

January 2022 • Vol 54 No 1

Happy New Year!



Article by Ernest Makin

**Appeals for Philippines,
Malawi and Pakistan**

Update from Malawi

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Front cover: Fireworks in London (from pixabay.com); above: Christmas lights



MY PERSPECTIVE



Holidays and resuming life

Happy New Year 2022!

Another year has dawned! 2022 is finally here! Although new years bring the hope of ‘newness’, it seems in too many ways that 2021 was a repeat of 2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic has continued. If the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918 is anything to go by, it would seem that these pandemics take about three years to work themselves out. If so, then 2022 should be a good year for us all!

Arlene and I were able to travel and spend the holidays in the United States with our family over there. We were able to finally meet our second grandson in person and it was a joy to spend the holidays with him and our granddaughter (as well as our son and his wife). We were also able to finally have a more formal ‘farewell’ for my mother, who left this life in September 2020. We had a memorial service for her and scattered her ashes at the same location as we scattered our father’s ashes. Getting that accomplished lifted a huge weight from my shoulders.

Travel was not as onerous as we had anticipated. Having our NHS Scotland Covid app meant we could show we had been vaccinated and boosted. We had negative Covid tests before flying both times, as well as filling out passenger locator forms. We are now self-isolating in our home in Netherburn as we await the results of our day 2 PCR test, which had to be pre-booked before entering the UK. It seems that there is a surge in testing right now so these results may be delayed for a few days.

What does 2022 hold in store for us? At the beginning of every year we

should ask ‘how much have we grown in Jesus during the past year?’ We are the only one who can truly make a good evaluation of how we are doing spiritually.

If we are not observing growth in our own lives as a Christian, then we would do well to ask ourselves a second question: ‘what are we doing to help us grow spiritually?’ I am always bewildered when I hear Christians who are longing to grow but do not spend time reading and studying God’s word and frequently are not gathering with their fellow Christians in worship. These two things don’t guarantee growth, but generally these are good indicators as to how a person is doing as a Christian.

Let me encourage you to spend time in God’s word this year. Make Bible reading and study a habit for us in 2022. I have heard that it takes 21 days of doing something to make it a new habit. Why not try to start something new in 2022? Spend some time each day in January with God’s word and then continue doing this throughout the year.

A second challenge would be to meet with your local congregation for each period of worship or Bible study. This, too, will help us grow in Jesus. If we do these simple things I am confident that at the end of the year you will see growth in your life as a Christian.

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever! Amen.”
(2 Peter 3:18 NIV)



BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

As we begin a new year, we are delighted to announce a reasonably full programme of activities to encourage and build up the people of God in Christ.

Online Bible Classes

From 4th January we will be commencing two new series of evening classes online. On Monday evenings we will be holding classes on “Proclaiming the Unknown God” looking into God’s word to discover some of the wonderful things that he has made known to us about his character and nature. And then on Thursday evenings we will be considering “More than Happiness” as we explore Paul’s letter to the Philippians.

Both of these classes are conducted via Zoom and are open to all. You should be able to find more details on our website and on our Facebook page.

Online Extension Programme

Then on Tuesday, 11th January we will be beginning another of our Applied Biblical Studies modules. This term we are offering “Understanding the Bible” (INT03) and will be considering an

overview of methods, looking at context and the importance of perspective in application to Christian service.

Those wanting to be a part of this more structured and intimate class will need to enrol through our website. Full details will be available very shortly, and students will be expected to complete additional assignments as part of the module requirements.

Winter Family Retreat

We are very much looking forward to returning to Bassenfell Manor in January for our Winter Family Retreat from 14th to 16th January – and we still have spaces available. If you have never been on one of our regular Family Retreats then you will not know what you have been missing. Do please visit our website for further information and a Registration Form.

Other activities

We are hoping to be able to announce dates of Study Weekends in various locations before too long. If you are interested in hosting a study or training event, or would simply like to know

more of what we have to offer, do please get in touch.

As always we thank all of you who continue to support this work through prayer and contributions. May God bless us all in his service.

Patrick Boyns
britishbibleschool.com

Born To Be King

Late Winter Family Weekend Retreat

Friday, 14th to Sunday, 16th January 2022
at Bassenfell Manor in the Lake District

www.britishbibleschool.com





THE MEANDERINGS OF AN INSOMNIAC

As I travel through the octogenarian years, after being an immersed believer and lover of the Christ for well over six decades, there is an increasing realisation of the enormity of the richness of the promises that a loving Divine Father has made to his faithful children. These promises have been inspirationally recorded by our spiritual ancestors, the early disciples, to enable us to enjoy the love of a Father who willingly and with the determination of “his only begotten son”, made Calvary a place of *redemption, justification, salvation* and *forgiveness* for those who confess that Jesus is “both Lord and Christ”. The solid certainty of these ‘gifts’ being immutably enshrined in ‘the faith’ three days later when a flagellated, tortured and humiliated man, through the power of the Godhead, was resurrected and eventually seen by hundreds of his contemporaries.

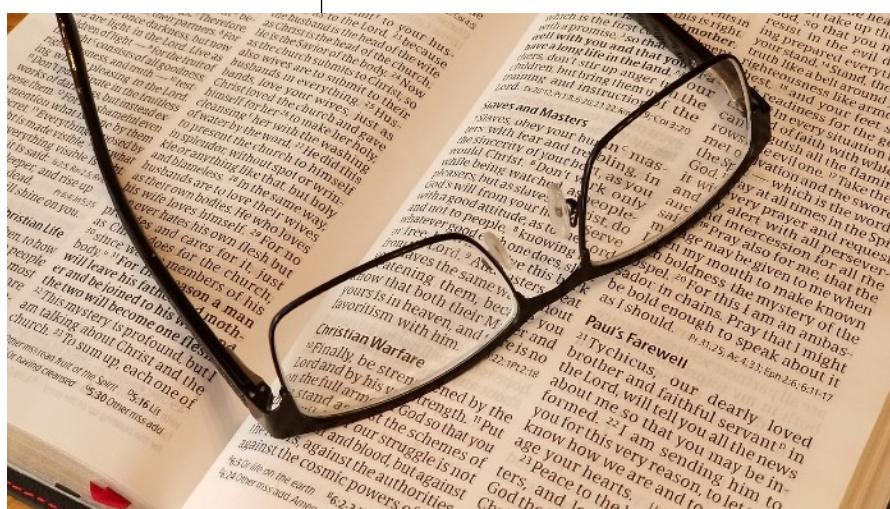
While under house arrest in Rome, Paul wrote to his fellow Christians in Ephesus, Philippi and Colosse and a beautiful personal letter to Philemon. About A.D. 60 a letter from Paul reached Ephesus. The first thirteen verses of that letter is a cornucopia of promises spilling out and administered to us by

our Father. In Ephesians 1:4-13 we are taught that believers are –

- “blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places with the Christ”;
- “chosen with him before the foundation of the world”;
- “holy and without blame before him in love”
- “have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins”;
- “are the recipients of his abounding grace”;
- “are party to an understanding of his mystery and granted insight into the will of God”;
- “are recipients of an eternal inheritance which is sealed by the Spirit”;
- “predestined to the adoption of sons by Jesus the Christ”.

In addition to all this, there are many more promises for the Christian from which to take comfort “according to the pleasure of his will...by which he made us acceptable in the beloved”. And the staggering thought is *we do not deserve this*, because we have all fallen short of the status (glory) of God and are sinners. The wonderful foundation of these gifts is that they are “all to the praise of the glory of his grace”. Each individual gift listed above is worthy of a lengthy period of study.

There is another side to this particular coin; Paul listed a whole host of responsibilities that Christians enjoy, in the application and use of the gifts that have originated from the Father. This is



THE MEANDERINGS OF AN INSOMNIAC

not the place to discuss these responsibilities. (Please read Ephesians 4:11-16.)

The gifts listed in verse 11 were “*for* the equipping of the saints *for* the work of the ministry *for* the edifying of the body of the Christ...”.

In the text above the first use of the preposition “*for*” may be translated “with a view to” the second and third prepositions may be translated “*for the purpose of*”. In other words, and it’s a daunting responsibility, the gifts of early apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the early church were to establish a platform until Jesus comes again for his saints to:

1. Perform the ministry, in all its forms, of the church.
2. Edify the saints in the body of the Christ.

The objective of the ministry and edification was and still is and will be until Jesus comes again “that we all come to the unity of the faith (confessing that Jesus is both Lord and the Christ) with a knowledge of the Christ” so that

we become *perfect* (mature) as God is perfect (Matt.5:48). Daunting indeed, but we have been given gifts through the grace of a loving heavenly Father to achieve that goal.

Finally Peter gives encouragement in this God-allocated task for his children, as Paul had done.

“His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by glory and virtue by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:2-3)

The beloved disciple John reaches out to us and informs us: “this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:4-5).

“In the Christ we are more than conquerors.”

Ernest Makin

DIRECTORY UPDATE



SHEFFIELD

New place of worship – As of 2nd January 2022 we will worship at the following address:
Church Hall
School Lane
Stannington
Sheffield
S6 6DD

Patrick Oppong

PETERBOROUGH

Directory contact update

Please remove Robert H. Brown as a contact.

Add new contact: David Hepburn. 01733 245115 e: david.hepburn@btinternet.com

Mac Erysthee



APPEALS

PHILIPPINES

Whilst most people were busy preparing for the holidays, another super typhoon wreaked havoc across the southern Philippines. A week before Christmas, Rai (locally known as Odette), hit several heavily populated areas, including Cebu, late Thursday. The storm, which had

initially packed winds of up to 260 kilometers per hour (160 miles per hour) with gusts over 300 kilometers per hour (185 miles per hour),

later moved west bringing with it heavy rain and widespread flooding.

Rai is the 15th typhoon to strike the country this year. Communication and power was out in several parts of the Philippines on Friday, making rescue efforts difficult – with officials unable to determine the extent of damage due to the outages.

Rai's arrival has compounded the struggles of people still recovering from typhoons earlier this year. Millions are still rebuilding their homes and livelihoods, especially after several devastating storms late last year.



A shipping company based in Cebu offers free shipment (from Manila to Cebu) of donations such as much needed food, water, clean clothes, blankets, and hygiene kits. The situation on the ground is pure chaos where people are scrambling for help. Queues outside groceries, banks and petrol stations stretch too long without any guarantee of success. Power and communication lines are still out in most areas.

We all can help if we put our resources together. Please help us help the people in southern Philippines. Please give.

Gigie Carranza

Once again the Philippines has been devastated by a typhoon: Super Typhoon Odette. There have been at least nine landfalls devastating thousands of homes and lives. Being wrapped in our own national miseries little has been announced on British Television. I have visited The Philippines four times over a number of years and several have graduated from the British Bible School. Several people we know have lost their homes or had them severely damaged. The Bible School in Manilla had its roof ripped off and is now covered in a tarpaulin.

Devastation can be seen on YouTube if you look up Cebu and Siargao. Many places have been without electricity and clean water and it is expected that interruptions will be for at least three months.

Please help if you can. Funds may be sent through our bank account, The Christian Worker HSBC 40-45-03, 91058533. Cheques may be sent to our home address: 195 Hickings Lane, Stapleford, Notts NG9 8PJ. Additional information can also be sent, just let me know (0115 8376895).

Trevor

APPEALS

MALAWI

Over the past few months two of the British Bible School graduates have lost support: **Davison Ndhlovu** in Malawi and **Naeem Sabir** in Pakistan. Both brothers were supported by American congregations but now have no support though both work hard for the Lord. If you can help please contact Trevor for more information. Below is a recent update from Davison.

Trevor

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I hope this finds you well despite the global health and economic problems which has affected us all. Here I'm fine and the children are taking care of me and I thank you all for your prayers and support for this year which is about to end in few days time. God has his own plan for the coming year of 2022 and I'm grateful that the end of the year has been better than the beginning as you all know what I have passed through.

Evangelism & Outreach Programmes

During the past few months most activities had to be suspended and Covid restrictions were in place. I was confined at my main congregation at Ekwendeni and both English and Tumbuka services were being conducted under government instructions of covid rules. However by third week of September, the situation improved and lockdown measures were eased so all the planned village gospel meeting were

Gospel outreach in Thumbi



re-scheduled while others had to be postponed indefinitely until next year.

Out of the eight planned gospel meetings, we managed to conduct six of them. The gospel meetings, in addition to daily work with my co-workers has led us to having 46 baptisms and 27 restorations during this period alone.



The first to be conducted was at Thumbi, from 24th-26th September, which is about 48 km north of Ekwendeni. The total attendance was 368. It was the first gospel meeting in the area after almost five years, From there we went to Kaweche on 1st-3rd October. Kaweche is just 9 km northwest of Ekwendeni. The attendance was 269 on the final day which was Sunday.

After Kaweche it was Munthu Mkulu congregation, from 19th-20th November where we had 436 people.

Then on 26th-28th November it was the Youth Meeting at



APPEALS

Mphimbi where by the grace of God we had three baptisms.



To crown it all we had the mother of all gospel meetings here at Ekwendeni from 3rd-5th December with the theme of "Keeping the Faith: Isaiah 41:10". My fellow village preachers and local leaders came and on Friday morning we had a seminar where we discussed how we can move forward and help each other as the congregations are now having to survive on our own without major support from abroad. It was a good discussion and we have agreed to meet again in February to map the way forward.



Peachers' seminar at Ekwendeni

By evening Friday, the place was full and we had run out of accommodation places. By Sunday morning we had 668 present. We had good lessons on marriage, the need for the Lord's supper every first day of the week, and the role of church leaders/elders.

Baptism at Ekwendeni



Benevolence & Church Building

They are six requests to roof and repair dilapidated church buildings in several village congregations. The problem is that now even the traditional grass for thatching is difficult to find due to deforestation hence the need to get metal sheets. I told them to at least look for piece-work and as they may be able to do something rather than to let the church buildings collapse completely.

Mark and Ann Thiessen visit

Mark, Ginger and Ann Thiessen came to condole me and it was a sad moment as Ann was in tears remembering the days they would come and welcomed by Lincy. They were encouraging us for the Lord's work we are doing more especially now that John is no longer here and she is also living in the United States. I told them that I'm still strong and faithful to the Lord despite the loss of my loved ones and support. I don't know what the Lord has in store for me for my remaining days here on earth.

Conclusion

Again thank you very much for each one of you for what you have done for me this year, whether in prayers or financial help. May the Lord guide and help us in our plans for 2022.

Davison Ndhlovu

NOTICES

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER 2022

Will you help?

Does everyone in your congregation receive the CW? It is available in e-mail free of charge, can be sent out by post with a donation to cover costs or each congregation can print it off themselves and distribute as needed.

Does your congregation have an appointed CW reporter letting us know what is happening? News of baptisms, congregation development and growth, plans, reports of weddings and passings are welcome. We want your congregational news!

Do you have any budding writers, poets, hymn writers, or composers in your church family? Encourage them to help us out! The CW is a magazine for every age and we want to include your talents.

The CW is a magazine for the people written by the people – be part of this every month.

The CW website contains information of where our congregations are located and how to get in touch: www.churchesofchrist.co.uk.



Contact Trevor for items to be included:
twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk



DIARY

January

3rd – British Bible School Evening Class: “Proclaiming the Unknown God”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, for twelve weeks each Monday. Teacher: John Griffiths. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

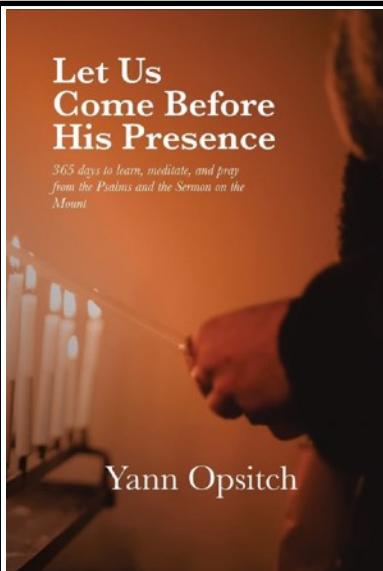
6th – British Bible School Evening Class: “More Than Happiness – Exploring the Letter to the Philippians”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, for twelve weeks each Thursday. Teacher: Jon Galloway. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

11th – British Bible School Module Online: “Understanding the Bible”, 7.30-9.30 pm each Tuesday for twelve weeks. Teacher: Patrick Boyns. To register, visit our website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

14th-16th – British Bible School Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor. Register at: <http://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/upcoming-events/bassenfell-manor-family-retreat-2022>. Contact: Patrick Boyns (study@britishbibleschool.com).

February

14th-20th February – Advanced Bible Study Series in Gemünden, Germany. Space this year is limited to 30 people due to Covid restrictions. Hotel rooms will also be available in the village. ABSS I (Monday-Friday) and ABSS II (Friday-Sunday). Contact: Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com).



New book by Yann Opsitch

Many may know Yann from years past in France and Switzerland. He is a graduate of North Ireland Bible School as well as the University of Geneva, Abilene Christian University and University of North Texas. He taught at Abilene Christian University for many years as well as working with the Jim Ned Valley congregation in Texas.

He has written many books in French and this is his first book to be published in English. It is a book of 365 devotions from the Psalms and Sermon on the Mount.

It can be purchased both as a paperback or Kindle from amazon.co.uk. For more information about Yann and other lessons and books see his website: <https://www.yannopsitchauthor.com>.



THE FINAL WORD



The need for peace, strength, and courage

"The church...enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord." (Acts 9:31)

The results of Paul's conversion had a dramatic effect on the state of the early church to the point that it was able to enjoy a time of peace. Following this time when the early Christians could take a deep breath a series of events took place.

First of all the church was strengthened. Throughout history the church has had times when it really needed to be strong because of the difficulties that surrounded the body of believers. This may have been in the form of brutal persecution, false doctrine or even deadly disease. When the strengthening started it was because of the encouragement given by the Holy Spirit. They now had strength and courage. The result was that the church grew but it only grew when the brethren lived in the fear of the Lord.

There is a lot preached and taught about the love of God but little about the fear of the Lord. Consequently many today take their Christianity lightly. Love can only be effective when holy fear is part of it. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, 'Be on your guard; stand firm

in the faith; be men of courage, be strong. Do everything in love' (1 Corinthians 16:13-14).

The people of God are often concerned, worried or fearful. God told Joshua, 'Do not be discouraged; do not be afraid' (Joshua 8:1). We are living in an ever-changing world. Technology is moving faster than we are, the problems of global change is greater than we can realise, news of heartache and disaster enters our homes before we can grasp what is happening.

The world sits on our shoulders and there is only so much we can do. The church is trying to be all things to all people and we cannot do that. We want to see people led into the love of Jesus and to accept his sacrifice but with the pandemic we are limited in what we can do and some are now to the point of wondering how we can continue at all.

We are presented with two choices: we go on in the strength and courage of the Holy Spirit or we say enough is enough and like so many before us give in and give up.

We do need peace, we do need strength, we do need Holy Spirit courage and we do need to live in the fear of the Lord. And sometimes we have to go back to the beginning and start all over again.

We have a New Year with all its hopes and blessings ahead. We must use it with the power of God as our guide.

Trevor

*Bless 2022, O Lord, with peace
Granting us your strength and your courage
That we may live in harmony with you.
Amen*

