowship at Luton, but has not been successful due to a number of reasons. In Milton Keynes, we have always had the ambition of helping set up a Christian congregation at Luton since we had some families living there meeting with us.

On 6th March 2022, that dream of having a Christian fellowship in Luton was realised and we give all glory to the almighty God.



Directory Updates

We invite all to help us thank the Lord and also pray for the sustainability of this great work.

Meeting Address: 33a Mallard Crescent, Caddington, Luton LU1 4FG

Meeting Times: Sunday, 10.00 am

Wednesday, 8.00 pm (on Zoom)

Friday, 8.00 pm (on Zoom)

Contacts: Samuel Adorm (07956 898586)

Nat Oppong (07455 903920)

e: Lutonchurchofchrist@outlook.com

BIRMINGHAM (Great Barr)

Please be informed that the Great Barr congregation has just secured a new meeting hall in view of Covid restrictions which had made our former place no longer available.

Meeting place: The Pheasey Community Hub, Hillingford Avenue, Birmingham B43 7HN

Our first worship will be held in this new location on Sunday, 3rd April 2022 (Lord willing). You are welcome to join us on this day and on any other Lord's Day. Our evening and mid-week programmes will continue to be on Zoom until further notice. Please note that the new meeting hall is just a three minute walk from Collingwood Community Centre which was our old meeting place.

For further details, please contact Sola on 0772 884 1215 or John on 0780 118 3872.

Sola Adeosun





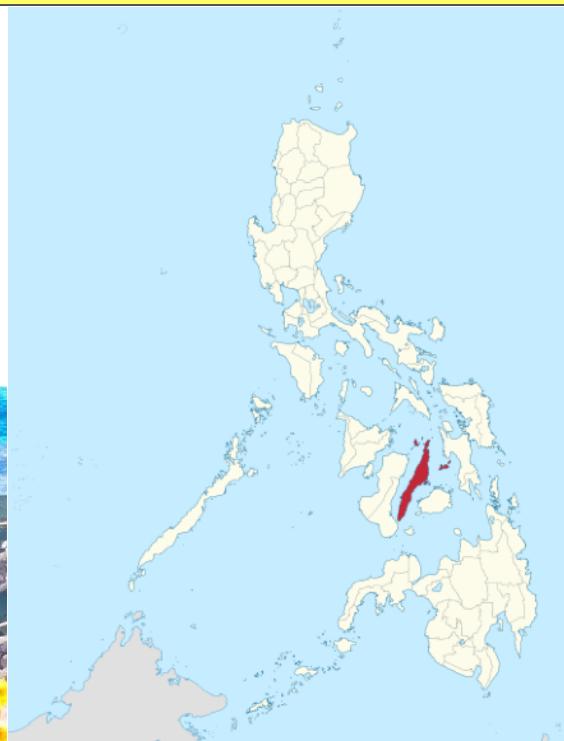
APPEAL UPDATE

CEBU TYPHOON RELIEF

I have had an amazing trip to Cebu (one of the islands in the Philippines) doing something I dearly love: blessing others during their time of need. I am grateful to you for helping me to do just that (several in the UK have helped Gigie in this effort).



Dr Evelyn and I flew again together for the first time since the lockdown in 2019. We served five different sites from south Cebu to an island just off Mactan, working with Christians in Alcantara and



Olango We cooked thirty kilos of spaghetti and two huge pots of arroz caldo for 500+ children, and gave free medical consultation to 200+ children and their mums.

This trip is our first attempt (since the pandemic) to do a relief mission together as a group. Our six-man team had quite an adventure roughing it out in an island that still has no electricity and clean water because of the super typhoon.

Imagine having to endure such an ordeal for more than three months! We were there for only two nights and, boy, how we "suffered". It was humbling!

We pray we are able to go back to other areas affected by typhoon Rai. There is just too much suffering, and too few of us willing to serve. Please help us help more people.

Gigie Carranza



An invitation to join us on a...

TRIP OF A LIFETIME

...to the Bible Lands of Israel & Jordan in 2022



Have you ever wanted to visit
the land of the Bible, to walk
in the footsteps of Jesus?

A visit to the Bible Lands can be a truly life changing experience. With your newfound geographical, historical, and archaeological context the scriptures will come alive as you read the stories told there.



We are planning a trip to Israel and Jordan, Lord willing, in 2022. This will be our fifth Bible Lands trip and will be drawing on our past experiences and the evaluations gathered from previous groups. Together this has helped to polish an inspiring, educational, and spiritual itinerary.



We would love for you to join us on this trip. The group will be made up mainly of Christians from around the UK. Many of you will know each other already. Our experience of these trips is that you will deepen friendships and make new lifelong friends as you live through such a faith building experience together.

For further details and costs please call or email me.

We look forward to travelling with you, and God bless you.

Jan. Starrs

Contact details

Jan Starrs

Call Ian Stans

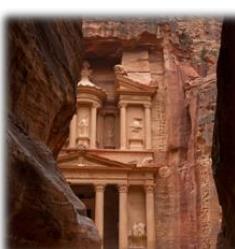
 ies22ian@msn.com

What's included:

- Pre-departure preparation and study guide
 - Travel from Edinburgh to Tel Aviv including airport and local taxes
 - 10 nights in 4-star hotels including breakfast and buffet dinner
 - 9 lunches. One of which is a special lunch in a fish restaurant by the Sea of Galilee where they serve tilapia, often referred to as Peter's fish
 - One bottle of water per day
 - Local English-speaking guides
 - Personal headset system linked by Wi-Fi to the guide's microphone
 - All in-country transport in an air-conditioned coach
 - All entrance fees to sites
 - All tips including portage at hotels in Israel
 - Boat trip on the Sea of Galilee

What's not included:

- Passport fees - visas are not required for UK passport holders
 - Personal travel insurance (a must!)
 - Personal spending - souvenirs, bottled water, snacks etc.





DIARY

April

4th – British Bible School Evening Class: “The Saviour of the World – a short study of the Gospel of Luke”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, each Monday for twelve weeks. Teacher: Patrick Boyns. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

7th – British Bible School Evening Class: “Jeremiah – a short study of the book of the prophet Jeremiah”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, each Thursday for twelve weeks. Teacher: Mark Hill. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

8th – British Bible School Monthly Bible Quiz on Zoom, 8.00 pm. Quiz master: Steve Whitehead. For links and details see the BBS Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

May

6th-7th – Northampton: British Bible School Study Weekend – “Ezekiel” (part 1). Teachers: Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths. Friday evening and all day Saturday. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

20th-22nd – Northampton: British Bible School Study Weekend – “Ezekiel” (part 2). Teachers: Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths. Friday evening and all day Saturday. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

July

30th – Edmonton (London): Singles Enrichment Programme – “Christ-Centred Marriage”, 12.00-4.00 pm on Zoom (Meeting ID: 849 2443 9737, Passcode: marriage). Speakers: Patrick Boyns and Manny Ebong. Contact: 07833 296396, 07908 725427, 07852 343010.

September

5th-15th – Trip of a Lifetime to the Bible Lands of Israel & Jordan. Contact: Ian Starrs (jes22ian@msn.com).

October

1st – East Kilbride: 50th Anniversary meeting: “Into the Future with God”. Guest speakers: Patrick Boyns, Mark Hill, John Mooney and Ian Starrs. Contact: Jon Galloway (jdgalloway@mac.com).

22nd-23rd – East Kilbride: British Bible School Study Weekend – “Contemporary Christianity” (part 1: the history of British congregations). Teachers: Jon Galloway and Mark Hill. All day Saturday and Sunday class and worship. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

31st-4th November – British Bible School Autumn Study Week at Bassenthwaite Manor: “John’s Gospel, part 1”. Teachers: Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Steve Whitehead. Cost: £150 all inclusive. Further details and registration will be on our website soon, but make plans now.

November

25th-26th – East Kilbride: British Bible School Study Weekend – “Contemporary Christianity” (part 2: Christianity in the world). Teachers: Jon Galloway and Mark Hill. All day Saturday and Sunday class and worship. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com. Contact: Jon Galloway (jdgalloway@mac.com).



THE FINAL WORD



15th-23rd
April

I recently read a comment that someone would only read the New Testament, (the translated Greek Scriptures) as they were New Testament Christians and it was pointless reading the Old Testament (the translated Hebrew Scriptures). I could not help think that the person involved was not only short changing themselves but they were making a mockery of the Bible.

We are reminded that 'all scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training' (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Also 'everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope' (Romans 15:4).

I am somewhat at a loss how anyone can read the book of Hebrews without reading about the Jewish Law revealed in Exodus to Deuteronomy. The list goes on – where would the understanding be if the fulfilled prophetic scriptures in Matthew's gospel were ignored? The Old Testament is the skeleton for the New Testament to reveal the body of Christ to us today.

Because of this Christians need to understand that when we break bread together in communion, in thanksgiving, we need to understand what went on when Passover was established and how it was celebrated over the years.

I keep hearing that the 'Angel of Death' passed over the houses of the people in Egypt – but it never did because we do not read about such a person. God himself passed over the houses of the people and where there was the shed blood of The Lamb there was salvation. Where there was no blood God himself entered and death came about for the first born of people and cattle. Our communion is not a re-enactment of Passover, it is a remembrance of the body and blood of Jesus and where his blood covers the individual there is salvation.

Passover was a sign for leaving slavery, a meal eaten in haste, in the middle of the night, dressed in travelling clothes. They ate non-yeasted bread because of the speed in which they were to travel and eat.

I would like to encourage us all to really read and study about the Passover. This year our Jewish friends will start the remembrance on the evening of 15th April and will conclude it in the evening of the 23rd. It is well worth studying the subject a little more.

*Lord of all being who directed the pathways of your people down through the ages, direct us now to live, to worship and celebrate you in your majesty and for your glory.
Amen*

Trevor

