

# Weekly News

NEWBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

28TH MAY 2025

## Small Groups: The Home of Pastoral Care

*Each week in May we have heard from different people about their experiences of belonging to a small group. This week it's the turn of Judith and Kelvin, who recently stepped down from leading a group after 20 years. They share how pastoral care became a key part of their group.*

*If you are interested in joining one please email Julie: [JulieB@newburybaptistchurch.org](mailto:JulieB@newburybaptistchurch.org).*

Right at the very beginning, in 2005, we agreed within the group some core guiding values, "We share, we care, we are there for each other". Confidentiality within the group was also core value; everyone needs to know that what is shared within the group stays within the group, unless of course permission is given to share wider. An example of this was that one of our group received a terminal cancer diagnosis but didn't want it shared wider as they wanted no fuss and carry on as normal. Even until shortly before their death and the illness became obvious, confidentiality was kept, so the group could pray for and support them.

Building trust is essential to being able to freely share, which means we could support each other, without judgement, in prayer and practical ways through all life's challenges, sorrows and of course its joys. Opportunities to encourage sharing and getting to know each other better can often best be done in more social settings, for example. Bringing a cup or mug with special significance, on one occasion and sharing its 'story', allowed people to share something about themselves and was then used as we shared communion together.

Communication is essential so that urgent prayers and help can be sought quickly. An example was during heavy rain a member feared being flooded but the group rallied and sandbags around the front door brought reassurance, knowing people cared. We always sent a group update after a meeting so that everyone was up to date with the group meeting and future plans. On the update was always Praise and Prayer requests.

Over the years of group leadership, we were aware that everyone in the group brought different, knowledge, skills and capabilities, which when shared makes the whole group stronger.

For more involved issues, the NBC Pastoral team can support the Small Groups if required and confidentiality is maintained.

It has been a joy and privilege, over 20 years, to facilitate our groups and we continue to pray that Small Groups will be at the heart of NBC.

*Kelvin & Judith Pitman*

# Spring Harvest Reflections

A group of 14 made their way from Newbury to Butlins in Minehead during the Easter holidays to be part of Spring Harvest 2025. The theme for this year was No Greater Story and focused on Isaiah. One of the key points was that none of us get the story we want or choose but we were encouraged to rediscover our place in God's epic adventure.

For the adults the mornings were spent with a choice of different seminars and Bible teaching. The afternoons had more seminars and a range of different activities, sports and crafts. We spent our afternoons at the swimming pool, fairground or the newly opened Sky Park. For those without children they enjoyed walks along the seafront at a slower pace!

The evenings included an extended time of worship and different speakers sharing challenging messages. Events do run late into the night but I don't think any of our group attended them.

All of our children joined the 5-11 Kids' Club and were part of 700 children in that age group. They had a session every morning and every evening and they didn't miss a single one. There were also sessions for 0-4's and teens. Spring Harvest recently announced that 631 children and teens gave their life to Jesus across both events this year! It is really exciting for our children to have the opportunity to worship with others in that environment, so they can see that the church is bigger than NBC. Those of us with children all chose the catered option and the children very much enjoyed having their own table and helping themselves to the variety of food on offer. The ice cream and drinks machines were definitely a big hit! For the adults not having to cook, clear up and having adult conversations were the highlights of meal times.

Some of reflections from the adults include:

It was nice to have an extended amount of time with members of our church family and to see the children building their relationships too.

The event was so well organised and the quality of the seminars, which were brilliantly delivered, were thought provoking and full of wisdom.

The worship was a highlight for me! As well as having the time and space to listen to amazing Bible teaching and spend extended time each day focussed on God away from the distractions of every day life. I was challenged by a speaker saying we should be praying for God to show us how He wants us to fit into His plan and to reveal what He is already doing in our community and asking Him how He wants us to get involved. It was a challenge to reframe the question and ask God to reveal what He is already doing and the part we can play in that.

And some highlights from the children:

The slides, friends and the songs.

Swimming and Skypark. Kid's Club had lots of variety and something that everyone could enjoy, I liked the prayer times as we prayed with actions.

Skypark slides especially when they were wet and we took our shoes off and slid down on our coats – even though I did get lots of bruises!

I liked the talks at Kids' Club, the leaders spoke about when they were younger so I could relate. The prayer time was quiet and peaceful but you could feel God was there. The worship was very energetic with lots of clapping and jumping!

Some of us are already looking forward to returning next year! It is a wonderful opportunity to connect with God, to spend time with others from our church family and your day is what you make it, you can go to as many or as few of the seminars, teaching and activities as you want.

**Booking for Spring Harvest 2026 opens on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025. See page 3 for more details.**

Please speak to any of us if you would like to find out more!

*Amelia, Angie, Daniel, David, Debi, Eve, Jenny, Jo, Joshua, Julie, Nikki, Noah, Sarah and Zach*

# Notice board

## First Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June

We're looking forward to the next "First Thursday" event on 5<sup>th</sup> June at 12 noon. All are welcome to come along to worship and spend time together followed by a delicious meal. To book your place please [sign up on the website](#) or contact Daph.

## Men's Breakfast 7<sup>th</sup> June

Join us on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 8am for a delicious cooked breakfast, and hear David share about his experiences from his time volunteering for Christians Against Poverty. David has worked as a CAP Money coach for a number of years as well as recently delivering the CAP Money course. He's seen the effects of how handling money badly can affect people's lives, but has also had the opportunity to share his faith with those he's come to help. Please [sign up online](#) if you'd like to come along.

## Book Swap 15<sup>th</sup> June

Following the service on Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of June we will be having a church book swap. We've been donated a selection of Christian books and would love them to be passed on to spread further benefit.

If you have any Christian books languishing on your bookshelves which you no longer read then bring them in to NBC and swap them out for something else.

Any good quality leftover books will be donated to Book Aid, who supply bibles and christian literature to their partners who work in areas of the world where books are wanted but not easily found or afforded. Any books that they will not accept will be given to charity.

If you have books you want to donate then leave them in the prayer room and we'll set them out in the foyer on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June.

If you have books that you are prepared to swap, but would like returned then write your name in the front cover so that whoever takes it knows it needs to be returned to you after use.

## Spring Harvest 2026

If you are interested in attending Spring Harvest next year, please speak to any of the group who attended (see bottom of page 2 for a list of names).

The dates are:

Skegness – Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March – Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April

Minehead – Easter Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April

Early bird prices are in place until the end of July.

Visit: [www.springharvest.org](http://www.springharvest.org)



**DO YOU HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?**  
**EMAIL: [OFFICE@NEWBURYBAPTISTCHURCH.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@NEWBURYBAPTISTCHURCH.ORG)**

# Prayer Space

## A Prayer for Peace

*As war continues to rage across the world, let us commit to praying for peace and seeking to be peacemakers in our own local contexts.*

Heavenly Father, we come before you today with troubled hearts, deeply aware of the pain and suffering that fills our world. We see the news and feel overwhelmed by the scale of human conflict.

Lord, we lift up the people of Ukraine, now living through their third year of war. We pray for families torn apart, children who know only the sound of sirens, and the elderly who hoped never to see another war. Give strength to those defending their homeland and wisdom to leaders seeking resolution.

We also bring before you Israel and Palestine. The cycle of violence seems endless, Father. We pray for mothers on both sides who fear for their children's safety, for communities living under the shadow of fear, and for those working courageously for reconciliation.

God of all nations, we remember too the conflicts that don't make headlines - in Sudan, Myanmar, Yemen, and so many other places where your children cry out for peace.

We confess that we sometimes feel helpless, yet we remember your promise through Isaiah: "They will beat their swords into plowshares." Help us believe your kingdom of peace will come.

Give wisdom to world leaders, diplomats, and peacemakers. Help them see beyond political advantage to genuine solutions. Soften hardened hearts and open closed minds. Where there is hatred, let love take root.

Show us how to be instruments of your peace right here at home. When we encounter division, help us build bridges. When we meet refugees, help us offer welcome. Use our church, our prayers, and our witness to spread the good news that in Christ, barriers can come down and enemies can become friends.

We pray trusting in the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## A Prayer for Small Groups

Father God, we thank you for the fellowship we can enjoy with each other, and for the opportunity offered by small groups to build relationships and explore the Bible together.

We pray for small group leaders, as they organise, plan and often host meetings. We pray that each group would be a place where every person feels valued, included and able to learn.

We pray for those unable to join a group due to health issues, work patterns and family demands. May they find spaces where they can be encouraged in their faith and enjoy moments of encounter with you amidst the busyness of life.

We thank you for those who have contributed to our weekly reflections this month, and pray that you would continue to build disciples in this, your church. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

## Praying for our Church Family

Dear God, we bring before you those in our church family who are struggling. We pray for those who are poorly, dealing with illness and feeling worried about what lies ahead. We remember those who are stuck at home, whether through age, disability, or circumstances beyond their control, but who we remember and lift up to you.

We especially hold close those struggling with their mental health, facing challenges that can feel overwhelming and isolating. Please bring healing where you can, comfort where healing isn't possible, and hope when things feel particularly dark.

Help us to be good friends to our brothers and sisters in Christ, showing your love through our actions and care. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.