

'In Touch'

**The magazine of
Forest Gate Baptist Church, Blackpool.**



Summer 2016

I Will Move the Rock

A man was sleeping at night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light and the Saviour appeared. The Lord told the man he had work for him to do and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might.

This the man did, day after day. For many years he toiled from sun up to sun down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmovable rock, pushing with all his might. Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain.

Seeing that the man was showing signs of discouragement, Satan decided to enter the picture by placing thoughts into the man's mind such as: "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time and it hasn't budged. Why kill yourself over this? You are never going to move it."

Thus giving the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure, these thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man even more. "Why kill myself over this?" he thought. "I'll just put in time, giving just the minimum effort, and that will be good enough."

And that he planned to do until one day he decided to make it a matter of prayer and take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. "Lord", he said, "I have laboured long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock by half a millimetre. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

To this the Lord responded compassionately, “My friend, when I asked you to serve me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. Now you come to me, with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed, but, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinewed and brown, your hands are callused from constant pressure, and your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition, you have grown much and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yet you haven’t moved the rock. Your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in My wisdom. This you have done.

“I, my friend, will now move the rock.”

At times when we hear a word from God, we tend to use our own intellect to decipher what he wants, when actually what God wants is just simple obedience and faith in him...

By all means, exercise the faith that moves mountains, but it is still God who moves the mountains.

**God, You call us to obedience every day. Sometimes, I want to see beyond obedience. I want to know why, how and when. Yet, it is usually long after the obedience that I begin to realise that Your plan was back then. So help me just to be obedient for today. I am learning, Lord that by being obedient today, I am stronger for tomorrow,
In Jesus’ Name,**

AMEN.

Top 10 Predictions No Matter Who Wins the Election

- 1. The Bible will still have all the answers.**
- 2. Prayer will still work.**
- 3. The Holy Spirit will still move.**
- 4. God will still inhabit the praises of His people.**
- 5. There will still be God-anointed preaching.**
- 6. There will still be singing of praise to God.**
- 7. God will still pour his blessings upon His people.**
- 8. There will still be room at the Cross.**
- 9. Jesus will still love you.**
- 10. Jesus will still save the lost.**

**ISN'T IT GREAT TO KNOW WHO IS STILL IN
CONTROL?**

**God has a reason for
allowing things to happen.
We may never understand
His wisdom but we simply have to
trust His will.**

TOAST and Junior Church

In the last few months we have had plenty to do in Junior Church and our fortnightly Youth Group, TOAST.

In Junior Church we have been looking at some of the lesser known characters from the Bible. I am sure that, if asked to name a famous person from scripture, names such as Rahab, Onesimus, Dorcas and Naaman would not be the ones to come up! Each week, we have looked at some of these individuals and the role they played, however small or unlikely. Most weeks we play games, have a story and some puzzles or creative work. The fruits of our labours can usually be seen on the whiteboard in the downstairs room – have a look. Indeed, when you browse the work that the young people have done, quiz them on it. That'll prove whether they've actually got the message!!!

As for TOAST, we still meet every other Tuesday during the school term. That means that our session on Tuesday, 12th July will be our last until September. Our final session will be our traditional trip to Stanley Park when the wickets, cricket balls, footballs and frisbees come out. Then again, if it rains (come on, July in Blackpool!) we'll have a games night inside the church. Over the course of the last few sessions, we have had a Euro 2016 Quiz, Easter activities and numerous games nights. The favoured games include 'corners' and 'chair basketball'. The rules have kind of evolved over the months of playing these games. We have the occasional dispute, but it is always amicably resolved.

As always at this time of year, the Junior Church Team are taking a well-deserved break over August. If there are any members of the church congregation who are willing to help cover the weekly slots over Summer, it would be much appreciated. There are certain safeguarding

requirements, but if you think you can help, the Deacons would be very interested to hear from you.

Anthony Lord

B.M.S. World Mission
Keeping Families together in Thailand

Monmanat is an 8 year old boy who was born blind and, because of cerebral palsy, is immobile. His mother, Sor, loves her son very much and is dedicated to his treatment, but providing for her family is difficult. The support they receive from the Church of Christ in Thailand Aids Ministry (CAM) and BMS mission worker Judy Cook has helped to keep this family together. "I think it's more beneficial for a child to be with their family, if it's safe than to take them somewhere better equipped, cleaner and has everything but doesn't have mother love," says Judy.

During their monthly visits CAM supports Sor financially while Judy provides nappies, milk, emotional support and foam wedges which prop Monmanat up and give him a chance to develop the muscles in his neck. Judy also helps Sor with exercises that keep the little boy's joints loose and prevent his muscles from weakening or contracting.

Sor and Monmanat have a long and challenging road ahead of them, but thanks to the love and support they receive from Judy and CAM, Sor can continue to care for her son and give him the love that he needs.

If you would like to support the B.M.S. or Home Mission Boxes can be obtained from Ken Morley or Lindsay Smith to put in small change. These are emptied four times a year and sent to the B.M.S.

Blackpool Schools and Youth Work

Blackpool Schools and Youth Work are an organisation which goes into over 30 Blackpool schools.

Below is taken from their June Prayer Letter and is a report from Scripture Union's Magazine "Connecting You"

"New Guardians of Ancora school clubs are a big hit!"

In January we shared our plans to introduce our new digital game *Guardians of Ancora* into schools, and asked for your support. Through your generosity, your prayers and God's blessing – it's happening!

We are always looking for new ways of sharing Jesus with children and young people. Across the country, our local mission workers are out sharing the gospel with children every day, and are often the first to spot new mission opportunities and develop initiatives to use them, so when we hear about these initiatives, we take them and turn them into something that can be shared with other churches and local mission partners, so that many more children and young people can be blessed.

When we launched our digital game *Guardians of Ancora* Last July, we hoped in particular it would mean that children with no church background could hear the gospel perhaps for the first time. Katy Finney, who works for our local mission partner Blackpool Schools and Youth Work (BSYW) has developed an amazing new way to do this in a schools setting.

Katy already runs lunch and after school clubs for children aged 8-11. When *Guardians of Ancora* was launched she immediately spotted the potential for creating new clubs based on the game. She sounded out some local schools on the idea – seven were interested straight away! Katy worked with one of them to pilot the

first *Guardians of Ancora* club last October. Since then, six more schools have launched clubs (and there's a waiting list of children keen to join), and a further ten local schools have asked Katy to set up clubs for their children too!

Most *Guardian of Ancora* schools' clubs run for an hour a week over a term. At the outset, Katy loads the game onto computer tablets (most schools provide these). The children start by playing the same session of *Guardian of Ancora*. Then Katy runs an interactive session, such as a quiz or discussion, to draw out the scriptural meaning of the games session. Katy says 'I don't need to say much – the children are usually really keen to share their thoughts with each other!'

What's really exciting is that many of the children know little of Christianity and have no church background – but they go on to download and play *Guardian of Ancora* at home in preference to some of the most popular commercial games and Katy knows, from the subsequent discussion sessions, that they are learning lots about Jesus!

Rob Steward, Scripture Union's *Schools* Worker in the area heard about this success and wondered if it would work elsewhere too. He and Katy shared the *Guardians of Ancora* school club concept with other local mission partners, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Well done Katy!

The website for BSYW is www.bsyw.org if you would like to know more of what they do.

Their new assembly theme is Jesus Feeds Five Thousand People, please pray for lots of miracles.

Love Russia - Anna's Story

I was 5 when I was taken to an orphanage because my parents lost custody over me, my brother and two sisters. At first we were put together, but as I began to experience epileptic seizures, I was moved from one orphanage to another since no one knew how to deal with my problem. I ended up in Yelatma orphanage a long way from anywhere else, where most of the children had learning difficulties. We rarely left the building.

Once I was 16 and too old for the orphanage, I made the long bus ride to Ryazan to stay with relatives. I was scared as I didn't know them but didn't stay long; I moved into a college dormitory to train as a seamstress. It was very much like being back at Yelatma. Academic courses were not an option as my literacy skills were very poor. At the end of the course I was no longer entitled to a dormitory bed. I looked for somewhere to live, but nothing worked out. Not quite knowing where I would stay from one night to the next, I was relieved and happy to meet a guy who said he loved me.

We'd not been dating long when I fell pregnant. We moved in with my relatives until the baby was born and after a while he became violent and frightening. By the time I was 20 I couldn't take it anymore and decided to leave. He kept begging me to come home and said he would change. I returned home but left again after realizing he hadn't changed. I went back to my relatives living on £48 a month for me and my baby. I couldn't afford childcare to enable me to work. I found a baby home where I could leave my son until my financial situation improved.

I visited him every day. At two years old he was moved to a nursery class and I was so happy that I could have him back at weekends. However, regular coughs and colds

meant I had to take days off work and I lost jobs over and over. My confidence hit zero.

I was introduced to a group where other young mums having also grown up in orphanages were finding help. Amidst all the practical help, group Mentor Galina and other counsellors helped me start believing in my abilities as a mother. They assured me that my baby needed and wanted me, which deep down I knew as I've always longed for my own mother.

More recently I met a man who knows all about my son. He is encouraging me on my journey to have my son live with me full time without any of the pressure and danger I felt from my last boyfriend. He seems keen to get to know us both and take one day at a time. My confidence is beginning to grow.

Anna

If you would like to know more about the work of the charity Love Russia or would like to make a donation, then go to their website: www.loverussia.org or have a word with Edna Rawding who will be pleased to tell you more about them.

Worship is giving God the best that He has given you. Whenever you get a blessing from God, give it back to Him as a gift of love.

Oswald Chambers

Celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday

In June we celebrated the Queen's 90th birthday at Forest Gate by having a Café Style Service around small round coffee tables. The Church was decorated with Union Jacks and flowers etc. and the congregation was encouraged to dress in red, white and blue.

In the middle of the service we had a break for coffee and a Birthday cake which was shared by all the congregation.

The service was enjoyed by all and at the end of the service everyone was given a copy of "The Servant Queen and the King she serves" which was published as a tribute for Her Majesty's 90th birthday. Excerpts from the book are in this magazine.

From the foreword by the Queen, of the above book reflecting on the words of a poem quoted by King George V1, in his Christmas broadcast in 1939:

I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown"

And he replied "Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way."

A Tale of Two Simes

The Queen receives thousands of letter and cards but she has an amazing memory for detail and tremendous care for individual people.

Every year from 1952 Albert Alfred Simes sent a Christmas card from Izmir in Turkey to the reigning monarch until he died in 2011 aged 102. In 1972, he was invited to meet the Queen at a reception in Izmir. His grandson, Andrew, writing on Facebook, recalls the event:

“When it was his turn to be introduced to the Queen, instead of a formal handshake, she paused, smiled and quipped: “So it’s you who keeps sending me those lovely Christmas cards.”

When his grandfather died in the summer of 2011, Andrew took up the baton and sent a Christmas card to the Queen. The following January, he received a letter from her. Andrew explains:

‘In it was written:

“I received a letter from a different Simes this Christmas, I instructed my office to research your grandfather’s whereabouts. Therefore, it is with much sadness, I have learned of his passing and extend my condolences to you and your family.”

I couldn’t fight back the tears then, nor can I fight them back every time I remember this story of two people who left a lifelong impression on each other.’

From “The Servant Queen”

Empowering an Enthusiastic Team

Help each other be right - not wrong.

Look for ways to make new ideas work – not reasons they won't.

If in doubt, check it out! Don't make negative assumptions.

Help each other win and take pride in everyone's victories.

Speak positively about each other and about our fellowship at every opportunity.

Maintain a positive mental attitude, no matter what the circumstances.

Act with initiative and courage as if it all depends on you.

Do everything with enthusiasm – it's contagious!

Whatever you want, give it away.

Don't lose faith – never give up!

When things go wrong – laugh and learn!

Have fun!

ABC Toddler Group
(Adults, Babies and Children)

The Group is going from strength to strength with lots of children and parents, grandparents and carers, attending. We have an average attendance of 15-20 children most Monday mornings.

Some of the parents asked if we could open another morning, so we have been open on Fridays. The numbers on these mornings have been mixed but lately we have seen a rise in numbers.

We have various activities including making presents for Mother's Day and Father's Day and Easter activities, playing with play dough, drawing, painting etc.

The group closes for the Summer holidays with a party on Monday 18th July when we will have games, activities, dancing and party food. Four of our children will be leaving us for school and they will be presented with a children's bible. We will open again in September.

Thank you to all our staff for their help each week and for Maggie and Gemma who have been helping out.

**Liz, Janet, Olive, Lindsay,
Gemma and Maggie**

God asks you and me to put our faith in Him and to believe that we can do whatever He asks us to do. He is mighty to uphold us and make us stand. He will Support us and keep us from falling!

Joyce Meyer

Summer in Bavaria

For the fourth time in the last five years, I was privileged enough to spend a week in Ingolstadt, Bavaria, at the start of July. The opportunity arises because Ingolstadt is the home of Saint Aidan's partner school, Christoph Scheiner Gymnasium. Our two schools have been linked for almost 25 years and the exchange visits between our respective students have been going on for 20 years. The German students came to visit the Fylde Coast in March and enjoyed days in our school, as well as trips to Lancaster, Chester, the Pleasure Beach and bowling at Thornton YMCA. It was great for them to experience English culture at first hand.

Our return, always at the end of June, saw 20 of our students go to live with families in Bavaria, Southern Germany. As you would expect, the weather was very hot and the week was enhanced by the live showings of the European Football Championships on every corner! The students I accompanied were able to visit the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremburg as well as tour the city and its castle. The visit also took in Munich and the famous Englischer Garten park and the stunning shops in and around Marienplatz. Chantelle, Tory and I were also lucky enough to visit Chiemsee lake by the Austrian border and take in the pretty walled town of Ingolstadt itself and its immense Dom (Minster). Ingolstadt is a very affluent town (it is the German headquarters of Audi) with lots of lovely bars and restaurants.

It was a joy to take our students over there and enjoy German culture for a week. Teaching is not an easy profession, but there are one or two perks. I certainly feel privileged to have experienced the education systems and taught lessons, in China, Russia, France, South Africa and Germany over the years. I do hope that we'll still be welcome in them all after Brexit!

Anthony Lord