



The Methodist Church

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield, Shirehampton Methodist Churches and St Peter' Pilning.

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We are part of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit (www.bsgc.org.uk),
a family of over forty churches serving communities across the local area.

These notices are also posted on <http://www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk>

“This too will pass” (Anon).

“All will be well, and all manner of things will be well” (Julian of Norwich).

Sunday, 26th July, 2020.

I am looking forward to taking some time off over the next couple of weeks, which would normally mean packing up and going somewhere away from home for. This year will be different by necessity, so we are going to have to 'holiday at home' and discover how best to do that. One personal challenge will be to ensure that the place which has been my sole place of work since the end of March will have to become my place of rest and re-creation, and I am not sure how that will pan out and whether I will be able to switch off completely.

Not being sure about something can reveal a mixture of emotions, ranging from hopeful excitement to anxiety and fear. Four years ago, in the wake of the referendum about the UK's membership of the European Union and also the murder of MP Jo Cox, I spent some time reflecting on how the first disciples must have had a sense of uncertainty about what their future held. Yet they openly responded in faith to Jesus' call, despite any inner doubts. Towards the end of his earthly life, Jesus spoke to them about the future beyond his death and resurrection, and offered assurance about the Holy Spirit who would come to comfort and guide them. That still needed a step of faith on their part, one which they took in the face of continuing uncertainty.

For years now, the world at large continues to grapple with the impact of COVID19, many changes in the political landscape, climate change, we are less sure about what Brexit will mean in practice, and more. We are faced with almost daily uncertainty, which needs constant readjustment, even re-creation of our view of the world and how God is working in and through all things. Despite those uncertainties, I am sure that God continues to be present in and through the power of the Holy Spirit, which guides and strengthens us all.

“Do you now believe?” Jesus replied. “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:31ff)

With my prayers, Rev Patrick.

SERVICES, DEVOTIONS, ETC.

Sunday Morning Live. BBC1 at 10.00am.

Angelica Bell and Sally Phillips take a look at the ethical and religious issues of the day.

Songs of Praise. BBC1 at 1.15pm. Revd Kate Botley meets artists on Crosby Beach on Merseyside.

BSGC Corona Virus Worship resources.

Worship resources and other resources for reflection are available on the Circuit website. There is also a daily prayer, based around the Methodist Prayer Handbook, for people to use at 12.00noon.

Our online worship videos will continue for the time-being, but in August will include contributions from Christian organisations here in Bristol and further afield. Please do continue to watch these and pray for those who lead and work in all these faith-based organisations.

The New Room. The New Room has partially re-opened Tuesdays to Saturdays 11.00am - 3.00pm. The Cafe is open for drinks, cakes and light lunches with limited seating and the Chapel and the courtyard for private prayer and reflection.

The New Room – Friday Reflection. See website.

Dial-a-Prayer. A FREE phone service to hear prayers and news from the Methodist Church has been launched, updated each Thursday evening. Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514 Listen to news: 0808 281 2478.

Bible Study. Bible Study, looking at the book of Esther, will recommence on Wednesday, 19th August at 7.45pm. Zoom Meeting details:- Meeting ID: 824 4060 4625 Passcode: 202692.

Video reflections. A video reflection for this weekend is available on church websites.

Afterzoom tea. Sundays at 3.30pm to share news informally and see friends. Please join online via zoom.us Meeting ID: **962 4920 4497** Password: **004692**.

If you would like to join either the Bible Study or Afterzoom Tea, but do not have internet access, you can use your phone: please dial **0330 088 5830** then enter the Meeting number followed by the Password for the particular event. We look forward to hearing you join in.

All Age devotions. Alongside our own devotions included in this news sheet, there are free materials for younger members of our congregations accessible via www.rootsontheweb.com (and other material for the young at heart too).

Big Church Sing. There is a new link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjETodcfHY>

CHURCH NOTICES.

All churches.

If you are looking for somewhere local to visit for some quiet time in God's presence, then everyone at ALFACC* (Fulligrove House, Woodwell Road BS11 9UG) will be pleased to welcome you to their garden which is available for people to come on their own or with a few friends (appropriately spaced) to sit in peace and think/read/pray etc. They are affiliated to the Quiet Garden Movement <https://quietgarden.org/> and have a few photos and resources in the summer house. It is generally helpful if people contact us in advance (info@alfacc.org.uk or 01179826455 or alfacc.org.uk) as there are days when activities will be happening and the garden will not be quiet. Drop-in sessions will be available on

Wednesdays 2.00 – 4.00pm in August when the weather is dry: tea and cake will be on offer!



Feeding Bristol is fundraising for part of the citywide Healthy Holidays project, looking to support our most vulnerable children during the summer holidays. Please visit this fundraising link if you feel able to contribute.

Thank you to all those who have sent cheques to church treasurers or set up standing orders instead of storing up your cash or envelopes for your regular offerings. If you have not done this, please do consider doing so as it will help church finances and also reduce the amount of loose cash which we will have to handle as and when we start to meet again. Please contact your church treasurer for more details: Elaine (Bishopston, 0117 951 4529), Ian (E Compton, 01454 632 255), Helen (Horfield, 0117 962 4257), Debbie (Pilning, 01454 632 200) or Gill Shire, 0117 950 3400). Thank you.

Thank you also to those across all our churches who have been keeping in touch with our young people over the past few months. To give you an idea of some of the things which have been continuing in different forms: material for Messy Church 'at home' has been produced routinely, shared with those who would normally meet at Horfield and Pilning, but also online via the Circuit website to extend its reach; members of KiGLe have been sharing in the WhatsApp group for the whole church at Shirehampton; and we've recently started online sessions for young people at Horfield. The church membership lists across our five churches total about 200, but we have routine contact with over 300 people in various ways, with a quarter under the age of 18. Those connected with Horfield will be receiving a book or similar during the coming week, a way of marking their contribution to the church's life, but also to encourage their journey with Jesus. Please offer prayers of thanks and encouragement for them all.

Horfield.

Worship Consultation. The next meeting will be on Thursday, 20th August at 7.30pm. [Zoom Meeting details](#):- Meeting ID: 856 0226 4713, Passcode: 104301.

Junior Church. We are running online Junior Church sessions every Sunday on-line at 10:30am. For details of these sessions please email the Junior Church Leaders (Helen-treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk).

An important part of our discipleship is to pray for our community and each other. This week you

are asked to pray for the following people and their families:- Alima and Tom Parkes/Oyebanji, Eurfron and John Parry, the Pastoral group, and Anna and Chris Pawlik.

WEEKLY NOTICES, ETC.

Please submit all items to John Hopper by each Tuesday (p.hopper1@btinternet.com or 0117 951 4529). To be added to, or deleted from, the electronic circulation, please email John Hopper.

This week's Lectionary readings are:

Genesis 29: 15 - 28; Psalm 105: 1-11, 45b or Psalm 128; Romans 8: 26-39; and Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52.

Reflection (based on Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52) by Revd Mandy Briggs.

Last year I decided to buy some prescription sunglasses. All went well until June this year, when one of the tiny screws fell out of the frame. It was the screw which kept one of the nose pads in place. Just a tiny little thing, but without it my sunglasses were wonky and a quick trip to the opticians was required to restore things to normal again!

Small things can make a huge difference. This has been a popular theme during the last few months. A rainbow in a window. A teabag in a card. A phone call. Picking up some shopping. Small acts, which in themselves do not seem much, but combine to create a whole world of people helping one another and caring for one another. Small is beautiful.

I find it really interesting, then, that in the Gospel reading set for today, Jesus shares a series of parables which all suggest that that the Kingdom of Heaven can be found in small things. A mustard seed, a small amount of yeast, a pearl. Small things, some absolutely tiny, and yet these things are chosen to represent the kind of world that God wants to inhabit. A kingdom where everyday, ordinary things like mustard seeds and yeast are valued. And yet a kingdom that is so prized that people search and strive to discover it, like a valuable pearl.

Theologian and writer Tom Wright suggests in his commentary on Matthew that there was a fashionable idea in the ancient world that "different religions, and the experiences they offer, were like a set of pearls which you could collect." We still see this today in the 'pick n mix' approach that some people take to faith – weaving Christianity with New Age ideas, Paganism and the like.

But Tom goes on to say: "There is only one great pearl; there is only one hoard of treasure; and everything else is nothing beside it. The pearl, the treasure, is the gospel of the kingdom which Jesus was announcing and embodying. That is the shock, the new thing. Without that, all you've got is the old thing, the same old story that half the world believed then and believes still."

He also discusses the difficult verses at the end of this passage, when the 'good and bad fish' are separated. He is intrigued by verse 52: 'the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.' Of Jesus, he suggests: "For him, the new things are the extraordinary, brand new visions that the kingdom of heaven is bringing. The old things are the wisdom of the centuries, particularly the ancient stories and hopes of Israel. "The gospel he brings...consists of bringing the two together, rooting the new deep within the old and allowing the old to come to fresh and exciting expression in the new."

After the experiences of the past few months, we too are in need of extraordinary, brand new visions. Can we take the stories, wisdom and traditions of our past and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, shape them into something new, which shows the world what the Kingdom of God is really like? I really believe we can.

A prayer:

God of parables and stories, help us to see you in people and things which seem insignificant and overlooked. May we see with your eyes as we look for a bigger vision of what your kingdom of love is like.

Something to think about this week:

Have a look around your home and/or garden. Think of a new way that you could describe the Kingdom of God using the things you can see now. Here are some suggestions:

- The Kingdom of God is like a mobile phone; it is a small thing which can connect us to the whole world.
- The Kingdom of God is like a teabag: it can flavour its surroundings and bring refreshment.
- The Kingdom of God is like a courgette plant: it starts small, but if you look after it can produce a huge crop.

Let me know what you come up with!

Mandy (briggsa454@gmail.com)