

Church Together

God Says: 'I Will Build My Church'

13th October 2024



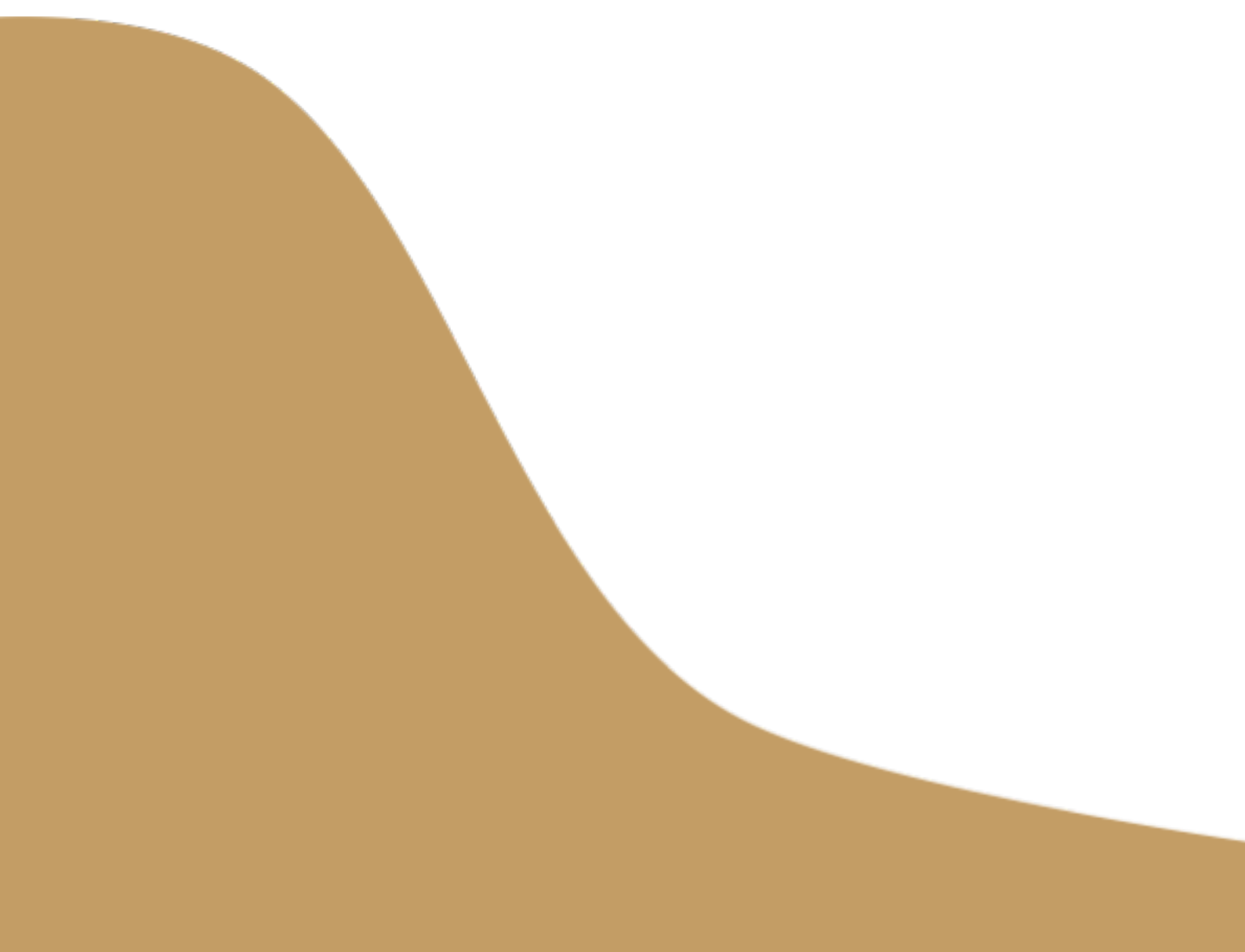
Welcome

In today's Service we will be looking at: **Acts 2 v. 41 – 47**

The theme for our service today is: **God Says: 'I Will Build My Church'**

Our service today also includes: **Communion**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today's service and that you would be able to **Celebrate The Church's 281st Anniversary And Know That The Church Is Built By God To Have A Future!**



Call To Worship

Psalm 9 v. 1 - 2 NLT

I will thank you, Lord, with all my heart;

I will tell of all the marvellous things you have done.

I will be filled with joy because of you.

I will sing praises to your name, O Most High

1743. 1893.

THIS TABLET IS ERECTED IN A SPIRIT OF DEVOUT THANKFULNESS TO GOD, AND TO COMMEMORATE THE 150 YEARS OF BLESSING WHICH HAVE FOLLOWED THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH IN THIS PLACE IN 1743.

DURING THIS PERIOD AN EVER GROWING ATTENDANCE ON THE MEANS OF GRACE HAS NECESSITATED THE BUILDING OR RE-BUILDING OF 3 CHAPELS ON THIS SITE, VIZ. IN 1743, 1803, 1843, ALSO EXTENSIVE ALTERATIONS IN 1893.

NO FEWER THAN 14 CHURCHES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HAVE BEEN FORMED AS THE SPIRITUAL CHILDREN OR GRAND-CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH WORSHIPPING HERE, THE COMBINED MEMBERSHIP AT PRESENT BEING 2591.

"THIS IS THE LORD'S DOING AND IT IS MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES" MATT. 21 CH. 42 V. 9.

"BE NOT WEARY IN WELL DOING" 2 THESS. 3 CH. 13 V. 5.

NOVEMBER 1893.

Song Suggestion

Lord For The Years



Psalm Of Praise

We have gathered here today Lord as your people, your Church meeting together in your presence on this 281st Church Anniversary. We welcome each other and above all, we welcome You, Heavenly Father into our presence and time together. Make yourself known to us in new ways through our worship, our prayers and our understanding of your Word today. May our Church here at Salendine Nook be built on the firm foundations of Jesus, who said: 'I will build my Church'.

This is your day, Lord and we shall praise you this day!

This is your day, Lord and we shall declare you name this day! This is your day, Lord and we shall worship you today as the risen Saviour and our heavenly King!

Bless us as we seek to build your kingdom here on earth and in this community that we call home. Bless the singing of your praise, the reading of your Word, the sharing of our fellowship, the prayers that will be heard, so that we may grow in our faith and walk with you. Bless us as we meet together, dear Lord we pray.

Amen

Communion

As we gather today we come to share in this act of Communion together, remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the Cross. We remember the price that he paid for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together. We come in faith, conscious of our weakness, seeking to renounce our sin, humbly putting our trust in Christ, and seeking his grace, as we look forward to the day when he will come again.

A prayer of Thanksgiving:

Heavenly Father, we offer you this day our praise and thanksgiving; we thank you for raising Jesus to life again and exalting him so that we might call him 'Lord', as we offer our faithfulness to him and seek to share in his ways. Loving Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit, powerfully present in your people and your world, for the fellowship of your church, and for all the means of grace and the hope of glory. Living God, fill us with your Spirit, that as we share this bread and this cup we may feed on the body and blood of Christ, and be empowered for service in your world. Heavenly Father, accept our prayers and thanksgiving in the name of Jesus, the light of the world and the life of your people.

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I also pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of

me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 - 26

After all have received the bread and the cup and after a period of silence, we end with these words in a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the blessings received at the Table:

Leader: Your death, O Lord, we commemorate. Your resurrection we celebrate. Your final coming we await. May the glory be to you, O Lord.

Response: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Loving Gracious God, we praise you for what you have given and for what you have promised us here. You have made us one with all who know you as Lord and Saviour. You have fed us with the bread of life and renewed us for your service. Now we give ourselves to you and we ask that our daily living may be part of the life of your eternal kingdom, and that our love may be your love in the world where we find ourselves., through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray these things.

Amen

Bible Reading

Acts 2 v. 41 – 47 NIV


41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold

property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

A photograph of a natural rock archway leading to a view of the ocean. The arch is made of light-colored, textured rock. The ocean is a deep blue, with white foam from waves crashing against rocks in the distance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The text is centered over the image.

Sometimes God
has to shake
your foundation
to set you free.

Song Suggestion

Take My Life And Let It Be



Tithes, Gifts & Offerings



No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.

Church Together

Thought

Monday 1st July – Monday 30th September 2024 were the dates of my Sabbatical leave from Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Ministers don't stop learning as soon as they leave college, or even when they complete the studies required of Newly Accredited Ministers. The process of learning should be life – long, through both day to day study and experience. Sometimes, however, it helps to stand back from regular ministerial duties and to take time to study, reflect and pray at greater leisure than the demands of ministry allow. The purpose of a sabbatical is to enrich a minister's ministry and make it more effective, which benefits both the minister and the church. Baptists Together encourages ministers to take study leave every seven years from the commencement of accreditation. (2024 will be my 29th year in pastoral ministry, since the date of my first church appointment). This normally follows initial formation and training at college. This provision is included in the recommended terms of appointment. Sabbatical leave should be for a period of time, of up to three months, to ensure that the benefits of a significant break from duties can be enjoyed, whereby the minister can feel refreshed in all areas of life (mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually). I have always been intrigued by 'Church Growth' and the

methodology of how this happens, therefore, the working title of my sabbatical was: 'Why when churches seem to engage in similar activities do some churches thrive and grow, while other churches either just keep the status quo or even in some cases dwindle and eventually close'. 'Is there a reason for this'?

Ministry in 2024 is not the same as it was when I began my ministerial journey in 1994. Church culture and societies outlook on Church has changed and it is this that has drawn me to look at this particular 'theme' in more detail.

As I looked at this 'theme' I meet with several ministers from different denominational backgrounds and explored with them a series of questions, so as to unpack the 'theme' of my sabbatical. As I reflected, I asked questions about their outlook and understanding on what they feel makes churches thrive and grow and why they feel that some churches stagnate and eventually close. Some of the questions I asked were:

What do you feel lies at the heart of Church growth?

What, if anything, is non – negotiable, if a church is to see development that leads to it thriving and growing?

How do ministers face up to the tension of balancing their personal expectations of church growth with the reality that in 2024, church seems to be irrelevant to the most of society?

How is a minister's time best spent – helping a church to reach its full potential or helping a church to come to a natural end?

I wanted to be able to decide what beneficial changes I possibly needed to make within my own ministry and the

life of the church that I currently serve to best incorporate into my continuing development and journey as a Christian Minister over the last several years before my retirement.

My sabbatical is more about reflection than practical doing and I hoped that it was possible to read a few books that would help in looking at the theme I had chosen. I chose to look at a theme that involved some theological reading, research, ministerial / denominational meetings and various church attendance at different denominational settings.

The books I read were:

On This Rock (simple lessons and achievable habits for church growth) by Alex Harris & Chrissy Remsberg.

Love Your Church (8 great things about being a church member) by Tony Merida

Vital Signs (20 ways to put whole - life discipleship at the heart of your church) by Ken Benjamin

Your Church Can Grow by C. Peter Wagner

Releasing Your Church To Grow by David Beer

I also meet up with the following ministers:

Rev. Mark Janes Minister at New North Road Baptist Church, Huddersfield

Rev. Abbie Palmer Priest In Charge at St. Stephen's Church (Anglican), Lindley Huddersfield

Rev. Sue Taylor Minister at Lindley Methodist Church, Huddersfield

Pastor Ian Goodson Minister at Grace Church (FIEC) Wakefield

Rev. Ruth Wood Minister at Dewsbury Baptist Church

Rev. Sarah Fitton Minister at Waverly (Focal) URC Church

I also intended on sabbatical to visit several different churches, so that I could experience a variety of different worship styles. The churches I visited were:

Lindley Methodist Church, Huddersfield

Raglan Baptist Church, South Wales

Bryn Sion Baptist Church, Trecynon, South Wales

Oakes Baptist Church, Huddersfield

New North Road Baptist Church, Huddersfield

Barton Baptist Church, Torquay

St. Stephen's Parish Church, Lindley

Huddersfield Christian Fellowship, Huddersfield

Song Suggestion

Tell Out My Soul



Church Growth Comes From

Everyone being loved and knowing that they are loved by God and each other

A genuine desire to reach people outside of the church

An authenticity for sharing the Gospel, no matter what the cost

Relationships are key - they need to be honest and true!

Churches grow when there is generous and intentional hospitality

There needs to be a willingness to engage in something new, even if it fails

Learn from the mistakes of the past and don't repeat them

Bring people into the building, no matter the cost to the church

Growing churches welcome people with open arms - no clicks or hidden agendas

Having a clear vision and spiritual maturity

People make decisions together - from the bottom up and not the top down

Communication, Communication, Communication

Growing churches dream dreams and know the direction in which they are going

Breaking tasks down into manageable steps, aims and goals

Fundamental core values are non-negotiable

Prayer is key in knowing what God desires for His church

Sacrificial modelling of what it means to be an authentic follower of Jesus

Prayer

An openness to what God can and is able to do - if we let Him



I Will Build
MY CHURCH
-Jesus

Church Growth Comes From

A false and superficial love and acceptance of others and Christ

Actions and motives that are not founded on reasons for things to be, not out of a desire for the things of Christ, but for self motivation

Looking inward rather than looking outward

Being stuck in the same ways of doing things - keeping the status quo, it has to be done this way

Demands of the building and the ideology of maintenance - keep the building going at all costs

Historical differences and church structures

Factors beyond the church - secular society, people want what the world can give, not what the church can offer

The demographics that are around the church

A lack of desire to do good outreach and the lack of funding for that outreach to happen

Internal scrapping and fighting

Lack of openness to the work of the Holy Spirit

The Iceberg Syndrome - It all looks good from the outside, but look deeper and you will find multiple problems

A lack of resources - people, finance, time

Limit of flexibility of both people and buildings

A lack of Biblical ideas. If they are not present then nothing happens

Holding on to the past in traditions and attitudes

It's either my way or no way

A failure of older generations to allow a younger generation to take the reigns of moving the church forward

Fear

I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH
AND THE GATES OF HELL
SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT

MATTHEW 16:18



Prayers Of Intercession

God of Eternity, we gather today to give thanks for the past. We think back to those who first had a vision of a church here in this place, to those who gave of their labour, their finance, their time and energy to make it happen.

God of Eternity, we also give thanks for our present and our future. As we gather here today we look for hope. The present may be unsettling, the future is uncertain. We hope that in the goodness of your love that your guidance will be ever - present as we build on the foundation, that is Jesus.

Fill us with a vision for what we could be. Give us hope for our congregation and our community that lead us into your abundance and not our scarcity.

God of Eternity, in a time of uncertainty we so often fall into fear and worry, therefore show us the opportunities in our chaotic world, remind us of our priorities in relationship to you, push us to see how our choices matter, and then fill us with hope in a new heaven and a new earth.

God of our future, may we walk boldly into what may come, as a people of faith and hope. May we be found faithful in the world in which we live because our lives as your church is built on solid ground.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power
And the glory, forever and ever.
Amen

Song Suggestion

To God Be The Glory



Blessing

We give you thanks at the end of our time together today for all the ways that you bless our lives: for the love of family and friends, the joy of knowing you as our Lord and Saviour and hearing your word.

Send Your Holy Spirit among us on this our Church Anniversary so that we might dream your dreams and see visions of what you intended your church to be. Guide our thoughts and actions. Bring us closer to you so that we might do your will and dwell in your house forever.

Amen