



# Bunyan Meeting

## Mill Street

## Bedford

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025

The First Sunday of Lent



# Welcome to worship at Bunyan Meeting

*Bunyan Meeting is an Independent Church founded in 1650 and is affiliated to The Congregational Federation and The Baptist Union.*

Following the services tea and coffee will be served in the church foyer.

Children are welcome to use the activities provided in the children's corner and church foyer during morning worship.

If this is your first visit to Bunyan Meeting, please introduce yourself to one of our stewards.

## Our services today

- 9.30am Christ, Coffee & Croissants, All Age worship
- 11.00am Morning worship  
conducted by Rev'd Barry Osborne
- 6.30pm Evening worship  
conducted by Rev'd Barry Osborne

## Our services next Sunday

- 11.00am Morning worship  
conducted by our Minister
- 6.30pm Evening worship with Communion  
conducted by our Minister

*Our services are livestreamed. If you do not wish to appear on the livestream you can evade the reach of the camera by sitting at the sides or in the back two rows of the central seating of the ground floor of the church or in the central back gallery.*

You can also join us live at our services on our **YouTube Channel**.  
Just go to:



<https://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk/live>

***Please keep silence before our service when the Bible is brought into church and use this time for reflection and private prayer***

## Our church flowers today



are given by Alan and Gilly Millbery  
in memory of Gilly's parents Peter and Janet Barratt

**The offering** for Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March was £1192.45  
(£442.45 was given in Church and an average of £750 in  
direct giving).

**We pray for members and friends of the church,  
remembering especially:**

Samantha Nightingale

Jo-Ann Gaunt

The family and friends of Queenie Murdie

Audrey Mehew

For your prayers

## **The special prayer for the First Sunday of Lent**

O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights: Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

### **‘The Baptist Union**

This week we pray for the Yorkshire Baptist Association. Their vision is to grow disciples by multiplying healthy churches across Yorkshire, and they aim to do this through planting, revitalising and reimagining. [www.yba.org.uk](http://www.yba.org.uk)

### **Congregational Federation**

Anchor, Wandsworth

MORNING WORSHIP at 11.00am  
Hymns from Baptist Praise and Worship

Opening Voluntaries

Welcome and Notices

Introit

Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Hymn No. 10

*How pleased and blest was I*

Introduction to Theme: "Making a Saviour"

Hymn No. 219

*It is a thing most wonderful*

First Reading

Luke 4 v 1 – 13 (page 1030)

Read by Brian Cornish I

Anthem

Second Reading

Hebrews 2 v 5 – 10 (page 1202)

Read by Jenny Gunton

# Hymn No. 218

*Forty days and forty nights*

Sermon

# Hymn No. 204

*My song is love unknown*

Prayers of Intercession

Offering and Dedication

Hymn

1 In Christ alone my hope is found,  
He is my light, my strength, my song;  
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,  
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!  
My Comforter, my All in All,  
here in the love of Christ I stand.

2 In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,  
fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
scorned by the ones He came to save:  
Till on that cross as Jesus died,

the wrath of God was satisfied -  
for every sin on Him was laid;  
here in the death of Christ I live.

3 There in the ground His body lay,  
light of the world by darkness slain:  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
up from the grave He rose again!  
And as He stands in victory,  
sin's curse has lost its grip on me,  
for I am His and He is mine -  
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

4 No guilt in life, no fear in death,  
this is the power of Christ in me;  
from life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No power of hell, no scheme of man,  
can ever pluck me from His hand;  
till He returns or calls me home,  
here in the power of Christ I'll stand!

Stuart Townend (born 1963) and Keith Getty (born 1974)  
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[www.kingswayworship.co.uk](http://www.kingswayworship.co.uk) Used by permission.

## The Blessing

## Closing Voluntary

CCLI Licence No. 3740

EVENING WORSHIP at 6.30pm  
Hymns from Baptist Praise and Worship  
“A Covenant of Grace”

Welcome and Notices

Call to Worship

Hymn No. 566  
*To God be the glory!*

Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer

First Reading  
Romans 10 v 8b – 13 (page 1137)

Hymn No. 550  
*Amazing grace!*

Second Reading  
Ephesians 2 v 1 – 10 (page 1174)

Prayers of Intercession

Hymn No. 382  
*I will sing the wondrous story*



Sermon

Silent Prayer

Offering and Dedication

Hymn No. 233

*When I survey*

The Blessing

Closing Voluntary

CCLI Licence No. 3740

# Bunyan Meeting News Letter

## Our Visiting Minister

We welcome Rev'd Barry Osborne to lead our worship today.

"Hello! I am delighted to be with you today. This is my second visit to Bunyan Meeting but the first was many years ago so it is unlikely anyone will remember me.

I grew up in a Baptist Church in St Leonards-on-Sea where later I was baptised and received into membership. Most of my ministry has been in rural mission. I served 21 years as a joint pastor of an Independent Baptist Church, but since 1990 I have held three pastorates in Congregational churches and provided oversight for two more. My latest charge was at Yelvertoft, Northamptonshire.

Having retired from pastoral ministry, I now live in Market Harborough where I am a member of the local Congregational Church and serve on its Steering Group. I am a Past President of the Congregational Federation and serve on one of its Accreditation and Pastoral Care Co-ordination Groups.

I am delighted to bring greetings from Market Harborough Congregational Church and Rural Missions."

## Bunyan Flower Arranging Group - March 2025

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 12 March** at 7.30pm in the Hall. It's a practical session entitled *Keep it Simple* with a nice easy arrangement to start off the year. One bunch of tulips, some large leaves, using a low container and of course a base.



This is one I did a few weeks ago and the tulips lasted for ages without twisting or bending.

The foliage is Arum Italicum Pictum, Laurel and some Fern. Fatsia, Bergenia or large Ivy leaves would also work well.

Depending on where you park, please enter either via the door on St Cuthbert's roundabout or the door in the top right hand corner of the Church garden.

I will have printed copies of the year's programme with me.

I look forward to seeing you all and of course we always welcome newcomers.

*Gilly Millbery*

## **Thank You**

I just wanted to send a 'Thank You' to all who came and provided cakes for my Grandfather's Funeral. Special thanks to Jocelyn for playing the organ, to Chris for leading the service and also to Gilly for doing the flowers.

*Ruth Blake*

## **Funeral**

The funeral service for the Late Queenie Murdie will be held at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 10.00am.

All friends from Bunyan Meeting are invited to attend.

## **Let the Little Children Come to Me**

During my years as a Presbyterian Minister, I have learned an important truth about first time fathers. It's this: if Dad is a football fan, he will without fail buy his son or daughter a baby-sized team strip. Then as soon as the little one is up to it, he will start to take him or her along to games. If being a parent means anything, it means teaching your children from their earliest days to love what you love.

If there is one thing which has typified the collapse of confidence of Christian churches in Britain in the last century, it has been the strange assumption that Christian worship is not for children. An anonymous X account went viral a few weeks ago when he tweeted (now deleted) about being admonished after a service by a curate for his fidgeting toddler because the boy was distracting the adults. Not only is this sort of thing common, but across the whole spectrum of denominations, it has become completely normal for children to be hustled out of a side door before the service has gone too far; or perhaps steered in a different direction from their parents the moment they enter the building. Or even for entirely

different events, with paint and glue and games, to be put on for the children at different times or on different days. For surely Christian worship is for adults; and children will find it far too boring.

Perhaps, in far too many cases, the reason for this is that it **is** boring. It's not the children's fault if they are not grabbed by the twaddle that emanates from the mouths of many of the ordained, a thin layer of spiritual jargon stretched across the content of a standard Guardian article. Nor if they fail to be excited by songs with lyrics, or tunes, or both, of astonishingly mediocre content and poetry. But the solution is not to banish the children to a poorly-recreated child-centred play group in a different room or at a different time. The answer is to realise that the adults have themselves lost their grip on what Christian worship, and perhaps, what Christianity actually is.

**If we don't want to teach our children to love it, it's probably because we don't love it ourselves:**

For Christian worship is the most beautiful, arresting, challenging, exciting, dynamic and life-transforming activity that a human being can engage in. It is all about the most stupendous event in history, when God became man to do battle with all the evils of the world, triumphing over them in the most mind-boggling way. It confronts us with the darkness of our own souls, and provides the only means of rescue from it; it meets the reality of human suffering not with platitudes and shallow politics but with the power of God to defeat it forever, through his own decision to enter into it and lift it from us.

Christian worship is an encounter with the living God, who by his Holy Spirit makes the Son of God as really present with us as he was for those who sat at his feet in Galilee, and through him adopts us to be his children and speak to him as our Father. In Christian worship our desire for meaning encounters true beauty; our desire for justice encounters the absolute righteousness of God; our need for mercy meets his true forgiveness; our craving for truth is met by the utter truthfulness of his word, spoken and preached to us; and our longing for joy finds its true home in the songs of God's salvation which his people have sung for perhaps three thousand years and sometimes more. Where God the Holy

Trinity is worshipped rightly, we meet a greater challenge than in the most extreme of extreme sports; we are trained and transformed with more rigour than in the most effective workout; we behold a beauty more intense than in the most profound art or the most gorgeous music.

The biblical story of salvation has more excitement than the best movie and more drama than the greatest of plays; indeed, nearly all the plotlines of both are mere riffs on the Christian original. To hear the Creator of the universe address us as his children, to fill our lungs and throats with his praises, to be challenged and transformed by listening to his words of rebuke, command and blessing, to eat at the table of God himself ... these are things with a million echoes, but no parallels, in this world. To gather with a Christian church for worship is an experience like no other. It confronts, it elevates, it destroys what is bad and rebuilds good in its place, in ways so profound that those who make it a regular part of their lives often find themselves transformed in ways they (and others) could never have imagined.

If we have thought that this is not for children, then it's probably because we have not appreciated it ourselves. If we don't want to teach our children to love it, it's probably because we don't love it ourselves. Sad to say, in many churches there has apparently been such a total collapse in the conviction that God is worth worshipping, his words worth hearing, his praises worth singing - in other words, that God is actually God - that the children really are probably better off elsewhere.

But this does not have to be the case. In our church, whilst there is a playroom with toys and books for parents to escape with children who are letting off a little too much steam, we encourage them to keep their offspring in the service with them, and the other adults to be happy that they are there. Of course, the glories of Jesus Christ and his gospel are far beyond children to grasp. Their minds are only capable of understanding the merest edges of it. The same is true of football; but children who learn to love football at an early age will in time have no trouble grasping the subtleties of the offside rule or what constitutes a legitimate tackle. Those who learn to love God will, when older, hungrily devour more detailed teaching about who he is and what he has done.

The time will come when they will no longer fidget and whinge, whilst the songs and words and attitudes they have learned will remain.

In the meantime, parents and preachers alike can do many things to help the children to engage with lots of what is going on, and to be patient with what is still beyond them. Singing, joining in liturgy, listening to the brilliant stories in so many Bible readings, watching what happens at Baptisms and the Lord's Supper are all fundamentally interesting things to children, if we are ready to guide them through the drama of what is happening. Children, just like adults, must be trained in the worship of God; and that starts by including them in it.

Where churches frame their worship around the vast magnitude of what God has done in Jesus Christ, confident that God's word, not a disintegrating secular society, is to be trusted, both children and adults will find that its dimensions exceed their grasp. But nevertheless they will also find that he really does, as the Apostle Paul said, bring them to see him face to face. And in so doing, to transform them from one degree of glory to another.

If churches fear that children will not be interested in their worship, they need to ask serious questions about what kind of worship they are engaged in. And meanwhile, if you want to experience the very best activity of the human body and soul which this world has to offer, come to church. To a real Christian church, focused on the salvation of sinners by the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and future return of Jesus Christ. And if you want the very best for your children too... bring them with you. "Let the little children come to me", said Jesus during his time on earth, "and do not hinder them, for to such belong the kingdom of God". He still says the same today.

Rev. Dr Matthew Roberts, Minister of Trinity Church, York

From: <https://thecritic.co.uk/let-the-little-children-come-to-me/>

## Lent at Bunyan Meeting – Reflections on the Cross

We are hosting the five Lent services when we shall welcome friends from ‘Bedford Town Centre Churches Together.’

The first service is on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 1.00pm.

Please join us if you can, all are welcome.

*Reflections on the Cross*

2025 LENT COURSE  
presented by  
Bedford Town Centre  
Churches Together

WEDNESDAYS at 1.00PM  
all at **BUNYAN MEETING**  
Mill Street, Bedford

Date	12 March	19 March	26 March	2 April	9 April
Led by	St Andrew's Church	St Joseph's Church	Bunyan Meeting	Polish Church	Salvation Army

## Ken's Wise Words

Love is like the wind, you can't see it but you can feel it.

Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

## The BMS Birthday Scheme

If you wish to support the important work of BMS World Mission, please contact Sue Hammond for details of their Birthday Scheme. It's a great way to celebrate a birthday as well as helping a great cause.



### *'Happy Birthday'*

Gilly Millbery      15<sup>th</sup> March

*Sue Hammond*

# Exhibition in the Basement at Bunyan



## COVER VERSIONS

paintings & prints by Roger Woodiuss

Basement @ Bunyan Mill Street, Bedford, MK40 3EU

11th-15th March open 11am-4pm admission free

private view: Monday 10th March 6-8 pm all welcome



# This week at Bunyan Meeting

## **MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup> March**

Come & Sing 1.30pm, Stevington Room

## **TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> March**

Website meeting 3.00pm

## **WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> March**

Wednesday Workshops 10.00am - 12noon &  
1.00pm - 3.00pm, Harrowden Room

Lent service led by St Andrew's Church 1.00pm, Church

Flower Arranging Group 7.30pm, Hall

## **THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> March**

Knit & Natter 11.00am – 12noon, Coffee Shop

## **SATURDAY 15<sup>th</sup> March**

Bible Study 10.00am – 11.30am, Deacons' Vestry

## **COFFEE SHOP**

Open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday  
10.00am – 1.00pm (2.00pm on Wednesdays)

## **JOHN BUNYAN MUSEUM**

### **Museum's opening times:**

Tuesday to Saturday 11am to 4pm (last entry 3.45pm).

[www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk/planning-your-visit](http://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk/planning-your-visit)

## **BASEMENT AT BUNYAN**

The Basement Gallery

Next exhibition

*Cover Versions* Paintings and prints by Roger Woodiwiss

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March – Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March

# Contact Information

Bunyan Meeting, Mill Street, Bedford MK40 3EU

<b>Minister:</b>	<b>Rev'd Christopher J Damp MA BD</b>
<i>Day off: Monday</i>	
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<b>Acting Church Treasurers:</b>	Brian Cornish, Andrew Duthie
<b>Organist &amp; Choirmaster:</b>	
<b>Church Secretary:</b>	Sue Gauley <b>Tel:</b> 01234 306772 <b>email:</b> gauleysusan@gmail.com
<b>Museum Director:</b>	Nicola Sherhod <b>Tel:</b> 01234 270303 <b>email:</b> curator@bunyanmeeting.co.uk
<b>Basement @ Bunyan Coordinator:</b>	Anne-Marie Abbate <b>Tel:</b> 07775 973501 <b>email:</b> amabbate@yahoo.com
<b>Caretaking Team:</b>	Jo Stapleton Alfie Stijelja Mick Dashwood (Saturdays)
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[Any views expressed in articles in the News Letter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent church policy or the views of the Minister, Officers of the church or the News Letter Editor]

## News Letter deadline

Please send items to the Editor, Jocelyn Harper,  
email: [jos.harpy@ntlworld.com](mailto:jos.harpy@ntlworld.com) Tel: 406969 by 6pm on Tuesday for inclusion in the Sunday newsletter. Thank you

Bunyan Meeting Charity No: 248195