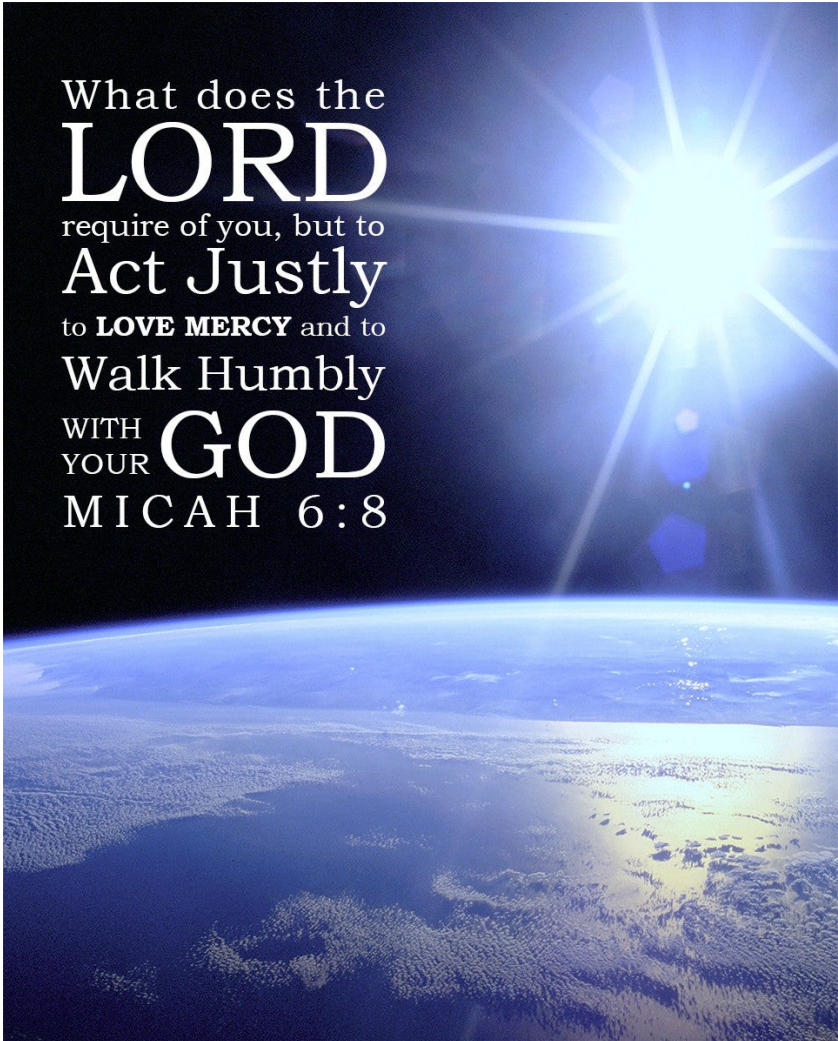




Sunday 14th April 2024

Victoria Baptist Church News

What does the  
**LORD**  
require of you, but to  
**Act Justly**  
to **LOVE MERCY** and to  
**Walk Humbly**  
WITH  
YOUR **GOD**  
MICAH 6:8



**Live in CHURCH and  
online**



**VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH**  
to see Jesus Christ honoured in Eastbourne and beyond

HOME JESUS ABOUT SUNDAYS FAMILIES CHURCH LIFE CONTACT US

**Live at Ten with  
Jez Taylor**



## **MATTHEW 18:21-35**

### **THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT**



We continue our mini-series on Micah 6:8. Last week we looked at acting justly and discovered two powerful words: TSEDEQAH and MISHPAT. This week we explore the idea of loving mercy. How do we love mercy? What is mercy and why should we love it? There is another beautiful Hebrew word - HESED - that describes God's loving kindness or mercy. What does God's mercy look like and why is it so important for us? All this and more will be uncovered as we learn to "love mercy."

### **THIS EVENING - DEEP DIVE!**

The first in the series of Jez's Level 2 Bible Academy takes place tonight at 6.30pm in the sanctuary.

This course looks at the nature of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the problem of sin, and then looks at some simple doctrines including 'who are the church?'

If you haven't already signed up for this course, do feel free to just turn up!

### **NEXT WEEK**

Jez Taylor continues with the final part of his 3-week series on Micah 6:8. "What does the Lord require of you?"

The fortnightly prayer meeting takes place next Sunday evening at 6.30pm.

# STAFF/OFFICE MATTERS

Staff movements for the coming week are as follows:

Chris	in Mon	Kevin	off Sat
Sandra	off Thurs	Tim	in Wed & Fri mornings
Colin	off Mon	Jez	in Wed & Fri mornings
Erik	off Thurs	Simon	off Tues
Julie	in Thurs	Nadine	in Mon & Thurs
		Phil	in Tues am, Weds, Thurs pm

## Senior Minister

Chris Short

## PA to Senior Minister

Sandra Taylor

## Family Ministries

Simon Grimes - Children

Erik Cornelisse - Youth

## Church Administrator

Colin McMahon

## Caretaker

Kevin Virgo

## CAP Debt Centre Manager

Phil Papps

## CAP Debt Coach

Nadine Crawford-Piper

## Treasurer

Mark Evason

## Finance Assistant

Julie Hanks

## Pastoral Team Leader

Tim Nunn

## Life Group Coordinator

Jez Taylor

Staff contact details:

*firstname@victoriabaptist.org.uk*  
(eg *chris@victoriabaptist.org.uk*)

## VBC Bank Details

*Account Name:*

Victoria Baptist Church Trust

*Account Number:* 00010297

*Sort Code:* 40-52-40

## 01323 737974

Eldon Road, Eastbourne

BN21 1UE

[helpdesk@victoriabaptist.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@victoriabaptist.org.uk)

[www.victoriabaptist.org.uk](http://www.victoriabaptist.org.uk)

**The Week Ahead**

- Sun 14 9.30am Pre-Service Prayer Meeting in Chris’ office  
10.00am Live and Online with Jez Taylor  
6.30pm Bible Academy -Level 2 with Jez Taylor
- Mon 15 6.00pm Girls’ Brigade  
7.30pm CLT meeting
- Tues 16 Soaking in the Spirit (next meeting Tues 23<sup>rd</sup>)
- Wed 17 8.30am Community Fridge and Cafe  
10.00am Vicky Bees  
6.30pm Boys Brigade
- Thu 18 7.30am Prayer Meeting (men only)  
10.15am Men’s Fellowship with Rev Joth Hunt, SEBA  
2.30pm Women’s Fellowship with Martin Relf  
6.00pm Omega  
7.30pm Ukraine Prayer Meeting
- Fri 19 10.00am Outreach Prayer Meeting  
10.00am Vicky Bees  
12.30pm Friends, Food and Fellowship  
5.00pm Kids Club  
7.00pm Xpect
- Sat 20
- Sun 21 9.30am Pre-Service Prayer Meeting in Chris’ office  
10.00am Live and Online with Jez Taylor  
6.00pm Alpha  
6.30pm Church Prayer Meeting

**Preaching Engagements** *Please remember in prayer*



- David Laskey Sun 14 Broadway United, Hampden Park 10am
- David Laskey Sun 21 St Barnabas, Langney 9.45am
- Francis Bates Sun 21 Halland Chapel, 11am

**Advance Notice -**

There will be NO service here at VBC on Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>. We want to encourage everyone to join us and other Eastbourne churches at the Bandstand that morning for this year’s Thy Kingdom Come event.





## ALPHA

Once again we will be starting another Alpha Course, this time on Sunday Evenings from the 21<sup>st</sup> April ... but it relies on all of us to pray, get involved and invite people!

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions, running over ten weeks, that allows people to freely explore the basics of the Christian faith. It's for anyone who's curious. The talks are designed to encourage conversation and ask questions about Jesus in a friendly, open and informal environment. No question is out of bounds and you are free to discuss as much or as little as you wish. Each session includes meeting together, a short talk, and a discussion at the end where you can share your thoughts. At any point, if you think Alpha isn't for you, that's not a problem. There's no pressure, no follow-up and no charge.

Our Alpha Course will start at 6pm on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April.

For further information or to sign up, contact Tim Nunn: [tim@victoriabaptist.org.uk](mailto:tim@victoriabaptist.org.uk)

Here are two links that explain more about the Alpha Course:

National Alpha website:

<https://alpha.org.uk/>

Victoria Baptist Church website:

<https://www.victoriabaptist.org.uk/church-life/alpha-victoria/>

## CALLING ALL BAKERS!

We like to provide home made cakes and desserts for Alpha each week and these are greatly appreciated. If anyone loves to bake and is willing to provide cakes/desserts during Alpha, please contact Sandra.



## SUSSEX GOSPEL PARTNERSHIP

The SGP's annual women's convention will be held at All Saints, Crowborough on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June. It will be a day of teaching, praise, seminars and testimony for all ages. Kimberley Davis is the keynote speaker, speaking from the book of Hebrews and explaining why it is a better story! For more information, **and to**



**book**, please go to <https://southernwomensconvention.co.uk>. A group of us are going and have space in cars if you need a lift. Hope you can join us!

*Lucy Craggs.*



## Somewhere over THE RAINBOW ...

... lies VBC! A super photo taken by Yvonne Broadbent earlier this week. Is a new career beckoning for Yvonne?!

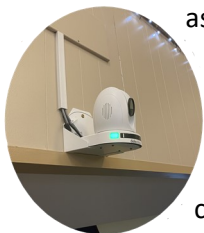
This picture reminded me of the lockdown days during Covid - hard to believe it was 4 years ago! Some of you will recall we had a regular feature in the news sheet of photos taken locally when you were out on your covid-permitted walks! The only stipulation was that the photo should be accompanied by a text from scripture.

It would be good to reintroduce this feature as we enjoy spring-time and a beautiful summer to come, I'm sure!

Do feel free to send in any photos you would like to see published (with an accompanying text)

## A Plea for Volunteers

Many people love the fact that our services are live-streamed. Maybe they find it hard to get to church, or they want to hear part of the sermon or a particular song again. Or maybe they want to listen again to aid Life Group preparation. We have people from all over the world who love to watch and listen to our services. It's a great resource but it can only happen if someone operates the cameras! Recently two of our camera operators have moved on to other things, leaving us extremely short of people. It basically means that the few people we have, have to cover more Sundays. Please can you help? It is not as hard



as you may think. Some familiarity with using computers helps, as does an artistic eye, but full training can be given. It's also possible to sit in and observe for a couple of Sundays to see if it's for you. If you can't help perhaps you can think of someone who might be able to. This is a real need so please give it some thought. Please contact Doug or Vanessa Howard, or the church office, if you are interested. Thanks.

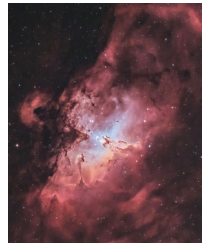


## The THEOLOGY OF ART

The first time we meet God in the story of scripture, we meet Him as an Artist. “Created” is the first verb in the first sentence on the Bible’s first page. Out of His imagination, the heavens and the earth burst into existence and teem with diversity and beauty. God could have easily spoken a monochrome cosmos into being. He could have made an all-grey universe filled with grey planets, grey animals, grey-on-grey rainbows in a grey sky. Even oranges would be called “greys” This grey world could’ve been perfectly efficient and functional from an engineering perspective. Why, then, make our multi-coloured universe? Why create with a colour swatch in hand? Why red strawberries, orange oranges, and yellow bananas? Why mandarin fish, peacocks, and chameleons? Because, as Genesis 1 repeats a fair few times, “God saw that it was good.” Evidently, ***God cares about more than efficiency and functionality. He also cares about beauty.***

God made this declaration even before He made Adam and Eve! And as far as I can see, this wasn’t a functional ‘good’ – this was an aesthetically pleasing good! Telling me that something can be truly beautiful even if no human being is around to behold and declaring it to be so. Beauty, then, is not merely something we as humans dream up (though thankfully we can); it’s also something we can discover. ***We don’t fabricate beauty. We find it.***

This means when we first beheld the sprawling fuchsia clouds of the Orion Nebula, the cobalt pupil and auburn iris of the Helix Nebula, or the sombre towering gas pillars of the Eagle Nebula, with their speckles of pink fire and wispy sea-green auras, and went WOW, beautiful!! - we did not fabricate this beauty. We found it. They were beautiful long before Hubble left our atmosphere, and they would stay beautiful even if we all went blind tomorrow. ***We do not hijack the GOD CREATED colours of the rainbow, we merely get to enjoy them when we see their beauty.*** The Son took on created flesh. He spent most of His career as a craftsman who could make small and large-scale projects with stone, wood, and possibly even metal. Then when His public ministry started, He taught in parables, painting mental pictures that have lived in our imagination for more than two millennia. His greatest commandment to love God with all of ourselves includes the imaginative and creative parts too. Creativity and Christlikeness go hand in hand.



*Submitted by Erik C - influenced by ‘Becoming yourself by mirroring the greatest person in history!’ by T. William*

**STARRY STARRY NIGHT?** On Tuesday morning (26<sup>th</sup> March) while listening to Thought for The Day during Radio 4's morning Today programme [Thought for the Day - Tim Stanley - BBC Sounds](#) I heard an interesting piece about Vincent Van Gogh by the historian Tim Stanley. This was to commemorate the painter's birthday and I highly recommend you listen to it. He describes visiting the Van Gogh art museum in Amsterdam (something I have also done and enjoyed) and being impressed by seeing the artist's paintings for the first time in relation to his psychological state and religious beliefs, and how the paintings reflected that as they progressed during his poor, troubled and sad short life.



In particular, he picked out a small 'Pietà' that Van Gogh painted shortly before he died, inspired by Delacroix's Pietà but, poignantly, using Van Gogh's idiosyncratic use of vivid primary colours and 'wavy' style [Vincent van Gogh - Pietà \(after Delacroix\) - Van Gogh Museum](#). The pietà is pertinent for 2 reasons;

a. Van Gogh's use of colour to accentuate the meaning. For him it was a way to get at a deeper eternal truth, in this case of faith, just as medieval painters used halos for that purpose.



b. The Christ in Mary's arms has red hair and a beard with a face resembling Van Gogh's, suggesting he identified with the suffering Christ, showing his faith and the inner struggles he was experiencing (he died shortly after, probably at his own hand).

It reminded me of another famous artist who produced a few Pietas which also reflected his attitude and beliefs at different times of his life. Michelangelo Buonorotti (1475-1564) sculpted his first Pietà for St Peter's Church, Rome in 1498. When someone suggested it was done by someone else the young, proud artist was so offended he crept into the church at night and carved his name on the sash across Mary's breast.



Fast forward about 50 years after he had some spiritual awakening through his contact with Vittoria Colonna, an Italian Noblewoman influenced by the Reformation, and evidenced in his diary and letters, we find him working on his Florence and Milan Pietas. [Michelangelo's Florentine Pieta \(1547-53\) | EPPH | Art's Masterpieces Explained \(everypainterpaintshimself.com\)](#) They depict a dead Jesus in the arms of Nicodemus and Mary after they had taken Him down from the cross. Michelangelo put his own sad face on Nicodemus and it appears his humanistic pride had waned and he was also identifying with his belief in the Son Of God who had died to take away his and our sins.

So next time you see these works of art don't just pass them by without thought- just looking - but consider the back story and how our beliefs express themselves in art. In particular, as we consider Easter, take another 'good long look' at these two artist's works and may they help you to see its meaning in a fresh way.

*John Demetriou*



## **CHURCH MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Apr, 7.30pm**

1. Introduction, Welcome & Prayer
2. Agreement of Minutes and Matters Arising
3. CLT Elections
4. Membership Report - Richard Kirk
5. Finance Report - Mark Evason
6. Omega Report - Eszter Smith
7. Pastoral Ministry Report - Tim Nunn
8. Ethos Statement - Chris Short
9. Baptist Union Consultation, SEBA Retreat &  
March Council Meeting - Chris Short
10. AOB - **Items for consideration to be emailed to the church office  
by noon Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**
11. DONM – **7:30pm, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

## PRAYER DIARY 15<sup>TH</sup> – 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL

**Monday** Thank God for the many blessings He has shown you. Praise Him for your salvation, for Jesus. Thank Him for your friends, family and the church here at VBC. Praise Him for His creation and the wonders of the universe that reveal His glory. Thank God for the food on your table and the roof over your head. Praise Him for His faithfulness and goodness to you.

**Tuesday** Today please pray for the Alpha course beginning soon, that people will invite others to come. Pray for Tim and the other leaders and helpers as they facilitate it. Pray that God will speak to people and challenge them. Pray for Jez as he runs the two Bible Academy courses. Pray that God will reveal truths and deepen faith through these courses.

**Wednesday** Pray for the Community Fridge and all those who benefit from this ministry. Ask the Holy Spirit to give wisdom to the helpers in their conversations with those who use the fridge. Ask that God will bless them and draw them closer to commitment to Jesus. Pray too for the other non church organisations that use the building; NHS blood donation, counselling, Rock Choir, dancing, Bub Club, Karate, Sussex Wildlife Trust, U3A... pray that God will speak to people as they use this building.

**Thursday** Today we meet to pray for Bohdan and the team in Lebedyn. Remember them and pray for strength and energy to serve in difficult circumstances. Pray for God's protection over the facilities of the church, that they may be spared destruction from bombs. Continue to pray for all the ministries they do: bread distribution, children's work, puppet ministry, schools work, ICT classes and so much more. Pray that the name of Jesus is honoured in every one. Pray too for the dreadful situation in Israel/Palestine. Pray for peace and for all those that want violence to reign be brought to justice. Pray for the innocent people caught up in it, that aid and rescue will come soon.

**Friday** Continue to pray for our youth work, for Simon, Erik and the leaders of the Brigades. Pray for safety in their fun activities, for wisdom in teaching the gospel and for the Holy Spirit to inspire. Thank God for all those who help them, the volunteers. Pray that the children of this church will meet Jesus in a personal way and grow into strong men and women of God.

**Saturday** Pray today for the team at VBC. Chris as pastor, Erik and Simon in their role as youth and children's workers. Pray for Tim and Jez in their ministry roles. Pray too for Phil and Nadine as they serve with CAP. Finally pray for those who make it all work behind the scenes in the offices and around the building. Colin, Sandra, Julie and Kevin.

**FUEL FOR PRAYER**

**Sunday** As we meet together to worship today, pray that God's word would be spoken clearly and truthfully. Pray for the Holy Spirit to fill the building to enhance our worship and bring joy to the Lord. Pray that friendships are made, renewed and strengthened as we share time together. Finally, pray for any visitors who come, that they may feel God's presence and be welcomed.



Over the past 2 Wednesdays of the Easter Holidays, Community Fridge has been offering a free breakfast to families. It was great to see so many staying to have pastries, toast, coffee and a chat with others. Children enjoyed doing crafts with Simon and were given an Easter egg each – donated by a member of the Fridge Community.

We were also able to offer a free week of shopping to our members which was well received.



## SPRING CLEAN?

Our caretaker, Kevin, is shortly on holiday for a couple of weeks and it would be very helpful to have a couple of you offering to do a bit of cleaning in his absence to keep the premises looking fresh and sparkly! All materials would be supplied —we just need some willing hands and hearts! Let the office know if you would like to be involved.



## Snooker Marathon

Last Saturday, Kevin undertook a 12-hour snooker marathon, ably supported by some other members of VBC. He was also well supported by a number of people who sponsored this event so a big thank you to all of you who helped him raise over £960 for Hope Lebedyn and the ongoing work in Ukraine. A great effort, Kevin!

**Flower Ministry**

The flowers last week were donated by  
**Chris Wrench**



*Thank you for the beautiful flowers delivered today, they were a lovely thought and much appreciated. N&SC*

