

# Happenings at Balham - September 2016

## Making a Difference in our Community



For I am not **ashamed** of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16 (KJV)

The Olympics are now over and there were many interesting stories that emerged as well as new heroes; The ban on some of the Russian team due to drug violations in the camp, Team GB winning a record number of medals and coming second in the medal table, Simone Manuel, who became the first African-American woman to win an Olympic gold in an individual swimming event - and some of us were convinced that black people couldn't swim! Simone Biles, another African-American, the unbeatable gymnastics champion and of course Usain Bolt who won the triple, triple in gold medals for the sprints.

One theme that runs through every Olympics is the level of 'nationalism' and pride in one's country. Contrary to what some people suggest, it is not just in Britain that people go on and on about their national success. It is seen in the cheering fans and the flag-waving and the singing of the National Anthem. People were definitely not ashamed of where they came from. Walking along the road, I even noticed a number of people wearing colours of their national flags. For instance I saw a number of people wearing black, gold and green costumes, which apparently is the flag colour of some 'small' country near America! Even though nationalism has its cynical side, there is something refreshing about people celebrating who they are.

In the text above, the apostle Paul expresses that he is not ashamed of who he is or what he believes in. The preaching of the gospel (or the cross) he says is 'foolishness' to some but to others who embrace Jesus it is the 'power of God' (1 Corinthians 1:18). Another writer reminds followers of Jesus who we are when he says we are 'sons of God' (1 John 3:1) and so we can refer to God as Abba Father (Daddy) (Galatians 4:6). Now that is something to be proud of, not because of what we have done, but because of who God is and what he has conferred on us, his children.

In an increasingly secular society in which we live, it isn't always 'cool' to admit we are Christians and sometimes we are reminded of some of the wrongs committed in Christ's name, which doesn't help. However being a Christian is about acknowledging who Christ is, accepting his sacrifice and vowing by his grace to live for him. Nothing can be greater than that!

People need to know about this Jesus and we, who claim to know him, have been tasked to lift up his name in our words and-actions. At the Olympics many people were proud to say where they came from and who they were. They identified with something or a nation that is flawed. How much more should we shout about a being (Jesus) who has no flaws?

So forget the national flags for a moment and remember words of the song. 'There is a flag flying high from the castle of my heart for the KING is in residence there. So fly it high in the sky let the whole world know that the KING is in residence there'. We don't need to be ashamed of the gospel because it is the POWER OF GOD, so let's embrace it and share it with others.

## Looking Back at August 2016

**Summer Music School:** Twelve students (including the child of the Music Director's college student), were challenged to express themselves through music and art. The children enjoyed playing keyboard, violin and guitar and decorated canvases and t-shirts. Their experience was shared with a performance and display at the end of the week.

**Summer Fun School:** Unfortunately, due to low attendance, the programme had to be discontinued prematurely.

**Youth Club:** This includes a weekly session every Tuesday and Thursday evening and a monthly session on a Sunday. Activities include badminton, basketball, table tennis and other board games

**Solofest:** Balham hosted the annual Conference Day of Fellowship for singles, although all were catered for. This included a powerful sermon by Pastor Ray Patrick, a very inspiring Street-witnessing session and a lively panel discussion on a series of issues in the afternoon.

**Day Trip to Margate:** A coach load of members and visitors headed for the coast for our annual day trip. A fun day was had as the group enjoyed games, sight-seeing and the obligatory dominoes as the yellow table and a set of chairs found it's way onto the coach.

## Dates for Your Diary

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>: Day of Prayer:** This includes a prayer session after Divine Service followed by a light meal, then an evening Prayer and Testimony session from 5pm-9pm.

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>: Balham Pathfinder Adventurer Club** resumes. Contact Eddie Musonda, Club Leader for information.

**September 10<sup>th</sup>: Communion** - celebrating God's gift to us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As always we will be collecting for the Good Samaritan Fund in order to support Balham members in need.

## EVANGELISM, EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE

As part of our evangelism efforts there are a number of people taking studies in preparation for a **baptism on October 15<sup>th</sup>**. We also plan to have a series of sermons leading up to the baptism to challenge others to make a choice for God.



Some of the art work completed at Music School



Boys working on their keyboard skills



Art group work at Music School





Guitar experiences were shared at the Music School



A group showing off their art work



T-shirts designs demonstrated by another group



Several of the children were involved in Keyboard lessons



Variety is the spice of life and the violin was also shared at the Music School.