



The **Methodist Church**

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield, Shirehampton Methodist Churches and St Peter's 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>

"The best of all - God is with us." (John Wesley).

## Sunday, 10th January 2021

### FORTHCOMING SERVICES

#### **Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield and Shirehampton**

During the current period of lockdown our services will be held on Zoom only. Please see the last page of these notices for details of Zoom, including how to dial in. If you would like support with accessing these services online or via the phone, please make contact with a Church Steward or Rev Patrick.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January at 10.00. Joint Zoom service only, led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January at 10.00. Joint Zoom service only, led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer.

#### **St Peter's Pilning**

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January, the church will be open for private prayer from 10.00

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January, Morning prayer led by Brian Richardson

Ken Luxon says, During our Epiphany service on Sunday 3rd January at Horfield I used two paintings from the National Gallery, both called "The Adoration Of The Magi". They are by Jan Gossaert and Pieter Bruegel the elder. You can find links below to the Gallery website where you can find high resolution images of the paintings and more background information. And some time in the future you can visit the gallery and see them yourself which would be even better.

[www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-gossaert-jean-gossart-the-adoration-of-the-kings](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-gossaert-jean-gossart-the-adoration-of-the-kings)

[www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/pieter-bruegel-the-elder-the-adoration-of-the-kings](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/pieter-bruegel-the-elder-the-adoration-of-the-kings)

or just the link to the main N G site. [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

**Video reflections.** Our online worship videos will continue to be available via church websites. Thank you to those who have contributed to these.

**All Age devotions.** Free materials for everyone available via [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com).

**Afterzoom tea - each** Sunday at 3.30, to share news informally and see friends. Please see the last page of this news sheet for the details for Zoom, including how to phone in.

### OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS

**BBC1 Songs of Praise** at 12.15 on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>, Claire McCollum examines Stirling's connection with the King James Bible.

**Circuit Coronavirus Worship resources and resources for reflection are available on the Circuit website, including a daily prayer, using the Methodist Prayer Handbook, for use at 12.00 noon.**

**Dial-a-Prayer** A free phone service to hear prayers and news from the Methodist Church. This is updated each Thursday evening. Dial a prayer: 0808 281 2514, listen to news: 0808 281 2478.

**Methodist Church prayer meeting.** 12.45 to 1.00 each Tuesday. Available via [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/)

**Bible study.** The weekly Bible Study will continue on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January at 7.45 and we shall be looking at Ecclesiastes. Zoom link below.

**WEEKLY NOTICES** - send items to Eurfron Parry by Tuesday ([eurfron@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:eurfron@blueyonder.co.uk)) or 0117 969 1908).

### **GENERAL NOTICES.**

**The CAPtivating Quiz.** Come and join us on Saturday January 16<sup>th</sup> for the online CAPtivating quiz in order to raise awareness of and funding for the Bristol NW CAP Debt Centre. If you know your CAPitals, the difference between a latte and a CAPpuccino and know about the CAPed crusader then this quiz is for you. For more information and to book a place email: [debzspinney@capuk.org](mailto:debzspinney@capuk.org)

**Singing for Wellbeing Workshop.** Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January, 10.30 to 11.30. Singing has many benefits to our health and wellbeing. This free online workshop is an opportunity to experience some of the ways in which singing can improve your physical health and lift your mood. The session is hosted by registered music therapists and New Room community choir leaders Judit and Meg. To book your free place go to the New Room website and click on Events. "Very enjoyable and uplifting, thank you". "Made me happy!" "Fun, active and relaxing." Interested in improving your wellbeing, but can't make the workshop? There is The New Room Community Choir on Wednesday lunchtimes during term time.

**Horfield.** As many will know Horfield is hoping to become an Eco-church. To start this process we have to conduct a survey together. Please join us on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm on Zoom (link at end of notices) and help. Looking forward to seeing you there - everyone is needed. Janet Browning

**Horfield** A message from Jamie Warren. "It was lovely to be able to join you all for the Sunday morning service over Zoom from Sydney and to see so many familiar faces. I hope that you are all keeping as well as possible during this time of Covid-19. It is hard to believe how much has changed over the year. This time last year, Sydney was experiencing its hottest summer ever recorded since European settlement in 1788 and bush fires were burning across the country. Now, we are experiencing a very wet summer with the threat of floods, while adjusting to what the Prime Minister refers to as "Covid Normal". After a grey and wet day, it was wonderful to be able to join you in worship and to be in fellowship with you all. I hope to be able to join you again in the coming weeks over Zoom and to worship with you again. I will hold you in my prayers. Blessings"

**Horfield** Betty and Graham Franklin and family would like to thank everyone for their prayers. Graham was admitted to Southmead Hospital on 15<sup>th</sup> December with bleeding on the brain. He is recovering slowly and after another CT scan this week may be transferred to a brain injury rehab. Unit to assess his needs and capabilities.

**Horfield** 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; Helen Humphries, Hayley Grady's House Group, Janet Hunt, Maureen and Philippa Hyde.

**Horfield** - Junior Church. Junior Church sessions continue online every Sunday at 10:00. Email Helen ([treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk)) before Saturday midday, for the Zoom access details.

**Shirehampton** Local churches in and around Shire are planning to lead an Alpha Course, starting in the New Year. Alpha is ideal for anyone asking questions about faith and interested in exploring ideas. It's also good for new Christians, newcomers to church and those wanting to brush up on the basics.

Further details from John Goodenough, Lawrence Weston Baptist Church: 0117 950 6755, 07773 110635 or [johnthebaptist19a@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:johnthebaptist19a@hotmail.co.uk)

**This week's lectionary readings are:** Genesis 1: 1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19: 1-7; Mark 1: 4-11

This week's reflection is provided by Local Preacher, Stephen Holliday (Horfield).

Our reading for today in Mark's Gospel is the familiar story of Jesus' baptism. Matthew, Luke and John include a similar narrative in their Gospels, with Matthew giving a bit more detail about the conversation between Jesus and John. At face value it is an account of an event which marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry but there is much more going on here than a simple act of baptism.

One obvious question arises : why did Jesus bother to be baptised? John was offering a symbolic washing away of sins but Jesus was without sin. That's why in Matthew's gospel we read that John protested and said the baptism should be the other way round : Jesus baptising John. So, was Jesus just following the crowd? On one level he was. Throughout his life, Jesus enjoyed and endured the full range of human experiences, emotions and temptations. His baptism was a one-off event which reminds us that Jesus knows what it is to be fully human as well as fully God.

Yet, we know that Jesus was not usually one who just went along with the crowd and did what others did. Time and time again we read how Jesus challenged accepted practices and led the crowd to a new understanding. In his baptism, Jesus was not just sharing a human experience; he chose very deliberately to be baptised to make a point about who he was and his purpose on earth.

The whole episode was a very clear demonstration that Jesus was someone special. John himself made that point publicly (verses 7 and 8) and then, so that there could be no doubt in the mind of anyone present, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove and a voice from heaven spoke: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.' (verse 11). The sign of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus was a great way to launch his public ministry with real power. People there would no doubt be amazed and word would have spread that Jesus was someone very special, even the Son of God. John's prophesy that someone much more powerful would come and baptise, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit, would now ring true in the minds of those who saw or heard about Jesus' baptism.

The voice from heaven has a significance for us too. It is a statement of God's unconditional love for Jesus, a love which extends to each of us, whether we deserve it or not. That's why infant baptism

makes sense: God loves us unconditionally at every stage in our life, whether we are just at the beginning, somewhere in the middle or right at the end.

As well as being a public launch of his ministry, Jesus' baptism also had a much deeper spiritual significance. It marked a new beginning, a break with the traditional relationship between God and his people. It is helpful to see John the Baptist in context as another in the long line of prophets that we can read about in the Old Testament where the people followed a traditional cycle in their relationship with God. That cycle was, in short, a period of obedience followed by a decline into sinfulness before another prophet was sent to get them back on the straight and narrow. Essentially it was a cycle of failure: obedience, disobedience, prophesy followed by obedience, before disobedience again. John's baptism offered a symbolic cleansing, back to obedience but it was just symbolic. Jesus offered the possibility of real change, a breaking of the traditional cycle of obedience and disobedience through baptism, not by water, but by the Holy Spirit. This, if we accept it, is a baptism that will work for us too. I'm not sure those present at the time would have understood all that, but we can reflect on the deeper significance of Jesus' baptism and what it promises us about our relationship with God, through his Son.

Real change can only come about in our lives when we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour and let the Holy Spirit work through and in us. We need the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives as we seek to be effective in our ministry, whatever we are called to do. As we seek to follow Jesus, his Spirit will strengthen us, will guide and teach us and will help us break that cycle of obedience and disobedience, which we all know is so easy to fall into and so difficult, in our own strength, to break.

The baptism of Jesus reminds us of some essential truths which lie at the heart of our faith: that in Jesus we have a Saviour who understands the full range of human experience; that God loves each of us unconditionally and, that by accepting Jesus as Lord we can start afresh and experience the transformational power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

As our new year's resolutions fade, demonstrating the limitations of human willpower, let us focus on the real changes that Jesus can make in all our lives if we seek to follow Him and let the Holy Spirit live in us and flow through us.

Our thanks to Stephen for his reflections.