



The Baptist Church,  
Brierfield

January 2021



*We meet in a warm, friendly atmosphere to praise and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.*

***Please do join us.***

## Sunday Services

We have limited capacity in church with Social Distancing and masks are mandatory for anyone inside the building. The services start at 10:30 am and are also being streamed live on YouTube - check our website for the service link.

<https://www.brierfieldbaptistchurch.org.uk>

Midweek Activities as announced.

**Secretary – Mrs Angela Higgin**

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Do you have something you would like to be included in next months newsletter? Please hand anything you would like adding to Richard I'Anson, or by email to [newsletter@brierfieldbaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@brierfieldbaptistchurch.org.uk)



# Hebrews 13v8 – Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

*(A short message by Donald Leeming)*

There are some years which more than others have shaped and influences the course of history:

1066, 1215, 1517, 1666, 1837, 1914, 1939 and we can add to this list 2020.

It has been a year that will never be forgettable for all of us, it has led to differences in work, home and church environments. Sadly some have lost loved ones, many have been ill, others have lost their jobs and unfortunately, maybe for the first time, some have suffered from mental health issues. Churches, and other bodies, have to use Zoom and other types of software to communicate with others and to continue to function, and some have not been at all successful in this!

But God has been good, the gospel continues to be proclaimed and people are still being saved.

What an amazing gospel we have to proclaim, even during pandemics, when all around is dark and black, the light of Jesus Christ shines on.

In March we thought the problem would last for two or three weeks and here we are facing a new year and the problem is still with us to a large extent.

Now Paul is writing to Jewish Christians, who are facing huge pressure to return to their former faith, and in addition they are facing persecution from the state. He is urging them to remain true to Jesus Christ whatever happens, they can be sure that Jesus will be there with them. He remains true and is the same yesterday, today and forever. He does not go into lock-down, nor does he practice social distancing and stay 2 metres away from us. In the whole of life He is with His own and gives them divine strength and peace of heart.

And this is our assurance as we face the new year. He will go with us every step of the way, hold our hand and guide us in all things.

He who has helped us hitherto  
Will guide us all our journey through  
And daily give us cause to praise  
New Ebenezers to His praise.

God Bless

*Donald*

\*Ebenezer- an altar erected to say “so far the Lord has helped us.”

## Dates for January & February 2021

Thursday 28th January - Officers Meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 23rd February - Church Meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Please note it will be confirmed if these will be on Zoom or at Chapel, as early as possible in January.

## Christmas Cards 2020 and Over 80's Gifts

Thank-you to everybody who helped with the distribution of Christmas Cards and also the gifts to the over 80's, to those of our congregation who cannot attend chapel during the current pandemic.

## Food Bank Appeal

Thank-you to everybody, for supporting the Food Bank Christmas Appeal. Our contributions were delivered on Wednesday 16th December in plenty of time for Christmas. Please continue to remember to support the Food Bank, whenever possible, and especially during the continuing crisis. Eleanor at the Food Bank passed on her grateful thanks for our continued support and she wished us all a Safe and Happy Christmas.

## Christmas Food Bank Appeal - Saturday 12th December, 2020

If you wish to put flowers into Chapel during 2021, please contact Glenys and she can check the rota each Sunday to check if the date(s) you requested are available and get back to you. Quite a few dates have already gone, so please contact her as soon as possible.

## A Big Thank You

I am sure everyone at the chapel would like to say a VERY big thank-you to everybody concerned in the planning, setting up and distributing connected with the 'Streamed Services' during 2020 and which now looks to have to continue into 2021. Without all these people, and they know who they are, we would have had a VERY poor church life. **THANK-YOU**

## Do You Need Help?

Could we remind any member of our church family, that should you need any help, to please contact any of the Church Elders or Officers who will do their best to help or will try and put you in contact with someone who can.

# Prayer Matters

I am missing singing at church! But there is a verse that is following me round, which I feel is right to take into the New Year.

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us  
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;  
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us  
For we have no help but Thee;  
Yet possessing every blessing  
If our God our Father be.

To many 2020 has been a year of disaster. But within the church new things have started, and as we move forward into a new year, let us go forth with hope in our hearts. We, as it were, have been wandering in the wilderness, perplexed by Covid and its implications for us all. Let us hope that God will lead us into better things and better times in 2021. And as He leads into this New Year, let us confidently slip our hands into His, the One who has promised never to leave us or forsake us. May we know our heavenly Father guarding us, guiding us, keeping and feeding us, for all our blessings come from His gracious hands.

## So Let's Pray...

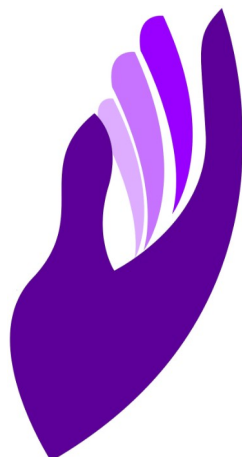
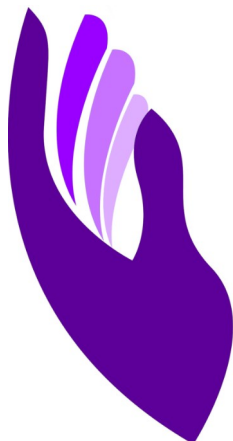
- That God will continue to be with us as He has in the past;
- That we may be able to grow in the Lord and in His grace;
- That in our small way we may be used to build His Kingdom and promote His glory in this area.
- That the forthcoming vaccine will be effective in restoring some sense of normality to our world.

May I remind you that if you have an urgent need for prayer, such as sickness, or one of the problems of life, please contact Philip on:

Email: [philip.rowland@virginmedia.com](mailto:philip.rowland@virginmedia.com)

- or by Mobile Text (please do not ring me): 07546 350 409
- or by phoning Kath on 01282 697005.

Your request for prayer will then be passed on to the other members of the Prayer Chain.



## Christmas Message from the North West Baptist Association

Dear Friend

It is hard to know where to begin our Annual letter to churches and ministers this year. None of us could have imagined the journey that 2020 has turned out to be. With recent news of an approved vaccine, hopes are perhaps lifted, but there remains a significant road to travel.

Though events have been so unexpected, I sense that this year has also served to reinforce our identity as a community of God's people. So many of our anticipated activities have had to be cancelled or significantly re-structured; physical meetings with and between churches have been almost non-existent, and yet at the same time a deep sense of community has been revealed across NWBA. Every NWBA church has been impacted, and it is thanks to the dedication and creativity of people like you, that we have not only maintained our life together, but can share stories of new initiatives, connections and possibilities that have emerged.

It has been humbling to be part of that, with many messages of support and genuine appreciation as we cobbled together online services and reflections - learning as we went along how to use the many features of our computers of which we were previously unaware. For all its unexpectedness, this has created new opportunities to connect with and include people, and a key challenge is how we use these new skills and technologies to serve each other in mission and ministry even more. Our shared identity is much more than financial, yet it is perhaps a sign of its depth and reality, that giving to Baptist Home Mission from NWBA churches has exceeded its set target for 2020. We are deeply grateful for this practical expression of our shared commitment to one another.

While we can celebrate these genuine signs of hope, we recognise too that this has been a year of tragedy and struggle for many. Our North West Region has been hit particularly hard and we ourselves have not been immune to that. Members of NWBA churches have died, and many others have struggled with issues of isolation, loneliness, financial hardship and insecurity. At one NWBA Team Meeting during the first lockdown, as stories were shared, virtually every headline issue had impacted someone present in one way or another - this is a reality that can probably be repeated right across our NWBA community.

It feels almost reckless to imagine that 2021 might signal a return to something of normality, but we sense that this might yet be the case. This will bring its own challenges as we face no less of a transition out of a life that has been defined by restriction and lockdown, as we faced when we entered it. We will need time to take stock, re-set our vision and of course carefully consider what we might have learned as a community of God's people through this worldwide pandemic.

2021 is unlikely to be a year for introducing great new initiatives and projects, but rather to carefully and prayerfully listen to God and to one another as we discern our way forward. It is this that has led us to identify the core theme for our work in 2021 as 'ROOTED'. This emerged from one of our online reflections in late November based on the words of Jesus "I am the Vine... remain in me". [John 15:5]

The road ahead remains unclear and will no doubt still contain its challenges. Yet this is a time of year when we follow a vulnerable couple on their journey to Bethlehem in the face of overwhelming struggle and uncertainty. Yet they did so with faithful confidence that

they were rooted in God's purposes and surrounded by God's love. Very often the difference between hope and despair is not so much the circumstances that we face but the way we understand them. Whatever we have endured and whatever is yet required of us, we are a people whose faith is rooted in Christ and whose shared foundation as the people of God can sustain us through this troubling journey.

This season will bring its own challenges, but on behalf of the NWBA team we offer our prayers and good wishes that it will for you and your church community prove to be a blessed and peaceful experience.

**Phil Jump (Regional Minister) on behalf of the NWBA Team.**

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## Christmas Message from Rachel Lawrence

Dear Brierfield Baptist Church

Greetings from a wet and windy Wales! I do hope you are all keeping well and safe in this build up to Christmas.

I am writing to share some news with you. Over the last 12 months I have had a real sense that God was leading me away from the Youth Department of WEC International and leading me into something new. After much seeking and praying God has provided the opportunity to work with Our Daily Bread Ministries in the logistics department sending out Christian literature. I will be starting this job at the end of January.

I remember going to the WEC UK headquarters, near London, in April 2011 with the intention

of helping the Youth Office for four months. Four months have turned into nearly ten years!

Every day in the Youth Office was an adventure and I loved it. I enjoyed the variety of work, whether it was children's camps, Sunday schools, holiday clubs, mission conferences or sorting out and organising resources. All with the aim of helping young people grow in their faith and get involved in what God was doing around the world. I am so thankful for all the people who came along over the years and helped me with all of these activities, the latest being Lydia who has agreed to take on the camp administration.

After serving in the Youth Office, I am looking forward to serving God in a new place. My heart is still that people come to know the Lord Jesus, grow in their faith and go on to serve Him. And so I will be working in a new place whose vision is to disciple people and help them grow more like the Lord Jesus.

Brierfield Baptist has always felt like 'home' to me. It didn't matter how often I could get back to visit or where I was coming back from, I knew I would always have a warm welcome and enjoy the fellowship and friendship there.

I thank you all for your prayers, support and encouragement over the years. They have meant so much to me!

So now I will be moving back into England. I will let you know how I get on and I will visit whenever I can :)

Thank you again and may God bless you all richly,

*Rachel Lawrence*

		<b>Preacher</b>	<b>Door Steward</b>	<b>Morning Service Leader</b>
<b>2021</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	10.30 am	The Elders	J. Greenwood	B. Baldwin
	Vestry Prayers:	Nigel		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
10 <sup>th</sup> January	10.30 am	Geoff Hartley	C. l'Anson	G. Fogg
	Vestry Prayers:	Donald		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
17 <sup>th</sup> January	10.30 am	Howard Ellison	G. Leeming	N. Leeming
	Vestry Prayers:	David		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
24 <sup>th</sup> January	10.30 am	Nigel Leeming	A. Higgin	G. Leeming
	Vestry Prayers:	Philip		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
31 <sup>st</sup> January	10.30 am	Daniel Parkinson	C. Leeming	K. Rowland
	Vestry Prayers:	Nigel		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
7 <sup>th</sup> February	10.30 am	John Caddy	S. Dunham	M. Lewis
	Vestry Prayers:	Donald		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
14 <sup>th</sup> February	10.30 am	Kath Rowland	J. Greenwood	B. Baldwin
	Vestry Prayers:	David		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
21 <sup>st</sup> February	10.30 am	Stephen Wells	G. Leeming	G. Fogg
	Vestry Prayers:	Philip		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		
28 <sup>th</sup> February	10.30 am	Geoff Hartley	E. Wilkes	K. Rowland
	Vestry Prayers:	Nigel		
	6.00 pm	<b>No Evening Service</b>		

**PLEASE NOTE ANY PART OF THIS PAGE MAY CHANGE AT SHORT NOTICE**