

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food features quite a lot in the Bible. It's certainly not hard to think of significant events in the four Gospels when food AND drink play a major part. There's the wedding at Cana, feeding of the five thousand, Mary getting it right while Martha prepares the food, instructions on where to sit, banquets for prodigal sons and the hugely significant last supper... to mention but a few.



by Dave Andrews

Today I reflect on John 21, when Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection for the third time.

The guys had just had a hard night fishing with no joy, when Jesus says, "Now come and have breakfast" (vs 12) This must be one of the first recorded "Men's Breakfasts"! But just like the one on the first Saturday of the month, it's not just about the food and feeding our physical needs... Jesus had a purpose, meeting with the guys where they were at.

I recently discovered that the Greek word used for the charcoal fire that Jesus used to cook the fish on is only found in one other place in the New Testament. It's used to describe the fire that Peter was warming himself by when he denied Jesus three times. I think that gives it incredible literary significance to what comes next. I'm in awe of how Jesus handles Peter's denial of their relationship. He doesn't say "I told you so!", or, "thanks a bunch mate ...where were you when I needed you?". He simply asks, "Do you love me?" Only he asks him three times to match the three times that Peter had denied Him.

This must have had a profound impact on Peter, such restorative love and forgiveness. I'd be surprised if Peter didn't shed a tear, and a hug with Jesus at that point. But God wasn't finished with Peter.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter continued to grow. Acts 3 vs 12, "Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd", and then in Acts 4 vs 13 "The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures."

So here's some Food for Thought, from a point of denial to a place of loving forgiveness (even though we might be ordinary men and women with no special Bible training) when emboldened by the Spirit – we can all share God's love to those around us when we recognise and respond to those God given moments ...especially if we've had our Weetabix! Have you had yours today?

# NOTICES



## The Bible Course

"The Bible Course" continues here at NBC. Join us online on Mondays at 8pm [via this link](#), or Wednesdays in person at church at 7.15pm.

## Church Meeting

The next Church Members Meeting will take place after the Sunday service on 28<sup>th</sup> June, and followed by our church picnic (see below!). The meeting agenda & papers are available to logged in members [here](#)

## Church Picnic

Everyone is invited to bring a picnic and something to sit on along to Victoria Park after the church meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June. We'll enjoy some time together as a church family, with games for the children).

## Welcome Area

The re-decoration of the welcome area has begun, and will continue for the rest of this week - with finishing touches being added over the next couple of weeks. Thanks for your patience while everything is being completed - we're really looking forward to seeing it finished!

## Bright Sparks

The Bright Sparks group on a Sunday morning needs some additional helpers. Could you help our youngest members of the church family as we share bible stories in a fun and interactive way through stories, simple crafts, games, activities and music? If you would like to find out more please speak to Linda-Jean or Sian ([sianc@newburybaptistchurch.org](mailto:sianc@newburybaptistchurch.org))

## Prayer & Fasting

The whole church is invited to a prayer meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm as we continue the search for a second minister. The search team felt challenged to include a time of fasting in the week leading up to the meeting, and in agreement with the deacons are asking that you consider joining us.

Fasting is ultimately about seeking God in a specific and focused way. It runs through the Bible as a response to moments of urgent dependence on God. When we are hungry, we are reminded why, and that remembrance shapes our prayer. It sharpens attention. It quiets distraction. It says, with our bodies as well as our words: we need God in this.

Calling a minister is one of the most significant decisions a congregation can make. We want to make it well. Fasting is a way of approaching that decision with the seriousness it deserves.

There are no specific rules. This is between you and God. However, some suggestions if you've never done this before:

- Skip one meal each day if it's medically safe for you, and use that time to pray for the search.
- Fast from something other than food: Social media, television, and redirect that space toward prayer.
- A full day's fast if you are able and feel called to it, ending with the prayer meeting on the 25th.

This isn't about self-punishment. It is about intentional focus.

We are asking God for something we cannot manufacture ourselves. Let's seek him together.

# PRAYERS

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## Southern Counties Baptist Association Changes

Please pray for our Regional Association and team members, following the news last week that our Regional Minister, Hayley Young, is leaving to join the national Ministries Team at Baptist House.

Hayley's last day will be 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Please pray for her as she moves into a new role focusing on supporting ministers and churches in areas of integrity, wellbeing, healthy leadership and lifelong formation.

Pray for the remaining team, especially Clare Hooper as team leader, as they along with the trustees prayerfully discern the next steps and manage the transition.

## Church Family Prayers

**Theo L** - One of our children currently suffering with two infections. Pray that the antibiotics will quickly be effective and for his parents as they look after him. Pray too for Christina's Mum, who has a blood infection in Romania. Pray that the doctors would be able to diagnose the problem and treat her effectively.

**Carol H** - Pray for Carol as she continues to recuperate at home from a recent heart attack, and for **Dave** as he cares for her.

**Titu** - Some will remember Dumitru (Titu), who attended NBC for some months before returning to Romania earlier this year. We are sad to share the news that he died earlier this week. Please pray for his wife and wider family as they mourn his loss.

## Second Minister Search

We pray that God would speak into this time of waiting and bring forward the person he is calling to NBC. We pray that we might be attentive to the Spirit's prompting, and that through this time of prayer and listening we would be strengthened as the body of Christ. Here is a suggested prayer to use:

*Loving God, we come to you choosing to fast, that our hunger for your presence and leading might be physical as well as spiritual.*

*We fast not to twist your arm or because we think you've forgotten or ignored us, but because we recognise we need you and your leading. In our hunger, remind us that we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. We need a word from you.*

*We pray for the person who does not yet know they are coming. Wherever they are today would you speak to them. Give them courage to step toward what you are asking of them.*

*We pray for ourselves. That we would be the kind of church worth coming to. That we would not be so settled in our ways that there is no room for someone new to lead and introduce different ideas. That we would hold our preferences loosely and your mission tightly.*

*We trust you with this. Even when trusting is hard. Lord have your way over this, your church. Amen.*