



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, 2nd August, 2020.

Rev Patrick is currently on holiday, but has left us this to think about:

"And who is my neighbour?" - She lives next door and needs a hug.

"And who is my neighbour?" - He lies in hospital and needs a visit.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Help us, Jesus, to look around, to see our neighbours as ourselves.

"And who is my neighbour?" - She is traumatised and needs asylum.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Posh, poor, addicted, abused.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Help us, Jesus, to bind their wounds, lift them up.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Old, young, imprisoned, mentally ill.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Black, white, behind a mask.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Help us, Jesus, to tenderly care and not to count the cost.

"And who is my neighbour?" - Let us rejoice in offering your love for all, unlimited and free.

"And who is my neighbour?" - May we all be held, healed and restored by you, loving God.

Amen

(Adapted from a prayer by Ann Cooper, local preacher in the Newcastle West Circuit in the Methodist Prayer Handbook 2019-20)

SERVICES, DEVOTIONS, ETC.

Sunday Morning Live. BBC1 at 10.00am. Sean Fletcher Bell and Sally Phillips take a look at the ethical and religious issues of the day.

Songs of Praise. BBC1 at 1.15pm. Aled Jones is at the Millenium Stadium looking at the links between Christianity and sport.

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



Feeding Bristol is fundraising for part of the city-wide 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.

Horfield.

Worship Consultation. The next meeting will be online 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:- Jim Pocock, Margaret Postlethwaite, Sue Pollard, Jehlani Pratt, and Dannikka Pratt.

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 32: 22 - 31; Psalm 17: 1 - 7, 15; Romans 9: 1 - 5; and Matthew 14: 13 - 21.

Reflection – An Army of Ordinary People, by John Hopper.

In her book “An Army of Ordinary People”, Felicity Dale shares stories of how God has always used, and is still using, ordinary believers to carry out His work in simple ways throughout the world. Some of these stories are dramatic. Some are everyday.

“An Army of Ordinary People” is also the first line of a hymn by Dave Bilbrough. You can find it in Songs of Fellowship and Mission Praise.

*“An army of ordinary people,
A witness that love is the key,
A city, a light to the nations,
Heirs to the promise are we.”*

Back in those dark days of the Second World War the American composer Aaron Copland wrote a piece called ‘Fanfare for the Common Man’. It was written in 1942 and was inspired in part by a speech made earlier that year by the then American Vice President Henry A. Wallace, who proclaimed the dawning of the “*Century of the Common Man*”. Copland’s piece of music celebrates common, ordinary, everyday men, and women, and their achievements. These days we would call it “Fanfare for the Common People”.

History, traditionally, is about the great and the good, and not so good or evil. However, in recent years there has become an increasing awareness of the contribution made by ordinary people to great events. The everyday heroes. Unknown, and often unsung. Those people who perform, at times quite heroic acts of courage, love and endurance. They too have a story to tell. In these ‘corona-virus’ days, we think particularly about the heroes of the NHS, the front line workers, the key workers, the carers, and all the other people working to keep us well, warm, fed and safe, both paid and voluntary. The world is full of heroes. Everyday heroes. An ‘*Army of Ordinary People*’.

Usually, we think of heroes doing brave, heroic things; but this is not always so. There are some who inspire us to be something more than we think we are. There is Colonel Sir Tom Moore, walking quietly and determinedly up and down his garden. There is also Major Chris Brannigan walking barefoot from Land’s End to Edinburgh to raise money for research into his daughter’s rare illness.



People do all sorts of extraordinary things, sometimes completely unaware of the result. There the unknown Local Preacher who brought about the conversation of the great Baptist preacher CH Spurgeon back in 1850. Spurgeon was on his way to a scheduled appointment, but a snow storm forced him to cut short his intended journey and to turn into a Primitive Methodist chapel in Colchester where God opened his heart.

The bible too is full of heroes. Some we know a lot about. Some we know little about. For example, Nimrod was a mighty hunter. That is it. Nothing more. Many people are nameless. Our reading today is well known to many of us - perhaps, too well known. When we read it, we tend to concentrate on Jesus and the miracle of five loaves and two fishes feeding 5,000 people, and then the 12 baskets of crumbs! It is easy to overlook the un-named boy who offered his lunch to Jesus. I wonder what prompted him to do it? Did he realise what was going happen? We never know what may result from a small, unselfish act!

We need to remember that for the fulfilment of his purpose God needs more than ministers, priests, pastors and missionaries. He needs mechanics and chemists, gardeners, road sweepers and dressmakers and cooks; tradesmen, doctors, philosophers, judges and typists... We do not serve God only in the brief moments during which we are taking part in a religious service, reading the bible or saying our prayers, or talking about Him to a friend.

We serve him just as much as when we are reading the paper, travelling, laughing at a joke, decorating the house or spending time with family and friends.

We serve Him by taking an interest in everything, because he created everything, and has put us in His creation so that we may participate in it fully. God is not interested only in religion; He is interested in everything and everyone. He is the God of all creation, the whole world, and so that must include me and you and everything we think and say and do.

There is a very old legend concerning the return of Jesus Christ to heaven after His ascension. It is said that the angel Gabriel met Him and said "Lord, this is a great salvation that you have wrought". But Jesus only said "Yes." "What plans have you made for carrying on the work? How is everyone to know what you have done?" asked Gabriel. Jesus answered "Well, I left Peter, James John, Mary and Martha to tell their friends, and their friends to tell their friends, till all the world knows." "But, Jesus," said Gabriel, "suppose Peter is too busy with his nets, or Martha the housework, or the friends they tell are too occupied, and forget to tell their friends – what then." Jesus did not answer at once, then he said in a quiet voice: "I have not made any other plans. I am counting on them".

God, our God, does not have a Plan B. That's it! **We** are it! **We** are His Plan A! He is depending on us!

There may be times you may think you aren't good enough to be of use to God, but remember...

Noah was a drunk.

Abraham was too old.

Isaac was a day-dreamer.

Jacob was a liar.

Leah was ugly.

Joseph was abused.

Moses had a stuttering problem.

Gideon was afraid.

Sampson had long hair and was a womaniser.

Rahab was a prostitute.

Jeremiah and Timothy were too young.

David had an affair and was a murderer.

Elijah was suicidal.

Isaiah preached naked.

Jonah ran from God.

Naomi was a widow.

Job went bankrupt.

John the Baptist ate bugs.

Peter denied Christ.

The Disciples fell asleep while praying.

Martha worried about everything.

The Samaritan woman was divorced, more than once.

Zaccheus was too small.

Paul was too religious.

Timothy had an ulcer.

And - Lazarus was dead!

"Sometimes it is the very people who no one imagines anything of who do the things no one can imagine."

(Christopher Morcom was a boyhood friend of Alan Turing. Morcom won a scholarship to Trinity College, Turing, the famous code-breaker, did not.)