



## 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](http://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, 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2020.**

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

Those words were amongst the prayerful questions included here at the start of my break over the past few weeks, during which time we have seen images of refugees crossing the English Channel, hoping to find asylum in our country. Many of them are fleeing the impact of human tragedy in other regions of the world: even before attempting the difficult boat trip, they will have undergone a hazardous and life-threatening journey of thousands of miles. Some sections of the media and many politicians continue to portray their actions as illegal, even suggesting their arrival amounts to an invasion, threatening the core of our identity as a nation.

As Christians, how might we respond to these events? We are used to being able to travel across the world on holiday or for work, even if for some locations we need a visa, it is rare for us to be refused. We speak of British people who live abroad as ‘ex-pats’, yet we label those who wish to come here as ‘migrants.’ Scripture reminds us of our common humanity with everyone: ‘There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus’ (Galatians 3:28). So when we see those seeking asylum in dangerous conditions, it is as if we were crying out for help. How would we like to be treated in those circumstances?

What might it mean for us to stand firm and support those who need welcoming to our shores, not facing rejection? I encourage you to find out more, perhaps by looking at some of the material produced by the Joint Public Issues Team ([www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/asylum-and-migration/](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/asylum-and-migration/)) in response to which you might write to a local MP, or consider prayerfully some action, for example offering to house an asylum seeker in the scheme run locally (see the notices below) or consider supporting the project at Westbury Park Church to re-furbish a house for a refugee family (for details, please speak to me).

"And who is my neighbour?"

Rev Patrick

#### **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. Revd Kate Botley celebrates the Salvation Army.

#### **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, and 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.

**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 and Listen to news: 0808 281 2478.

**New Room update.** The chapel, cafe, shop, museum, courtyard and toilets are now open

Tuesday - Saturday, 11.00am -3.00pm. There is a full safety system in place to reassure visitors including hand sanitation points, a one way system and participation in NHS Test and Trace. The cafe is offering drinks, cakes and light lunches with limited seating inside and benches in the courtyard. Timed tickets must be booked in advance to visit the museum and can be booked at [www.newroombristol.org.uk/plan-your-visit/](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk/plan-your-visit/) . As well as the Friday Reflection which is posted on the New Room website each week, an Emmaus prayer service is also being held in the chapel at 1.00pm every Tuesday. This can be attended in person (please wear a face mask) and is also being streamed live on Facebook, just search for the 'New Room Bristol' page. Prayer sheets so that you can follow the service at home can be found at [www.newroombristol.org.uk/faithandresources/](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk/faithandresources/) - click on Emmaus Service Resources to find the sheet.



*Face masks must be worn.*



*Practice social distancing.*



*John Wesley self-isolating.*

**Bible Study.** Bible Study, looking at the book of Esther, will recommence on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> 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](https://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](http://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=XiETodcfHY>

## CHURCH NOTICES.

### All churches.

**Accommodation for Asylum Seekers.** A local charity has issued an urgent appeal to help house asylum seekers in Bristol. Bristol Hospitality Network (BHN) is working together with the council to find move-on accommodation for asylum seekers who have been made destitute. Usually the charity does this through their 11-bed men's hostel and a network of hosts, but at the moment, the hostel is full so they need to find more hosts to support some of the most vulnerable people in the city.

Many asylum seekers have come from Iraq, Syria, Sudan, or Afghanistan and will have lost a lot on their journey to safety. Offering someone in need a room and your trust is a very immediate way to show welcome and solidarity. Volunteer Hosts would need to offer a spare room or living space for a minimum of three months. Most guests are self-sufficient and need very little in terms of time or energy. Just a safe place to sleep and a warm welcome. Hosts are able to join an active network, which will provide advice and support. All guests are actively supported by BHN to make progress with their asylum claims while hosted, and BHN also provide them with food and some money. To find out more, visit [www.bhn.org.uk](http://www.bhn.org.uk) or contact [laura@bhn.org.uk](mailto:laura@bhn.org.uk) for a no obligation discussion about becoming a host with BHN.

**Update for reopening for worship.** A short act of morning worship has been held at Shirehampton for the past few weeks and it is

planned to continue to do so, with a decision being made each week about the following Sunday: the stewards will communicate directly about this. We are in a similar position at Pilning, which opened last Sunday. The Church Council at Horfield met last week, and agreed that we should aim to be ready for a morning service on 20<sup>th</sup> September and thereafter; we are also exploring holding an evening service online. More information to follow.

**Dates for September.** The following Meetings will take place via Zoom. Nearer the date log in details will be circulated with the agendas.

- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm - Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting.
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm - Circuit Meeting.

**Cancelled.** The planned service to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of George Whitfield on 30<sup>th</sup> September has been cancelled.

**Education Sunday.** A Circuit Service will be held on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September. It will be accessible from 4.00pm on the Circuit YouTube Channel. Further details will be circulated nearer the date.

**Peter Slee.** With effect from last Friday, Peter has taken early retirement from his role as Head Of Chaplaincy (South) within Methodist Homes. I am sure that we all thank Peter for the contributions he has made within the Circuit and to wish him well for the future.

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](mailto:info@alfacc.org.uk) or 01179826455 or [alfacc.org.uk](http://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.

### Horfield.

**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](mailto: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:- Shirin and Chris Sittler, Mollie Spry, Rachel and Dan Smith, and the Stewards.

### Shirehampton.

Our reflection time on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> will be led by Patrick at 11.00am; please let Colin (9686860) know if you propose to come so that we can check numbers. The service will last about 35 minutes. Please bring your own drink if you need one, and a face covering.

### WEEKLY NOTICES, ETC.

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

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### This week's lectionary readings are:

Exodus 1: 8 - 2: 10; Psalm 124: 1 - 8; Romans 12: 1 - 8; and Matthew 16: 13 - 20.

## Reflection by Adam Biddlestone.

“Who do you say I am?” Jesus asks his disciples (Matthew 16: 15). How we describe people we know depends on our relationship with them. I wonder, if somebody reading this reflection asked you, “Who is Adam Biddlestone?”, what would you say?

For the past few weeks, I have attended the Zoom evening service at the church where I grew up and my parents still attend. At the end of the service we go into chatrooms for further fellowship. The selection of people is random, so I end up with people I know and people I don't know. People who know me would say to those who don't, “Adam is Joe and Marion's son”. If I go into school the Head will say to those who don't know me, “Adam is our Chair of Governors”. He would not introduce me as Joe and Marion's son, neither would anybody in the chatroom introduce me as Chair of Governors. In the same way none of you would explain who I am using either of those two identities. We all have many identities defined by the different roles we have. If any of you introduced me as Joe and Marion's son that would prompt the question, “Who are Joe and Marion?”

Our Gospel Reading begins with Jesus asking the question, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They reply by telling Jesus what other people are saying. John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets are the answers he receives.

He then asks them a more direct question, “What about you, who do you say that I am?” Simon gives the answer he would hope to hear from a disciple, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.” A text book answer which receives the highest praise as Simon is given the name Peter (meaning rock) and on this rock, Jesus declares, ‘I will build my church’. Simon knew what answer Jesus was looking for, but did he fully understand its meaning? In next week's Gospel Reading the one who here is the rock becomes the stumbling block as he fails to understand that if the Messiah is to be the Messiah then he must be killed.

The answers that Jesus gets to his first question are not what he wants to hear, or are they? The reading ends with Jesus ordering the disciples not to tell anyone that he is the Messiah. He is not yet ready to reveal this part of his identity to the crowds that follow him, so maybe at this stage in his ministry their answers are ones he is happy to hear.

We know who Jesus is and are not restricted, like the disciples were, to telling others. In the church we are often reluctant to talk to others about God, Jesus and our faith. Resources such as ‘Talking of God Together’ and ‘Talking of God with Others’ and initiatives such as ‘a culture of invitation’ and ‘a year of testimony’ aim to empower and encourage us to talk more openly with others. The rock the church is built on is the person who believes and testifies that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. When, as individuals and as a church, we fail to talk with others about our faith we become a stumbling block rather than the rock we are called to be. Where and with whom can you have a conversation this week about your faith in God and in the Messiah, the Son of the Living God?

A Prayer:

*Loving God, we thank you for those people, encounters and experiences which have led us to believe in you as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.*

*Give us confidence and conviction to speak of our faith with others,  
give us opportunities where conversations can begin,  
a meaningful language through which to speak  
and loving actions which speak louder than a thousand words.*

*Amen.*