



## 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>

**God says "When they call to me, I will answer them;  
when they are in trouble I will be with them." (Psalm 91).  
"The best of all – God is with us." (John Wesley).**

### **Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.**

#### **A letter from the President of Conference.**

"Dear Friends,

We are all devastated by the introduction of a second national lockdown in England as well as the ongoing restrictions imposed in Scotland and the firebreak that our sisters and brothers in Wales have been living under recently. Scientific advice is being heeded to bring down the rising rate of the virus and its possible consequences. The introduction of the lockdown from Thursday in England may be necessary, but its consequences will also be far reaching.

There will undoubtedly be a serious setback for the economy, and people who are struggling financially and in numerous other ways will be greatly affected. It could prove to be a tipping point for many people. The poor and the vulnerable have and will continue to be hit the hardest. There is a feeling of hopelessness for many people.

Our National Health Service staff and other key workers are already tired through the outstanding service they have given to us all, particularly during these past few months, and this second lockdown will be especially difficult for them. They need our continued support, encouragement and prayers. Governments all those in political life, plus medical and scientific advisers, are having to make very hard decisions on our behalf which, in a number of places, are far from popular. Whilst they rightly need our scrutiny, they also need our support, encouragement and prayers, that their decisions will help people's well-being.

One of our Methodist Presbyters commented to me recently that during this period she was trying to develop what she calls a 'sacrament of kindness'. I like that phrase very much. In the concerns of the moment we all need in our living to develop to each other a 'sacrament of kindness'. So much seems to be against this idea, but it is something every single one of us could develop in our attitudes to ourselves, to other people, and indeed the communities we serve.

Finally, as I write as the President of the Conference, I would be denying my role if I did not specifically mention something of our Faith. Bishop Leslie Newbiggin, of blessed memory, was once asked whether, as he looked to the future, he was optimistic or pessimistic? His reply was simple and straight forward, "I am" he said, "neither an optimist nor a pessimist. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead!"

Therein lies our hope. The God who is with us in the worst of situations, even when the flame of hope seems very weak. Such is our faith and hope in the risen Christ. Not a hope which ignores the shadows of suffering, but a hope strong and secure in the assurance that love is at the heart of all things, that the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. The best of all is, **God is with us.**

A Prayer by Teresa of Avila (1515-1582).

*"Let nothing disturb or dismay us, O God, for all things are passing and you alone are unchanging. All things are wrought in patience, O God, and those who possess you lack nothing. Our sufficiency, O God, is in you alone, now and always. Amen"*

Revd Richard Teal."

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## SERVICES, DEVOTIONS, ETC.

Please note that, in accordance with the current Government lockdown, all the churches for which Revd Patrick Stonehewer is responsible are now CLOSED for worship until further notice. We will keep you updated via the weekly notices.

**Sunday Morning Live.** BBC1 at 10.30am. Sean Fletcher Bell and Sally Phillips take a look at the ethical and religious issues of the day. Last of the series.

**Songs of Praise.** BBC1 at 1.15pm. Alen Jones takes a journey exploring how faith has shaped his life and his singing.

**Bible Study.** Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November at 7.45pm. Zoom Meeting details:- Meeting ID: 824 4060 4625, Passcode: 202692.

### **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. 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.

**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).

Please join a weekly prayer meeting for the Methodist Church, 12.45pm to 1.00pm each Tuesday. Go to [www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/year-of-prayer/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/year-of-prayer/) for details and to register for the online link.

## CHURCH NOTICES.

### All churches.

Even though the future looks uncertain, the local charity SIXTY-ONE plans to go ahead with this year's Christmas Gift Project, giving bags of simple gifts to the 1,500 prisoners in HMP Bristol, Leyhill and Ashfield. This is only possible because of the brilliant support received from the prisons and local churches. This year Horfield Baptist church is allowing us to use their space to store the gifts - a huge thank you to Sarah and the team. Normally the churches who pack the gift bags provide the majority of the funding for this project. But this year some will not be able to do so, as they will not be holding the usual Christmas service collections (including members at Bishopston Methodist Church). Can you help make up the shortfall by making a donation towards these costs (each bag costs about £6)? Many prisoners will have spent the vast majority of the last eight months locked in their cell, so it is more important than ever to reach out to them this year. You can donate via <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/9773#!/DonationDetails> . Thank you

I heard recently of someone speaking of the difficulty that having a reduced income for a prolonged period has had on her well-being and life situation. Although helpful, furlough has left her in debt with little money for day-to-day expenses. This story is likely to be replicated time over, and as we live through this second period of lockdown, please do think about those who may be in this or a similar situation. People are suffering due to this long term reduction in income and many are getting behind on rent and mortgages, and struggling with the essentials. Both our local food banks have plenty of food, toiletries and pet food and really want to help. It is worth reminding people that they are there to be used if help is needed now. Call 0808 208 2138 for the Citizen's Advice Foodbank Referral line, refer them yourself, speak to a church steward or to Rev Patrick.

**3Generate.** This year's elections take place from 21<sup>st</sup> November and the Methodist Church is keen that as many children and young people as possible are able to participate. They have the opportunity to elect the Youth President for 2021/22 as well as their representatives for the coming year. In order to vote children and young people need to be registered. There are some simple steps to make this happen:

1. Children and young people aged 8-17 years old can be registered only once by a group leader or parent/carer.
2. They need to be registered by 15<sup>th</sup> November via <https://eventsfeedback2020.typeform.com/to/S3YiH>.
3. Elections open on 21<sup>st</sup> November for a limited period.
4. All those aged 18-23 can register to vote via <https://methodistchurchlondon.myknowchurch.co.uk/form/load/U1Urb2FwOEY5NkE2elB3YThySmlMSGMxMC9sb09wWWoyanE5dS9XdG96ZFppSWU3RWRvdFp2N1pPK1BM>

There is information about the candidates standing for election so do check 3Gen TV and the 3Generate webpage for further details. We hope that lots of children and young people will use their vote and know that by doing so they are making a difference to the life and ministry of the Church.

**Cards for Good Causes.** Due to the current Coronavirus situation, Christmas Cards for Good Causes UK are not trading at the New Room this year. They do however have a shop in Tyndale Baptist Church on Whiteladies Road. Instead the New Room shop is selling a selection of Leonard Smith Christmas cards.

**Bristol Churches' Winter Night Shelter.** We are hoping to hear about how this will operate this winter, as communal shelters are not possible within the COVID-19 legislation. Arrangements will therefore be very different this year. More information to follow, but do continue to pray for God's wisdom and guidance over the whole project and those leading it.

### **Bishopston.**

Margaret and Richard Angel are now proud grandparents to Frederick, son of Anthony and Sarah, born at the beginning of November.

### **Horfield.**

**Junior Church.** Junior Church sessions continue online every Sunday at 10:00am. Email Helen

before Saturday midday, for each week's Junior Church Zoom access details ([treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk)).

**"Magnet".** We will no longer be doing a church order for the "Magnet". Anyone wishing to receive this magazine is asked to make their own arrangements as individual subscribers.

**Christmas crafts.** A full list of items is available on both the Horfield Methodist Church website and at [www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk/fundraising), and can be ordered from there. The Christmas wreaths are expected to sell out quickly.

**Fundraising.** More items (including face masks and knitted Christmas tree bunting) have been added to our Christmas fundraising page - please check weekly as items are added from time-to-time. See

[www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk/fundraising)

Please note that it is advised that the last date for ordering handmade Christmas wreaths is Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November, otherwise you may be disappointed. Watch this space for details of an online fundraising Christmas quiz evening - details soon.

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:- Jenny and Keith Cornell, Church Council, Linda Cox, and Cubs.

### **Shirehampton.**

Christians on the Cotswold was unable to meet last weekend because of the current COVID19 restrictions, but you are invited to listen to the second session on the prayer course (<https://prayercourse.org/>) and maybe have a chat (on the phone or email) to someone else about it afterwards? There are also various resources on the website as well - under the section called "Toolshed". Certainly we will need to be praying over these next weeks and months!

Jean Dodrell plans to offer a Music Appreciation Course and invites interested people to contact her on 0117 985 0846.

### **WEEKLY NOTICES, ETC.**

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

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**This week's lectionary readings are:**

Judges 4: 1 – 7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5: 1 – 11; and Matthew 25: 14 – 30.

**Reflection by Naomi Sharp (Lay Pastor Badminton Road and Winterbourne Down).**

It makes sense, in a way... You have something really precious and you do not want it to get lost, damaged or stolen. So, you bury it in the ground (in a carefully noted location). This is a hot, dry country, so it will be safe from moths, sun-damage and thieves. Excellent. A risk-free solution!

The focus in this story from Matthew's gospel is on the third slave and this is the solution the slave comes up with. It might have made sense to them, but it did not please their master. There was no risk but there was also no usefulness, no productivity. Protection actually meant missed opportunities.

When Jesus talked about a master and a slave, his first listeners would almost certainly have drawn a parallel with God and Israel. So, what might it be that Israel had "buried in the ground"? It must have been something very valuable – a "talent" was a sum of money, approximately what a labourer might earn in 15 years or so.

The greatest "talent" that Israel had received was being chosen to be in relationship with God, expressed in many ways including in the giving of the Law through Moses, the sign of the Temple, the ministry of many prophets and God's own promises for the future.

God's purpose was for Israel to be a "light to the nations" (Isaiah 42), to be the means by which other nations might also know Him. But Israel, in particular the religious authorities, was doing its best to preserve this "talent," to hide from the risk of it getting spoiled.

These days we have got used to the language of "risk". Many of us have completed risk assessments on paper, and all of us have done them in our heads when we have made decisions about what to do or not to do in our pandemic world: Will I go out to eat/shop/go to church/the library/the gym? Who should I meet with, and where? Who will I allow to come into my house? Should I wear a mask/gloves? To be totally safe we would do nothing at all. But that would hardly be living!

I wonder if we think about the Good News, the greatest "talent" we have, in the same way? Are we in danger of behaving like the religious leaders in Jesus' time, of protecting our faith so effectively that it becomes useless, like burying it in the ground? Or are we like the first two slaves who take their "talents" and put them to work, accepting the risk that investing brings?

**Prayer.**

*Jesus, you challenge us to take risks for your sake and for the sake of the Good News. Keep us from falling into the temptation of preserving and protecting our faith, so that it is stifled. Teach us how to invest wisely so that the Good News can go to work and be fruitful, for the sake of your Kingdom. Amen.*





## **FOODBANK MANAGER JOB ADVERT**

*To oversee the operation of the **North Bristol Foodbank** which has 8 outlets across North Bristol and South Gloucestershire and develop our new 10 year strategic plan.*

**Full time position**  
*(weekdays with occasional evenings/Saturdays)*

**Salary: £25,000**

**Based at Ebenezer Church Office**  
*(286 Filton Avenue, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0BA)*

To receive a copy of the job description and details of application process, please email **Stewart North** (chair of trustees) on [stewart@northbristol.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:stewart@northbristol.foodbank.org.uk)

**Closing date for applications:** Friday 27th November.  
Interviews will take place on Friday 4th December.