

TODAY'S FACILITATORS

PRAYER: Remy

OFFERING: Yetunde

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).



VERSE(S) OF THE DAY

I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars ... Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Revelation 2:2-4 (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 visit our website to find out how.



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

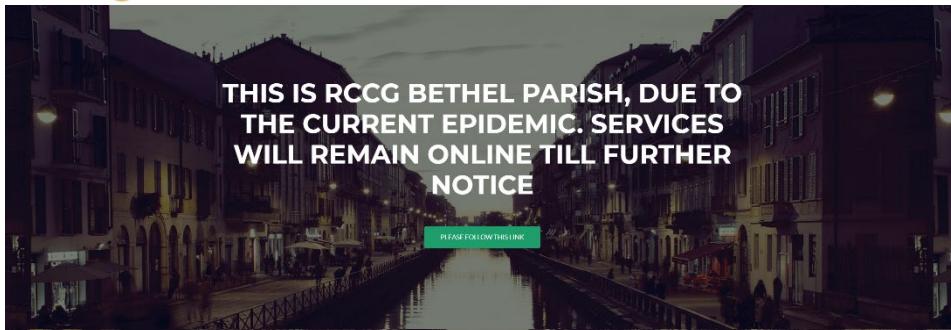
WEB: www.rccgbethel.church



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

Church discipline & excommunication

Text: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Discipline is defined as the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience while excommunication is the action of officially excluding someone from participation in the sacraments and services of the Christian Church. Both are often frowned upon, restricted and rebelled against in churches and some leaders would avoid venturing into these areas if they can.

We must understand that however unpleasant it is, the scriptures expect both self and corporate disciplines in the church. Both go hand in hand and Jesus and Paul modelled that for us. In Luke 9:37-56 for example, Jesus rebuked his disciples many times for being faithless, wanting to be great, stopping children / others coming to him and taking revenge when shunned and at one point, he was almost encouraging his disciples to leave him (Jn 6:60-67).

Jesus also railed against the Pharisees, Scribes and high priests in very strong terms, sometimes cursing them (Matt 23:1-39). Paul explained why excommunication may be necessary in several bible texts, including in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. His litmus test about the sins or crimes deserving excommunication include the following.

- When the sinner is open, unrepentant and boastful (1 Cor 5:1-2).
- Anything that could leaven or infect the church (1 Cor 5:6-7).
- Those spreading false teachings or causing division (Rom 16:17-18; Tit 3:9-11)

Paul was more concerned about two main things more than anything, (1) where there could be transference of behaviour or infection within the church and those spreading false teachings or causing division. Note that he wasn't even bothered about publicity or how it might look.

The fact is we look to each other as role models and the "training" we get is not just from the pulpit, our fellowship or bible studies, even personal ones. We also groom and train each other to behave well or not, as the case may be too. That's why Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:12 that we must be careful not to think always that our standing in Christ Jesus is strong or we may fall.

While churches today may have policies to discipline or excommunicate, they're often seen to be slow in acting to do either or more protective of their reputation than anything. It is difficult too, if the member concerned is quite influential, crucial to the running of the church or high up in the hierarchy.

Jesus did talk about saving those that are lost (Matt 18:12-13). We must also be aware that some could find it difficult to subject themselves to the discipline required for redemption (Heb 6:4-6) and it may be necessary to prioritise the spiritual health of those who may be susceptible, which according to 1 Corinthians 10:12, could be any of us.

Bottom line:

There's no doubt that bad behaviour in a church could be a blight on its reputation or drawback to spreading the good news, as we've been called to do. Where it gets murky is when there's a conflict between **how it looks** and **what must be done**. At all times, churches must prioritise what enhances the glory of God above all else (Col 3:16).

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