



Redditch Baptist Church

July Newsletter

Look up

It seems a bit unnecessary to tell someone to 'look up', but sometimes it is really the best advice. When Jenny, our daughter was little she used to wonder why I would often tell her to look up. I used to say to her, "Look at the hills" and she would often seem to be a little unimpressed. She would say what a lot of small children seem to say, "Why Daddy?" My answer would be that she was missing the chance to see the beauty of the place we were in. You may be amused to know that I often said this when we were driving round the ring road in Redditch where you could see the hills and fields across towards Beoley and Bordesley; some of which have now been covered with a new housing development.

You may now think I am a bit strange, but I spent the first twenty years of my life in the Black Country. When, as children, we were taken on a Sunday School trip, the children would lean across to the side of the coach to see and get excited about seeing sheep and cows in the passing fields. As a child our house was next to a foundry and factories, with an enormous gassometer at gasworks at the bottom of the road. So, it was lovely to look up to see some beautiful scenery occasionally and by comparison Redditch was a different world.

Your situation or your mood can often show in the way you stand or the angle of your head, you can allow your head to drop and look down. When your feet are in the mud it is difficult of course to concentrate on anything else. Simply lifting your head and looking up can help to lift your mood. There are of course situations where where you are looking can have a dramatic effect on what is happening. For a number of years I went skiing, or synchronised falling. I gradually managed to progress from snow ploughing, to stay upright and control my parallel skis. It took me a while to realise that I needed to look where I wanted to go. As silly as it sounds, if a skier looks down the piste they will most likely go down that piste. Unfortunately if they look at the trees, it is quite likely that they will run into them. So looking up is very good advice.

I do not know if the Psalmist went skiing, but he was well aware of the benefit of looking up. In Psalm 121, he says, 'I lift up my eyes to the mountains - where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip - he who watches over you will not slumber'. (121 v 1-3)

So, look up! What have you been focusing on recently? What has been foremost in your mind, perhaps you should take time to look and refocus on what is important. Perhaps you should look to the one who is the real source of your strength.

At the church members meeting in June, we started by listening to a poem written by Rev Ali Taylor minister at Yardley Baptist Church. She was prompted to write the poem while she was at the Baptist Assembly this year <https://tinyurl.com/y8xkxu75> For her it summed up what she felt God had been saying to her through the sessions she had attended at the Assembly. I found it quite thought provoking and a timely reminder of how important it is for each of us to allow the Lord to help and influence all we try to do. Hopefully it could help us all stop and reset our hearts and minds. With our feet firmly on the ground and a focus in the right direction we can move forward sure of the direction we should be travelling. Going off piste is not always a good idea.

Tom King

The word is 'up'
Numbers up
Money up
People up

Things are looking up
And it's exciting and encouraging

But my call to you is to look up

Look up to Me
Lay down the busyness
Set aside the rush

Don't get caught up in the numbers game
Still your hearts and minds

And look up

Look up and see Me
See My hope rise
My joy rise
My peace rise
Like light shards breaking the horizon
As the sun comes up

Look up

Before you show up
Before you stand up
Before you speak up

Before you take up
Before you stir up
Before you rise up

Look up
And let what you see in Me
Be seen through you
In all you do

Look up
Keep looking up
Because things are looking up!

David Pickup considers clocks

When the time is wrong

See then that ye walk circumspectly, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5, 15-16)

There is something that really irritates me in church. The clock is wrong. It is always five minutes fast. I do not mean the clock in the tower, that has not worked for years. There is a wall clock at the back of the church. It must have been put there for the service leader to tell when to start.

At our school there was always a bell which sounded when to change lessons. The bell rang and the pupils put away their books and got up to go to the next lesson. This used to really annoy the teacher who shouted, "that is a bell for me, not you!"

I do not know why no-one in our church has put the time right. What are churchwardens doing? Perhaps I am wrong and they have tried. The good thing is that at nine o'clock or five to nine, the leader of matins has the option of giving it another few minutes for others to come in. Or, if I had a meeting I could end five minutes early and no-one would be the wiser!



...Rodney, I've been meaning to have a word
with you about your carbon footprint!

By the Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York, where he is a spiritual director.

Just Listen!

Techno-dinosaur and curmudgeon that I am, I have clung to my old plug-in satnav for far too long. It has finally given up the ghost, and I have listened to the superior wisdom of Madame-my-wife, and started to use my smartphone, held in place via a holder on the car's dash, to navigate around areas I'm not familiar with.

Except of course, this morning, I thought I knew better than the info on the phone which advised an unusual route as I set off in the direction of my hydrotherapy session. (Techno-dinosaur, curmudgeon AND falling to bits- what a combination!). And ran into a long traffic queue at the new and extensive road works in the next village. Serves me right.

There's value in listening to someone who knows. The data on the phone had already taken into account the fact that the traffic queue would make me late, and had re-routed me away from the bottleneck. But curmudgeonly dinosaurs often think they know better- to their cost.

The art is, of course, in knowing who knows best. There are many false guides in this world, but it is the witness of Christians throughout time and throughout the world that listening to God- in prayer, or through His word- is a trusted way of navigating our way through today's world where many voices clamour for our attention, not all of which are trustworthy.

That great Welsh hymn 'Guide me O thou great Jehovah' is one of many which sings of our trust in God to guide us. It talks of being pilgrims through a land without waymarks, and it asks God to 'hold me with Thy powerful hand'. Here is Someone who knows and who is worth listening to. God Himself has said 'I will never leave you nor forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5; we can trust the One who will not leave us to guide us down good paths. It's a life-time's work to learn to trust in God, but we can improve, we can know the One who says 'My sheep know My voice' more clearly.

May God guide us on all our journeys, and be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.



What do they teach them in school these days?!

The following excerpts are 10- and 11-year-old answers to history tests and Sunday school quizzes. They were collected over a period of three years by two teachers. Read carefully and enjoy the grammar, misplaced modifiers, and of course, the spelling!

The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. He was born in the year 1564, supposedly on his birthday. He never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He wrote tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameter.

Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote Donkey Hotel. The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote Paradise Lost. Since then, no one ever found it.

Delegates from the original 13 states formed the Contented Congress. Thomas Jefferson, a Virgin, and Benjamin Franklin were two singers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin discovered electricity by rubbing two cats backward and also declared, "A horse divided against itself cannot stand." He was a naturalist for sure. Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.

Johann Bach wrote a great many musical compositions and had a large number of children. In between he practiced on an old spinster which he kept up in his attic. Bach died from 1750 to the present. Bach was the most famous composer in the world and so was Handel. Handle was half German, half Italian, and half English. He was very large.

Bethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf that he wrote loud music and became the father of rock and roll. He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling for him. Bethoven expired in 1827 and later died for this.

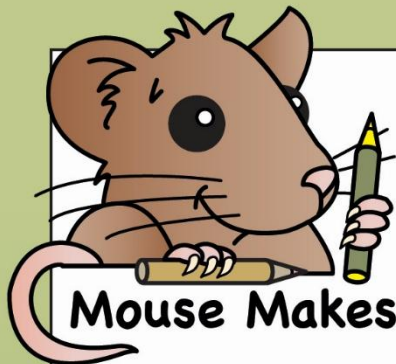
The nineteenth century was a time of a great many thoughts and inventions. People stopped reproducing by hand and started reproducing by machine. The invention of the steamboat caused a network of rivers to spring up.

Louis Pasteur discovered a cure for rabbits but I don't know why.

Charles Darwin was a naturalist. He wrote the Organ of the Species. It was very long, people got upset about it and had trials to see if it was really true. He sort of said God's days were not just 24 hours but without watches who knew anyhow? I don't get it.

Karl Marx was one of the Marx Brothers. The other three were in the movies. Karl made speeches and started revolutions. Someone in the family had to have a job, I guess.

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Mouse Makes

1. To which city did God send Jonah?

Jonah 1:1-2



2. Where did Paul travel to after seeing a vision?

Acts 16:9-10

MOAB

3. Which sea did Jesus walk beside before he went up on the mountain?

Matthew 15:29

5. Which town did Naomi and Ruth travel to after leaving Moab?

Ruth 1:22



6. Where did Paul and Barnabas go after being persecuted in Antioch?

Acts 13:51

4 across

After Paul was stoned, where did he travel to with Barnabas?

Acts 14:19-20

LYSTRA

4 down

Where was Saul travelling to when Jesus appeared to him?

Acts 9:3



EGYPT



JERUSALEM

7 across

Where did the Church in Jerusalem send Barnabas?

Acts 11:22

JOURNEYS

9



11

12



JUDEA

7 down

Where did Noah's ark come to rest after its journey?

Genesis 8:4

9. To which city did Philip travel to proclaim Christ?

Acts 8:5

10. To which river did people travel out to to be baptised?

Mark 1:5



11. After a five day journey where did Paul arrive?

Acts 20:6

GALILEE

12. Which sea did Moses walk through to get away from the Egyptians?

Exodus 15:4

8. To where did Mary and Joseph flee to get away from Herod?

Matthew 2:13



13. Where did Paul travel to after he left Athens?

Acts 18:1

Surveys have found that, probably because of the popularity of intermittent fasting, these days 13% of adults never eat breakfast.

For some of us, missing breakfast is not a problem. But be aware that no food means low blood sugars, which can lead to lower energy levels and even impaired cognitive function, or brain fog. That is because the brain depends on a constant source of carbohydrates to function at its best.

Skipping breakfast may help you lose a bit of weight, but it can also disrupt your metabolism and gut microbiome. And you can be tempted to snack on bad stuff later on in the day.

So, what is a good breakfast? Steer clear of fatty, sugary foods. Wholegrain foods, nuts, seeds, and low-fat live yoghurt are easy on stomachs – and ensure a supply of energy over several hours.

Here are some simple safety tips....

Hot and humid – what to do with those amber and yellow health alerts

This year the UK Health Security Agency has issued a series of amber and yellow health alerts across the UK. Heatwaves can kill people, the Met Office has issued advice on how to keep safe in extreme temperatures.

Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water

Avoid any exercise between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is strongest

Close curtains in rooms that face the sun

Wear sunscreen and a hat when outside.

Remember that even on very hot days, the water in lakes and the sea is still very cold. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution warns that entering it suddenly “can lead to cold water shock, causing a sudden increase in breathing and heart rate, which may trigger panic.”

If you find yourself in trouble in cold water, remember to Float to Live.

1. Tilt your head back, so that your ears are submerged
2. Relax and control your breathing
3. You may need to gently use your hands to help you stay afloat
4. It's OK if your legs sink — everyone floats differently.

Where possible, choose a lifeguarded beach, and swim between the red and yellow flags.

In a coastal emergency remember to call 999 for the coastguard.

9 Crossword Clues for July

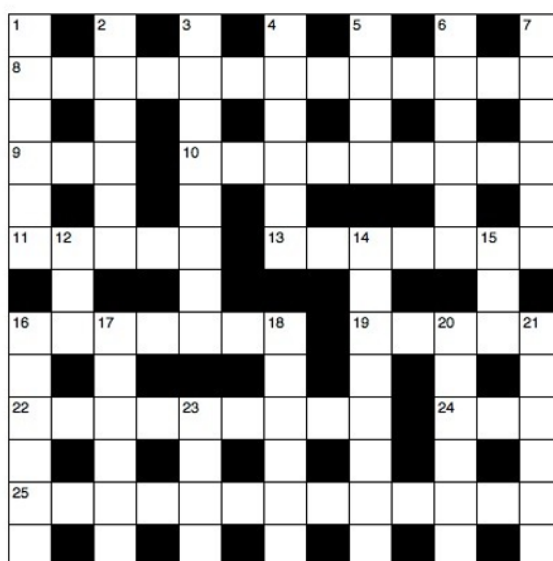
Across

- 8 One of the titles given to the Messiah in Isaiah's prediction (Isaiah 9:6) (6,2,5)
 9 International Nepal Fellowship (1,1,1)
 10 Single (1 Corinthians 7:27) (9)
 11 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's seminal book about Soviet prison camps, The — Archipelago (5)
 13 Treachery (2 Kings 11:14) (7)
 16 Of India (anag.) (2,3,2)
 19 'God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the —' (1 Corinthians 4:9) (5)
 22 Follower of a theological system characterized by a strong belief in predestination (9)
 24 'Put these old rags and worn-out clothes under your arms to — the ropes' (Jeremiah 38:12) (3)
 25 They brought together all the elders of the Israelites in Egypt (Exodus 4:29) (5,3,5)

Down

- 1 The season when kings 'go off to war' (2 Samuel 11:1) (6)
 2 Simon Peter's response to Jesus by the Sea of Galilee: 'Go away from me, Lord; I

- am a — man' (Luke 5:8) (6) 3 Beaten with whips (1 Kings 12:11) (8)
 4 'You shall not — adultery' (Exodus 20:14) (6)
 5 Encourage (Hebrews 10:24) (4)
 6 Service of morning prayer in the Church of England (6)
 7 'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and — him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving' (4,2)
 12 Run (anag.) (3)
 14 Member of 17th-century party that denied the right of autonomy to the Church (8)
 15 'We will triumph with our tongues; we — our lips' (Psalm 12:4) (3)
 16 Earnings (1 Corinthians 16:2) (6)
 17 'I rejoice greatly in the Lord that — you have renewed your concern for me' (Philippians 4:10) (2,4)
 18 How Paul described Philemon (Philemon 1) (6)
 20 Multiple territories under the rule of a single state (Daniel 11:4) (6)
 21 'You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, — to Israel's guilt' (Ezra 10:10) (6)
 23 This month (abbrev.) (4)



10 Crossword Solutions for July

ACROSS: 8, Prince of Peace. 9, INF. 10, Unmarried. 11, Gulag. 13, Treason. 16, In aid of. 19, Arena. 22, Calvinist. 24, Pad. 25, Moses and Aaron.

DOWN: 1, Spring. 2, Sinful. 3, Scourged. 4, Commit. 5, Spur. 6, Matins. 7, Feed on. 12, Urn. 14, Erastian, 15, Own. 16, Income. 17, At last. 18, Friend. 20, Empire. 21, Adding. 23, Inst.

Reminder about David's Sabbatical: As per Baptist Union recommendations, pastor David will be on sabbatical leave for two months in the summer, starting on Tuesday 16th June and ending on Sunday 16th August (inclusive).

If you would like to support our church financially, you can use the donation box at the back of church. You can also donate online via <https://www.justgiving.com/redditchbaptist>

We have also signed up with a website called Easy Fundraising, which helps charities raise money at no extra cost to members. Here's how it works:

If you go to www.easypfundraising.org.uk and search for Redditch Baptist Church, you can register to be a supporter. Then you just go via their website whenever you are shopping online at participating businesses (e.g. Boots, Argos, eBay, Waitrose, etc.) and they will donate money to our church.

Prayer for August 2026

Dear Father,

In this summer month of August, help us to be aware of Your presence.

If we are away on holiday, If we can't have a holiday, On our journeys, In our homes, With our families or friends, When we're alone, When life is sweet, When it's like an obstacle course.

At all times and in all circumstances, help us to know that You are in it with us, sharing our ups and downs, offering Your love and peace and hope when we connect with You through putting our trust in Your Son, Jesus.

Thank You Lord. In His name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching