

## TODAY'S FACILITATORS

**PRAYER:** Austin

**OFFERING:** Bola

**WORD:** Pastor

## WELCOME

We warmly welcome you, if you are worshipping with us for the first time. We believe you've become a member of our church family by God's grace.

Please ensure you speak to the Pastor or one of today's facilitators before you leave.

May God bless you richly (Amen).

Open my eyes, that I may see  
Glimpses of truth thou hast for me;  
Place in my hands the wonderful key  
That shall unclasp and set me free  
*Silently now I wait for thee*  
Ready, my God, thy will to see  
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear  
Voices of truth thou sendest clear;  
And while the wavenotes fall on my ear  
Everything false will disappear  
*Silently now I wait for thee*  
Ready, my God, thy will to see  
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear  
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;  
Open my heart and let me prepare  
Love with thy children thus to share  
*Silently now I wait for thee*  
Ready, my God, thy will to see  
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

## VERSE(S) OF THE DAY

That which was from the beginning ... concerning the Word of life — the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us.

1 John 1:1-2 (NKJV)

## THEME FOR THE YEAR

Our theme this year is to **enlarge and build better (Isaiah 54:2-3)**, and by God's grace, we're trusting that the boundary lines will fall for us in pleasant places (Amen).

## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know you could join most of our services online when **you are unable to attend?** Talk to the technical team or the Pastor to find out how.

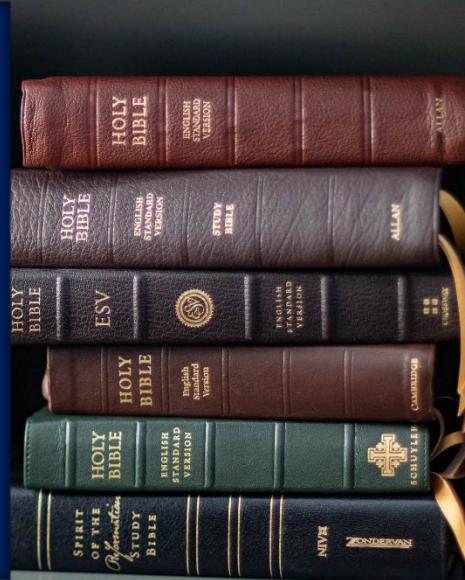


Image source(s): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OU9sNkhWbDk> // <https://www.bibledesignblog.com/>



## WEEKLY SERVICES & MEETINGS

**SUNDAY**  
Thanksgiving / Worship service  
From 10am

**FRIDAY**  
Prayer meeting / Bible study  
From 7pm

**RCCG Bethel Parish**  
Unit 13, Skylines Village  
Limeharbour, London E14 9TS  
**PHONE:** 07889906677 || **EMAIL:** [admin@rccgbethel.church](mailto:admin@rccgbethel.church)  
**WEB:** [www.rccgbethel.church](http://www.rccgbethel.church)

# Our 'must-visit' website



Home Our Focus About us Contact Us Sermons Privacy Policy



Our website is a treasure trove of information, and not only about our focus and mission. You could subscribe to our podcast or listen to past sermons too (<http://rccgbethel.church/sermons/>). This is particularly useful for when you are unable to attend services or for refreshing your recollection as an essential part of your private Bible study.

There's more! Details of events and outreach will almost certainly be available from relevant pages on our website and updated regularly, along with downloadable copies of our Sunday bulletins (<http://rccgbethel.church/category/bulletins/>).

So, why don't you set our homepage as one of your **startup page(s)** in your browser now? The following instructions for most of the common browsers may help.

## Google Chrome

1. Open the browser and the **Settings** menu (or the **three vertical dots** to the right of the menu bar).
2. Scroll down and click on **Advanced Settings**.
3. Select **Open a specific page or set of pages** under **On Startup**.
4. Select **Set pages** and enter or add <http://rccgbethel.church/>.

## Mozilla Firefox

1. Open Firefox. Press **Alt-T** on the keyboard and select **Options** from the drop-down menu or go to **Tools >> Options** from the main menu.
2. In the **Home** section, select **Homepage and new windows** and **Custom URLs...** from the field's drop down.
3. Enter or paste the URL: <http://rccgbethel.church/> or click **Use Current Page** if you are already on our website.

## Microsoft Edge

1. Click the **three horizontal dots** to the right of the top menu bar.
2. Select **Settings** and select **A Specific Page or Pages** from the **Open Microsoft Edge With** section drop down options.
3. Enter <http://rccgbethel.church/>. (Click the Plus sign to add more pages if required).
4. Click the **three horizontal dots** to the right of the top menu bar again to close **Settings** menu.

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### Enlarge and build better

#### Text: Isaiah 54:2-3

A poem titled "The Gate of the Year" by Minnie Louise Haskins (1875-1957) is relevant for our discussion today. A part of it reads: *"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."*

However, it is necessary this morning to challenge this. Does God really expect us to walk in darkness? Is he expecting us to go into the New Year unsighted or unknowing? If we read Psalm 119:103-105, there's a suggestion this is not the case. God has great plans for his children. For example, if our way is clouded by the fear of death, Psalm 118:14-18 tells us that God may punish us but he will not let us die and if our plans seem unclear, we can read in Jeremiah 29:11-14.

To God, our future is clear and although we may not have the details, we know the end result and that God has great plans for each of us (1 Cor 2:9). Therefore, as the word of God illuminates the darkness for us and makes everything clear, we begin to get insight and the word becomes a light onto our path. Everything begins with the word of God (Jn 1:1-5) and Hebrews 11:3 says *"the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen."*

The bible says God breathed the word and all the stars or galaxies were created (Psa 33:6). So, the same power that brought the universe into existence also brought us into existence. Everything, without exception, must begin with God's word, which is also light and illumination. When we have the living word of God in us, we cannot live in darkness or ignorance (2 Cor 4:1-6). The bible tells us that our eyes is *"like a lamp that provides light"* for our bodies and our bodies can only be filled with whatever it provides. However, if it is unhealthy, then it is only likely to provide darkness and our whole body will be filled with that darkness (Matt 6:22-23).

King Saul's story may be one of the greatest tragedies in the bible. He started so well, anointed against all odds and prophesying to the astonishment of many (1 Sam 10:11). Yet, again and again, he rejected or doesn't really understand the light in God's words, taking it for granted. However, he had another source of illumination in Samuel and would receive guidance at crucial points in his life, but he didn't value this either until it was too late. When Samuel became unavailable, Saul sought out a medium in fear and desperation and only received darkness and condemnation (1 Sam 28:5-20).

We must go into this year with the light of God in his word illuminating our paths. If we do that, we will find the answers we seek. Logical wisdom says you don't sow or reap in the time of famine, but the bible tells us that Isaac did and prospered (Gen 26:1-35). The last two years have been challenging and tough, but if you're wondering if it is time to take steps in faith, the bible is telling us this year that it is time (Isaiah 54:1-8; 55:8-13). And the more of us that are illuminated by the light of God, the better the world and our environment will be.

#### Bottom line:

Go into 2022 with the word of God as your light and you'll be able to discern God's plan for you this year. Be prepared and confident that any investment for God will bring us multiple harvest. Even if it doesn't look like it right now, there will be restoration and opportunities to enlarge and not just to build, but to build better in Jesus name (Amen).

**RCCG Bethel Parish**  
*Pillar of truth ... defining the future today*