

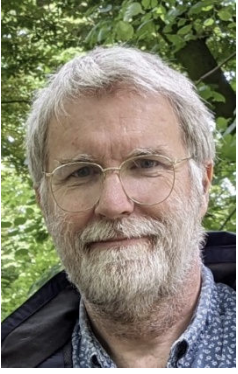
Knightrider Street News



JUNE 2026

MAIDSTONE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Taking the Good News of Jesus into our lives and into God's World
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Many of us are familiar with the story in Daniel 3, often called “The fiery furnace”. It is one of those stories that we are taught as children because it is a dramatic story of standing up to the bullies, of good overcoming bad, of faith in the face of adversity.

I urge you to re-read the whole chapter, as it is a powerful image of faith, how we approach difficult situations, and the impact that our faith in those situations can have on others.

“If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” ~ Daniel 3:17-18

There are 2 hugely powerful and often overlooked words in these verses. Even if. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were given an ultimatum - bow down to the idol or face death in the fiery furnace. Their faith was so strong that they believed God would rescue them. However, whatever the outcome, they would rather face death than compromise their faith. The result, as we read, is that God does indeed rescue them and Nebuchadnezzar orders his Kingdom to become worshippers of God.

As Christians in 21st Century Britain we are rarely likely to face this level of persecution for our faith, although we do know that sadly many Christians around the world do face those dangers. But we do all face trials of many kinds. And that's where our “even if” faith comes in. No matter what you may be facing, go into your situation full of faith, in the knowledge that God is with you.

Keep praising God. Even if you fail your exam. Even if your loved one dies. Even if you live with long term pain. Even if you don't get the job. Even if the longed for baby doesn't come. Even if the door remains closed. Whatever your “even if” situation is, keep the faith and keep praising God. Even if the outcome isn't what we prayed for, God is still good. Because God's goodness isn't only proven through miracles, but is revealed through

His closeness and His faithfulness. Because others will see your faith and ask “What keeps you smiling?”, “Why aren't you cross at God?”

Whatever you may be facing in your life, whatever your “even if” moment may look like, take the opportunity to declare and share your faith to those around you. It is often in those “even if” situations that the Gospel can be so powerfully experienced - and shared.

Nigel



2nd Maidstone Girls' Brigade & 1st Maidstone Boys' Brigade



Camp Amazing

We had a great time away at Camp Amazing (1st – 4th May) and despite the unsettled forecast we were blessed with a good few days of weather, with only really some rain on the Saturday evening to work around. This year we had 20 young people camping and a further 13 joined us for a Fun Day on the Saturday. The programme allowed time for organised activities and free time - many of the young people taking advantage of the football pitch, table tennis, Frisbee golf and garden games whenever they had a free moment.

On Friday evening we had a murder mystery evening which a number of people took very seriously by dressing for their part and getting into character. Saturday morning was a time to be creative with a range of crafts / design challenges to take part in. We all headed into the woods for a treasure hunt in the afternoon, our walk there thwarted by some very overgrown paths. Later in the weekend the campers made rockets and light sabres. We had a camp fire and silent disco and there was a film night one

evening for those that wanted something quieter to do. For another session we made use of the volleyball and putting facilities. Our outing this year was to Prison Island in Maidstone for a session with the various challenges, plus some time in the shuffle-board and darts areas.

As always at Camp we were fed very well, with many of the leaders taking a turn in the cook house. Alastair led our times of devotions throughout the weekend sharing stories from the Bible around the theme.

Thank you for all of your interest and prayers – they are much appreciated.

And some other things

As in previous years this session is a particularly busy time of year for us all and some things to note are :

- We will be rounding this session off with a celebration evening - recognising the young people’s achievements’ and promotions,
- We start our Summer Programme activities with all groups in early June and will be out and about most Wednesday evenings

and please don’t forget our fund raising **Barn Dance** at Boxley Abbey on the evening of **Saturday 27th June 2026** (£10.00 adult ticket, £5.00 per child (under 16)), Bring your own food and drink. All are welcome. Do contact me or Al if you would like to purchase tickets or need any further information.

Jane Haslam

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Deadline for July Knightrider Street News:

Sunday June 14th

Please e-mail contributions to the address on inside front cover

No later than 20.00hrs on this date



Prayer Points

POINTS

June 2026

- Mon 1st It is the start of a new month: may we invite the working of the spirit of God into our schools, colleges, workplaces, our homes, and wherever we find ourselves this week, to engage with what God would have us do in these troublesome times of suffering, wars, pain and national turmoil.
- Tue 2nd Let us pray for the local leaders of our towns and cities, particularly those who have specific responsibilities to keep our town clean and safe.
- Wed 3rd As students are completing another term, some of whom were very apprehensive about their future, pray that they will see light at the end of their tunnel of learning experience.
- Thur 4th Pray today for all those who are struggling in their personal lives, for the heartaches they face, for the tears they shed, for the fears they have and the anxiety that comes so unexpectedly.
- Fri 5th Remember those who have recently been diagnosed with illnesses and pray for the terminally sick amongst our friends and families. Pray for those receiving treatment in hospital, that the great physician will touch and heal them and comfort those who are fearful.
- Sat 6th Pray today for all the bereaved and widowers and widows in our

church and outside, thanking God that he never leaves nor forsakes those in need of Him at such painful times.

Sun 7th May we remember all those in our church who are in care 24 hours a day. Pray that they will be aware of God's presence and peace as they receive care.

Mon 8th Let us pray for our Boys' and Girls' brigade as they embark on their Summer programme. Pray for their spiritual growth and nurturing. Pray for the leaders and support staff in charge of their care.

Tue 9th Ask the Lord to be with our Senior minister Nigel and Youth Pastor Alastair as they lead the church continually. Also pray for our church leadership team and deacons. Ask God for guidance and perception in these trying times of so much uncertainty.



Wed 10th Pray for all those in our church who are lonely, afraid and unsure of the future and what will happen, especially as we see escalation of the war in Ukraine and the turmoil in Iran. Ask God to come close and comfort them.

Thur 11th Pray for the unrest in various parts of the world where terrorists and murderers are active. Pray for those who are victims of persecution, and those who are escaping from brutal regimes.

Fri 12th Remember those in our town who are wandering the streets and are sleeping rough with no settled place of residence. Pray for those who also find it hard to speak and explain their situation. Pray for mercy from those with power in the community.

Sat 13th Pray for the churches community outreach here in Maidstone

and surrounding districts.

Sun 14th Pray for the work of the Street Pastors who are there to support people who are out at night in the town and may be in danger.

Mon 15th May we pray for our government and the departments that serve the country. Pray for leadership and guidance for them all remembering Kier Starmer and the cabinet.

Tue 16th Pray for Alastair and Kirsty and the work they are involved with here in Maidstone and particularly the youth department and schools.



Wed 17th Remember those with special learning needs in our churches. Pray that their needs will be met and that their lives will be fulfilled according to the divine plan.

Thur 18th Remember those who are out of work and unemployed. Pray that their needs will be met because we serve a saviour who promised that He will supply all your needs according to the riches of His glory.

Fri 19th Let us pray for the churchs' collective process of praise and worship.

Sat 20th As some of our young people are soon to be starting new career pathways or new work, pray that they will put their trust in God the ruler of their life.

Sun 21st Pray for those in Maidstone who are in the local prison. Pray that they will not give up or lose heart. Pray for those who are in the prison evangelism ministry.

Mon 22nd May we pray for a renewed vision of the beauty of heaven as we walk amidst flowers, green fields, sunsets, and the natural beauty of nature. Look up towards the skies and picture the beauty of our Saviour Jesus.

Tue 23rd Pray for wisdom as we speak to colleagues and friends in our daily walk in life so that they will have the Emmaus experience.

Wed 24th Pray for our schools and colleges as they prepare for the final month before summer break. Pray for the teachers and lecturers at this time.

Thur 25th There may be those in our midst who need special strength from God as they walk the straight and narrow path of life. Pray for those people.



Fri 26th Pray for people who are victims of crime and domestic abuse and young people who may be trafficked for modern day slavery.

Sat 27th Let us pray for parents of the children in church. Pray for wisdom and strength as they face challenging times with internet use and cyber bullying especially as the long summer holiday approaches.

Sun 28th Pray for the children in Sunday School and those who teach them in these trying times when being a young Christian is a challenge.

Mon 29th Pray for the church budget and the responsibility of the treasurer. Pray for wisdom.

Tue 30th Remember in prayer unaccompanied children as they arrive in England from war torn countries. Pray for their safety when they cross the channel and from exploitation, trafficking and poverty.



HEALING HANDS, DIVINE PLANS

Breaking a leg shouldn't be a life-changing injury. But for Mohammed* in Chad, what could've been a simple enough fix altered the course of his life forever. Thankfully, BMS World Mission workers Ingrid and Roger Hamlet are working on a plan to help more people like Mohammed get the crucial medical care they need – and change the lives of people with disabilities.

For more than ten years, Guinebor II Hospital (G2) has been serving the medical needs of people around N'Djamena, Chad's capital. The team there, mostly made up of local Chadian staff, are providing all sorts of life-saving treatments – surgery after traffic collisions, emergency C-sections, and support for malnutrition. The hospital has grown and grown since its inception – but the needs of the community are constant, particularly for people with physical disabilities. Which is why the Hamlets are stepping in to help.

Ingrid and Roger Hamlet are prosthetics and orthotics (P&O) experts, and with your help, plan to set up a new P&O department at G2 to help people with limb loss and other physical disabilities. And the need couldn't be greater. More often than not, people with disabilities are excluded from everyday society in Chad. “At best, the person is helped by family members to live life as best they can in the Chadian context. At worst, they are shunned,” explains BMS worker Claire Bedford. “Generally speaking, in the Chad context, those with disabilities are seen as ‘less than’ and to be pitied.” Lack of education and access to medical facilities can also lead to conditions and injuries worsening unnecessarily. That, sadly, is why Mohammed ended up at G2.

At just 12 years old, Mohammed broke his shin – a painful and difficult injury, to be sure, but not one that should be too difficult to mend. But after his accident, rather than going to a hospital like G2, he was taken to a traditional healer, where his leg was bound to a wooden stake so tightly that

it cut off the blood supply. By the time he made it to G2, his foot was septic and badly rotten. When BMS nurse-surgeon Kalbassou Doubassou first examined him, he knew Mohammed's life was in grave danger – and the only way to save him was to amputate below the knee.

The operation was risky, but miraculously, Mohammed pulled through and his leg healed swiftly after the surgery. But now, Mohammed has to adapt to a completely different way of life – and the infrastructure and culture in Chad can make life incredibly difficult for people with disabilities. “Access isn't really a thing here, in terms of buildings,” explains Ingrid. “In the city centre, you have some paved roads, but the pavements are very holey... so practically, it can be difficult to get around.” And while the problems faced by people with disabilities are numerous, the team at G2 are determined to help however they can – and break the stigma around disabilities so that people know just how loved they are.

Ingrid and Roger have big goals for their new P&O department. They plan to build a workshop with the capacity to construct custom prosthetics for people in need. They also plan to offer well rounded orthotics support, providing equipment such as leg or back braces for people with musculature issues. There are only six other people in Chad offering this kind of support – which just goes to show how important this project is.

Please pray that the Hamlets will be able to connect with other people doing similar work so they can learn how best to serve people in need. It takes time to see real progress made. But whatever strides we make now are vital to creating a world where everyone knows their worth. So that the next time a child like Mohammed comes to G2 with a broken leg or similar injury, the hospital be fully equipped to help them recover.

**Name changed*

Engage Magazine Issue 63 (Edited)

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BMS Birthday Scheme.

15 th June	Godfrey Prior
19 th June	Lucie Prior
28 th June	Christine Frost



Happy Birthday to you all!

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FAITH, FEAR AND STRENGTHENING WHAT REMAINS

Sunday 22nd June 2025 started out as an ordinary day in Mar Elias Church, Damascus. The only difference was the number of people in the church. More than 300 people were gathered for the one week memorial for a much-loved member of the congregation, including her nephew, Elias, and his wife, Hanan. With so many people present, it was the most devastating imaginable day for a suicide bomber to burst into the service.



Gunfire and chaos

First, the church members heard gunfire. “The gunshots grew more intense from the front door,” says Elias. “The door was thrown open, and we were assaulted by a terrorist shooting right and left. People were shouting. The church had turned red.”

Everyone desperately tried to take cover. There was noise and panic everywhere. Hanan crouched between two seats, and Elias heard his brother, Geryes, shouting for people to “Get down.”

Geryes rushed to the bomber, along with his other brother, Boutros, and another man called Milad. Together, they tackled the bomber to the ground. After a short fight, the bomber detonated his backpack. The blast killed all four men instantly.

“Everybody witnessed their courage and martyrdom,” says Elias. “If they hadn’t acted, there would have been more casualties.” The bomber’s backpack had been filled with screws, meant to maximise the number of people killed in the explosion. In less than a minute, at least 22 Christians died in the attack – but the number could have been far higher if Geryes, Boutros and Milad hadn’t acted so quickly and so selflessly. Three further bodies, including the attacker’s, have never been identified.

“Please, just one more child”

In the aftermath of the attack, Hanan had only one thing on her mind: her children. All five – Elen, Sarah, Taqla, Ibrahim and Christina – had been at the service. She started frantically searching for them among the chaos.

“The whole church was destroyed,” she remembers.

“I failed to see any of my children. I didn’t know where to search.”

First, she found five-year old Taqla. After that, she prayed the most desperate prayer of her life: “Lord, please, let me find one more child. I’ll be content to find just one more.” At that point, Ibrahim came running toward her. “I held him and told him, ‘We have to exit quickly.’” The scene is still vivid in her mind: “As we headed to the door, we walked by bodies on the ground.” Outside, a girl covered in blood kept following her. Hanan didn’t know why – until she looked down, and recognised the shoes. It was her 12-year-old daughter, Sarah. “I didn’t recognise her face,” says Hanan, the pain of the memory evident in her voice. “Her face was swollen and her hair was burned. She wasn’t able to see anything and was just following my voice.”

Miraculously, all five of Hanan and Elias's children survived the attack. Elias was hit by two shards in his thigh, one in the femoral artery. He and Sarah were rushed to hospital – it was only in the days after the attack that he was strong enough to be told that his brothers, sister and four other relatives had been killed. "I broke down," he remembers. "My brothers were like fathers to my children. They would spend more time with our children than we did. After we came home, there was emptiness." Elias's and Sarah's injuries still affect them today, and beyond the physical wounds is the trauma that all the survivors are still healing from – particularly the youngest among them. "The children still fear the smallest sounds," says Hanan. "If they hear fireworks, they think they're being attacked."

Escalating violence

The attack on Mar Elias is particularly harrowing, but it isn't an isolated incident. In Syria, and across the Middle East, Christians have endured many years of persecution and oppression. The legacy of extremist Islamist ideology still persists, and Christians are often targets of religiously motivated violence and opposition. Even when a crisis isn't related to faith, such as the earthquake in 2023, believers can face discrimination in the distribution of support and often see their existing vulnerabilities compounded. Syrian believers like Elias and Hanan have endured years and years of ordeals.

Now, in the wake of the fall of Assad's regime, Syria has risen sharply up the World Watch List. It is the sixth most dangerous place in the world to follow Jesus, jumping 12 places in a year. While it still isn't clear exactly what the new regime will mean for religious freedom in the long-term, the authorities' early promises of protecting all citizens' rights have apparently come to little. Islamist extremists are exploiting the current political disorder to target Christians and other vulnerable minorities – largely with

impunity. They frequently patrol Christian neighbourhoods, demanding believers convert or face terrible consequences.

Tens of thousands of Christians have left Syria and neighbouring countries over the past decade or so, looking for safety in other countries. Some faithfully remain, keen to preserve the church in a land which has had a Christian presence since the birth of the early church.

But it is a terribly difficult choice.

“For the sake of our children, we are considering not remaining here,” says Elias. “If it’s God’s will, we will stay. If not, His will be done.”

Faith over fear

For now, the family wants to stay. More than that, they are determined to keep worshipping at the site of the tragedy – because it is still their cherished church, gradually being restored. Many believers are understandably too afraid to come back to Mar Elias but, despite the cost to themselves, Elias and Hanan won’t be deterred. “We go to church, but fear still exists,” shares Hanan. “Yet even if we are afraid, we will still go.”

Elias agrees. Walking through Mar Elias Church, he picks up a picture of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. It’s still marked with dried blood. He reads the text on it: “I am the Good Shepherd, and the Good Shepherd lays down His life for His sheep.” It’s a truth that means all the more to him now. Then he pulls out a stack of handwritten Bible verses. In the months after the attack, Elias sought hope and strength from Scripture more than ever

before. “Studying the Bible made my faith deeper,” he says. “We live day by day. We have no ambition but to remain faithful.” Looking around the church, Elias puts it simply. “We experienced faith and fear here,” he says. “We can’t deny it.” But despite all the family has faced, it is the faith that remains stronger. “I knew the Lord wouldn’t forsake us,” Elias says

with conviction. “We thank Him for everything. We are grounded in our faith. We will go on. Jesus said, ‘On this rock, I will build my church.’ Our faith is built on rocks, not bubbles of soap.”

Strengthen what remains

When Brother Andrew founded Open Doors, he was inspired by the words of Revelation 3:2 – “Strengthen what remains.” It led him to seek and support faithful, vulnerable Christian communities in Communist Eastern Europe who felt they had been forgotten by the wider world. Today, believers in the Middle East need to know they, too, aren’t forgotten.

Open Doors partners in Syria are supporting the persecuted church through trauma counselling, and through counselling schools that train believers to support others. More than 60 graduates are now equipped as trauma counsellors, strengthening the church as they bring professional support to traumatised people like Elias, Hanan and their children. Local partners are also providing vital economic aid, Bibles and prayer support to our brothers and sisters.

PLEASE PRAY

- Hanan asks: “Never forget these innocent children. Keep praying for us, so that we really live in peace. Pray for us to feel safe, to see our children growing up, and to be happy here. We need to live a beautiful life, not a life of fear.”

- Elias asks: “We ask you to pray that we can resist every enemy, seen or unseen, and every thought that keeps us from glorifying God. Ask God to chase away this cloud of darkness.”

Open Doors Magazine May/June 2026

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‘HOW AM I GOING TO TAKE CARE OF MY CHILDREN?’

Fatoumata’s daily struggle for clean water



Written by Peter Shaw

For years, Fatoumata’s life was defined by the weight of a 40-litre jerrycan and a two-hour daily trek. But the water she collected was so contaminated it left her children constantly battling sickness...

‘My name is Fatoumata, I’m 52 years old, and I live in Doniena in Mali. For a long time, life here was a constant struggle. In our village, the main role for women was to cut wood to sell. That’s what I used to do just to get by. Poverty is very widespread here, families were constantly fighting just to take care of their children. There simply wasn’t enough money to support them.

‘The lack of water was the hardest part. We had to walk about four kilometres [2.5 miles] just to find water. We would carry these big 40-litre cans, and by the time you got home and used a little bit, you’d realise you already had to go back for more. It was exhausting. Even worse, the water we found was not clean. When you put it in a pot to cook, it looked strange – you had to filter it just to prepare a meal.

‘It made the children so sick. Some families here had to pay more than 150,000 francs [£65] for medical care because of diarrhoea caused by dirty water. I felt really bad. Sometimes it was hard to sleep because I was constantly wondering how we were going to go on. I’d look at my children and think, how am I going to take care of them with all these problems? I had a deep feeling of sadness.’

Lack of water causing widespread hardship

In rural Mali, water scarcity is a deep-rooted challenge driven by a combination of a harsh semi-arid climate, erratic rainfall, and a lack of modern infrastructure. For many communities, the daily struggle for water

defines the rhythm of life. Women and children often travel several kilometres on foot to reach traditional wells or seasonal pools (known as marigots), which are frequently contaminated and lead to high rates of waterborne diseases like cholera and chronic diarrhoea. The long journeys also put women and children at risk of being attacked.

This water poverty is not just a health crisis, it's also an economic one; it restricts women to hours of hard labour, prevents children from attending school, and limits growing food to the short rainy season.

As climate change accelerates desertification and groundwater levels drop, the competition for these dwindling resources has increasingly become a source of tension in communities. There is a vital need for sustainable solutions like solar-powered boreholes and community-managed water towers.

Through our partner, Tearfund funds projects that support the whole-life development of people across the Sikasso, Ségou, and Mopti regions in southern and central Mali. Water, sanitation, and hygiene programmes are a key part of restoring hope and health to rural communities.

A sustainable, community-based solution providing clean water

By installing solar-powered water towers, ODES prevents the need for women like Fatoumata to walk miles for water and protects families from the devastating toll of waterborne diseases. This does more than just provide clean drinking water; it provides dignity and peace, allowing communities to shift their activities from basic survival toward sustainable activities such as community gardening and education. ODES identified Fatoumata's community in Doniena as needing urgent support to prevent more sickness and deaths because of unclean water.

'Everything started to change when ODES stepped in to help. They brought us a vegetable garden, and as soon as that started, I stopped cutting wood. Now, I spend my time working in the garden. It has helped the women here so much because it gives us a way to earn a little income to support our families.'

‘They also built us a water tower. Now that we have the tower, we don’t have to trek long distances anymore, and we don’t have to rely on collecting rainwater just to have something to drink. We have a rotation system, so the water benefits almost the entire village.

‘Some people take water from noon to 2pm, then we switch to another part of the community. Practically everyone gets water now, and many people have finally stopped going to the marigot to collect water.

‘Bringing the water and the garden really encourages us to move forward. It’s like the saying: if someone gives you five francs, it encourages you to work harder to turn that into more.’

Thankful to God for a life transformed

‘I am so thankful to God for the people who came to help us. I pray that God gives them health and courage, and that they find people to help them so that this work can continue.

‘Even though things are better, we still have needs. I still worry when I see others in trouble. I pray for them because I know what it’s like to feel powerless. We also still need more water towers so that every single family has easy access.

‘When I look ahead five or ten years, I want to see our village progress. I want the children of Doniena to have a bright future. They are in school now, and I pray that God gives them the health and the desire to succeed in their studies so they can become good leaders in our community. As for me, I’m here because God wanted me to be, and I just want to live a life that sets a good example for others.’

‘This article is used with permission from the Spring 2026 edition of Tearfund’s magazine, TearTimes: tearfund.org/teartimes’

If you would like to support this work, contact details are:

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info@tearfund.org

Regular Sunday Meetings.

Every Sunday: 10.30hrs In-person Worship at Knightrider Street

Services are also streamed on YouTube when possible.

Please Note: For safeguarding reasons photography and/or moving image recording, using any type of device, is **NOT** permitted in the church without **prior** permission.



Would you like to join our Street or Prayer Pastor Team? We are always looking for volunteers to join us.



If you would like to make a donation to our work, please scan this code.

Please email:
maidstone@streetpastors.org.uk for more information