



ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH UP CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 21st March 2021

NEWS UPDATE



Holy Week & Easter

Easter will soon be upon us. The following services will be run for Holy Week and Easter.



Sunday 28th March – Palm Sunday service at 9.30am.

Tuesday 30th March – No evening prayer group on zoom.

**Maundy Thursday 1st April – 10.30am Holy Communion St Christopher's
– 8.00pm Zoom Prayer group (rearranged).**

Good Friday 2nd April – 10.30am service Plungington Community Centre.

Easter Sunday 4th April – 9.30am Holy Communion service.

PCC Membership

The St Christopher's AGM is scheduled for Sunday 25th April, at 10.30am after the morning service. We have places for two new people to join the PCC. Could it be you?

We are seeking individuals who wish to see the church flourish, who will help shape our direction and our decisions. The PCC meets every two months on a Wednesday evening, and may now and again be called to meet in between if there is an urgent matter to agree upon. If you are interested in coming on board then please let Peter know.

BIBLE READING – Philippians 4: 10-23

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in

the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

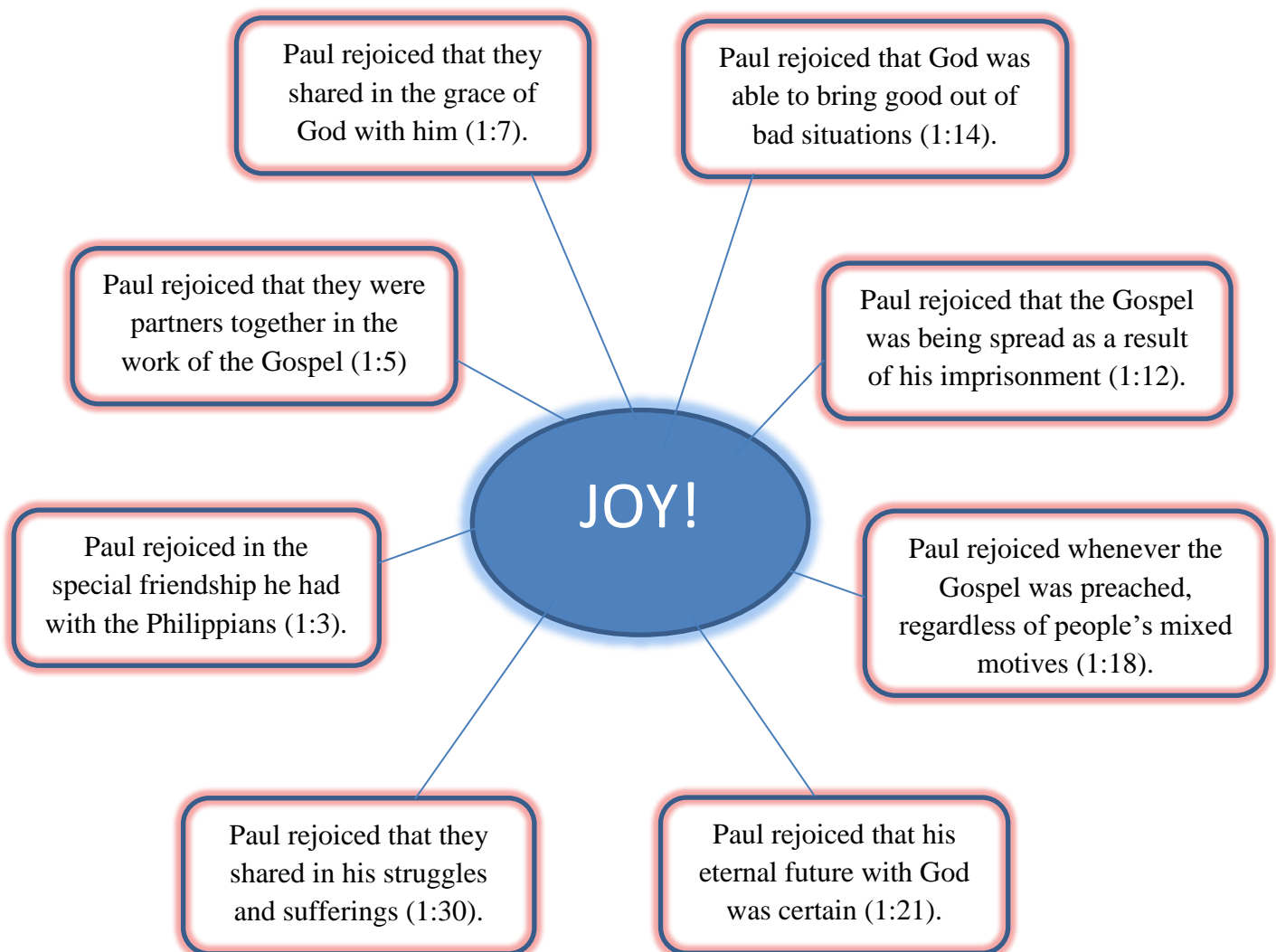
To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

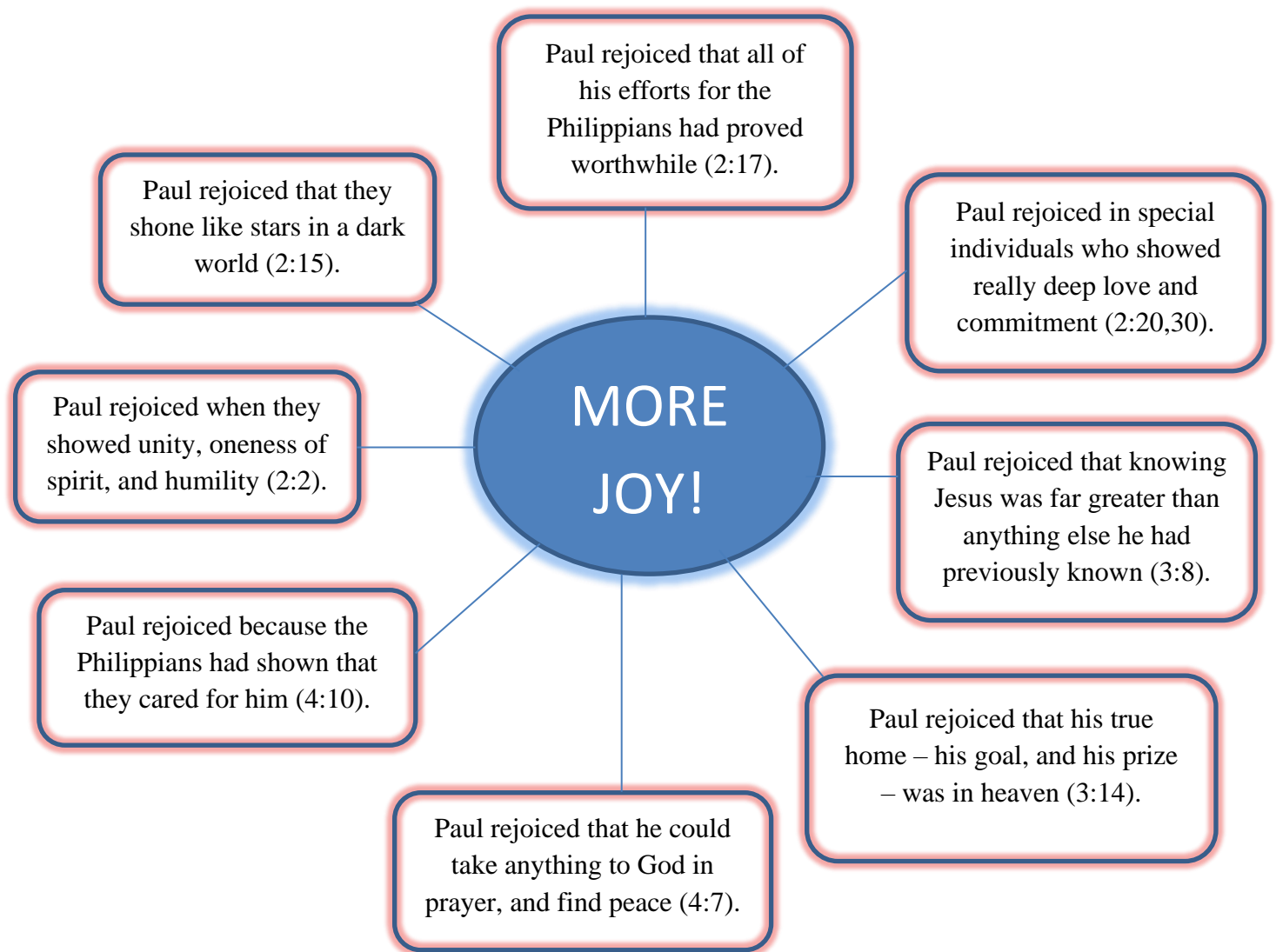
Greet all God's people in Christ Jesus. The brothers and sisters who are with me send greetings. All God's people here send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE – written by Peter

Today's message brings us to the end of Philippians. I hope you have enjoyed the series, which we entitled 'Joy in Adversity.' The word 'joy' or 'rejoice' appears sixteen times in the whole letter, which is rather a lot. Paul found many things to rejoice in despite the fact that he was chained up in prison. Looking back on the last ten weeks, here's a summary of some of the things that brought Paul joy.





What a lot of joy!! Paul said that he had *'learned the secret of being content in any and every situation,'* which is surely a secret we would all like to know. The answer, it would seem, is to find our joy and pleasure in the same sort of things that brought delight to Paul – his relationship with Jesus, living for the Gospel, his friendship and partnership with others, and the hope of his glorious eternal future. By making these things our focus and our joy we can endure hardships just as he did. It is possible to find inner contentment, whether we are in need or in plenty.

When Somebody Cares

It has been apparent throughout Paul's letter that the Philippians really were the apple of his eye, his 'joy and crown' (4:1). Why was this? Evidently they had proved their love for him through their concern and generosity when Paul was in need, over and above the other churches that Paul had planted. For Paul it wasn't about his material needs being met, or his desire to receive gifts. What moved him was just knowing that they cared, and he celebrated that their heartfelt generosity would be 'credited' to them in the next life (4:17).

I Rejoice Greatly In The
Lord That At Last You Have
Renewed Your Concern For
Me. Indeed, You Have Been
Concerned, But You Had No
Opportunity To Show It.

Philippians 4-10

Isn't this so true to life. When someone shows us that they care, it is not the thing itself that we really treasure, but the love we have been shown. We can bring joy to others through our words, but we can really spread joy when we show that we care in practical ways. I spoke at the start of this series about having a joy that is contagious, like a virus...The most effective way to pass on joy to someone else is through practical kindness, and acts of generosity.

For joy to be really spread around, we must let it work both ways. Sat in his prison cell, Paul was forced to let others bless him. He couldn't do much else, aside from write a rather good letter! Most of us prefer to be the giver of charity than the recipient of it, but if we don't allow others to bless us as well then we rob them of the opportunity to share their joy with us, and to practice their love for God. This has been driven home to me a couple of times in the past week, where individuals have told me to stop offering to do everything myself, and let *them* show a bit of sacrifice. And why wouldn't I? Paul allowed Timothy to serve wholeheartedly, and he let Epaphroditus 'almost die' for the work of Christ. He didn't get in their way.

So like Paul, let us rejoice when others show that they care, and when others make sacrifices for Christ. We can give, and we can receive, and in both instances – we rejoice!

Prayers – Written by Jim Cam



Lord, as we come to the end of our series looking at Paul's letter to the Philippians, we are struck by the relevance of its themes and message to us your church today.

We have been reminded of the all-surpassing worth of the relationship we have with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May we let the work of God's grace flow in our lives, so that our love may overflow more and more as we grow in the knowledge of God's love.

Let us have the same mind that was in Christ,
humbly seeking and doing God's will sacrificially,
seeking the benefit of others with gentleness,
showing care and genuine love to one another.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Help us not to worry, but take everything to the Lord in prayer.

May we find our joy and contentment in knowing our Lord,
serving and working together for the Gospel,
giving and receiving as our fragrant offering pleasing to God.

Lord we know we often fall short of this –

yet by your grace, Lord, be at work in us by your Holy Spirit,
that the love of Jesus may be seen and known among us and through us
to his praise and glory.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Lord, as we gradually emerge from lockdown and the restrictions of the COVID pandemic
we have found cause to reassess what is of true worth in our lives.

The pursuit of things and possessions as the source of our joy,
happiness, fulfilment, and contentment,
has been shown to be of little value in the face of illness and death.
Instead, the worth of the medical, caring, and serving professions,
of access to family, relationships, and friendships,
of the numerous acts of kindness, generosity, and practical help,
have stood out and shone in the darkest moments of our experience.

May we not quickly forget these things, but rather learn from them and take them with us,
to help us be a better people, society and nation in the future.

Lord in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for children and their teachers as they continue to
adjust to school, and settle into safe, secure learning environments.

We continue to pray for the ongoing vaccination program,
in particular at this time for information and knowledge from health authorities
to be communicated effectively in addressing concerns that people have over vaccine safety.

We also pray that vaccine supplies be fairly distributed and delivered by manufacturers,
both here and elsewhere in the world, for the benefit of all people.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who are suffering both physically and mentally.

We pray for any who are known to us who need our special prayers at this time

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Bless Lord all that is being done for their good and surround them with your healing love and power.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father we pray for those who have suffered bereavement within their family or friendship group, for all those who have lost loved ones during the pandemic, for whom the wounds of their grief are still a very present experience. Drawn near to them, Lord, and may they receive the support and help they need.

Lord in your Mercy:

Hear our Prayer.

**Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

JOY IN ADVERSITY

Sunday 10th January – Rejoicing in God and others – Philippians 1:1-11

Sunday 17th January – Seeing God at work in all circumstances – Philippians 1:12-18

Sunday 24th January – Courage in Life and death – Philippians 1: 19-26

Sunday 31st January – Standing firm together – Philippians 1: 27-30

Sunday 7th February – Imitating Christ's Humility – Philippians 2:1-11

Sunday 14th February – Shining like Stars – Philippians 2:12-18

Sunday 21st February – Appreciating Special people – Philippians 2:19-30

Sunday 28th February – The joy of knowing Jesus – Philippians 3:1-11

Sunday 7th March – Looking forwards, pressing onwards – Philippians 3:12-21

Sunday 14th March – Peace through prayer and thanksgiving – Philippians 4:1-9

Sunday 21st March – Joy and Contentment – Philippians 4:10-23

Thank you, Philippians, for a great series!