

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),
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 2 May 2021



All are welcome, all are
welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

In 2019, the Methodist Conference discussed the church's approach to marriage and relationships in a report 'God in Love Unites Us,' which was commended for consultation in local churches, circuits and District Synods (the Methodist Church's regional forums). The report included sections about the qualities of good relating, an understanding of cohabitation, celebration of civil partnerships, prayers following the end of a marriage and permission in principle for same-sex marriages to take place in Methodist church premises. This process of consultation has now concluded, with the final discussions at District Synods having taken place in the last few weeks.

Some find the proposed changes difficult to accept, but discussions have largely been conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect, thanks to careful work on the report itself and at the 2019 Conference. The Conference will again discuss this key report when it meets at the end of June, taking into account the feedback from churches, Circuits and Districts, before making final decisions on the report. It is hoped that the consciences of all church members and ministers will continue to be respected, whatever their views on these important subjects, particularly the proposal to allow same-sex marriages to take place in Methodist Churches.

Personally speaking, I hope that we can live out our belief that the gospel message is for all so that everyone, whatever their gender, sexuality, race, skin colour, age, social background, life experience, (...) is included fully within God's church, a community of love, safety and equality for all.

Please join with me in prayer for members of the Conference, and indeed for the Methodist Church as a whole over the coming weeks with this important topic in mind. Rev Patrick

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Joint Service on May 2 at 10.00 at the Church and on Zoom led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer.

It will be possible to attend the joint morning service in person at Horfield Methodist Church or via Zoom using the link advertised below. If you would like to attend in person, please reserve a place by calling a steward on 07552 780740 between 9am on Monday and 5pm on Friday for the coming Sunday. (If you book a place but subsequently need to change your mind please do let the steward know). When attending, please enter via the left-hand doors from the Gloucester Road frontage, with the side (red) door in Churchways Avenue solely for those needing level access. On arrival, a steward will check that you are feeling well. You will need to wear a

face covering whilst in the building (unless you have a medical exemption) and follow the other COVID-19 arrangements within the building including maintaining 2 metres social distancing at all times.

Joint Service on May 9 at 10.00 at the Church and on Zoom led by Ken Luxon.

St Peter's Pilning on 2 May at 10.00 will be led by Rev Philip Rowe.

St Peter's Pilning on 9 May at 10.00 will be led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer.

Junior Church sessions continue online every Sunday at 10.00. Email Helen before Saturday midday (treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk) for the Zoom access details.

Bible Study. 5 May, 7.45pm - 9.15pm. Please see Zoom details at the end of the Notices.

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.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS

Sunday Worship - BBC Radio 4, May 2 at 8.10. 100 years reflecting on the past and building on the future.

Sunday Morning Stories - BBC1 on May 2 at 10.45. Rev Kate Bottley shares inspirational stories rooted in faith, hope and spirituality.

Daily Service - Each weekday on BBC Radio 4 LW at 09.45

Songs of Praise - BBC1 on May 2 at 13.15. The formation of Northern Ireland 100 years ago.

Open Church Cafe, 3 May, 10.00 onwards hosted by St Peter's, Pilning. Please contact churchwardenpilning@gmail.com for the joining details.

Evening Prayer, 3 May, 4pm hosted by St Peter's, Pilning, using the Church of England "Join us in Daily Prayer" resources <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. Also Zoom details on last page

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/

WEEKLY NOTICES - please send items to Eurfron Parry by Tuesday, eurfron@blueyonder.co.uk or 0117 969 1908.

GENERAL NOTICES

On 6 May 2021, elections will be taking place across Scotland, Wales and England. You can vote for local councillors in the Local Authority Elections, the Mayor of Bristol, a Mayor for the South West and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Every election presents an opportunity for citizens to participate critically and constructively in the democratic process. As Christians, we're called to 'Think, Pray, Vote' - and to bring our faith into our engagement.

The new updated Bristol Faith Manifesto has been launched. Produced by representatives of different faiths in the City, including Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Jewish it highlights the significant role that faith has in Bristol's life and sets out five common aspirations for Bristol and its' people. To download a copy visit, www.bristolfaithmanifesto.co.uk

Christian Aid Week. May 10- 16. This climate crisis hurts us all, but people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day. From drought to flooding, climate change robs people of control over their lives. Extreme weather means people are struggling to survive without a reliable source of water. Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live. A reliable source of water will help families withstand long drought or relentless rainstorms. Every envelope. Every gift. Every challenge can change lives. The Circuit is also collecting for Christian Aid to give thanks for the vaccines. Anybody who cannot donate on line can send a cheque payable to 'Christian Aid' to Adam Biddlestone, Circuit Office, Horfield Methodist Church, Churchways Avenue, Bristol BS7 8SN with a covering note explaining you wish your donation to be added to our appeal.

The New Room is looking for children and adults to decorate butterflies to create a display in the courtyard when they reopen on May 17. For more details use this address;

<https://www.newroombristol.org.uk/easter-2021-emerging-hope/>

The New Room also shares an Emmaus Service (a short service with prayers, a reading and a reflection) on Facebook on Tuesdays at 1pm. Please join us if you are a Facebook user. The services are also available on the New Room's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCefGahuFuZ2HIthS7MTVl1w>

The Noise. 01 - 03 May, offering practical help and a step of safe reconnection to those in the Community. A treasure hunt will visit Horfield Methodist on Monday 3 May.

Eco Church- Tips. Energy conservation is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint. Leaving your electricals on standby needlessly uses up energy - hit the off switch and you could see huge improvements, most noticeably in your energy bills!

Horfield. Have you thought about becoming a Vestry Steward? We would be very grateful to anyone who feels they can give a few hours to helping with preparation for worship. Please speak to Rev Patrick or Asmin if you would consider taking on this important role.

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 Wallbridge, Amy Warren, Bob Walters and Harriet White.

Horfield. Bertha Lakey has had the sad news that her nephew, Stafford, passed away on Tuesday 27 April. Please remember Bertha and her family in your prayers.

Horfield. Dates for your diary.

Leadership Meeting. Thursday 6 May at 7.30 pm.

Eco Meeting. Monday 10 May at 7.30 pm.

Christian Aid Week. 10 - 16 May.



"I am the true Vine". John 15 : 1 - 8

Reflection on the Lectionary 2 May. Psalm 22 : 25 - 31; Acts 8 : 26 - 40; 1 John 4 : 7 - 21; John 15 : 1 - 8

This week's reflection is provided by Local Preacher, Adam Biddlestone (Zion).

Led by the Spirit, Philip found himself in the right place at the right time to engage in conversation and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In those days people tended to read aloud, so Philip would have overheard and recognised what the Ethiopian eunuch was reading.

At the beginning of Acts (1 : 8), Jesus commissions his disciples to, *'be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth.'* This encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch comes immediately after Philip had spent time preaching in Samaria and Ethiopia was at the time considered to be *'the ends of the earth.'* Philip's encounter with him led to him preaching the good news.

We are told very little about the eunuch apart from his nationality and role. A eunuch as a castrated male was a real outsider. Ethiopians considered matters of administration to be beneath their Kings, so the Queen took on this role. Eunuchs were often appointed in charge of the treasury as they would not be tempted by the Queen. Clearly this eunuch was an educated man, in a position of power and trust. He was most likely a *'god-fearer'* who worshipped the God of Israel but was treated as though he were a Gentile, denied full access to the Temple, permitted only to enter the Court of the Gentiles. He was clearly a man of means, with his own chariot and scrolls of scripture.

'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asks him. *'How can I, unless someone explains it to me?'* replies the eunuch. We are not told of any introductions or attempt for the two men to *'break the ice,'* they launch straight into exploring the passage of Scripture. Philip is able to answer the eunuch's question, end his confusion about who Isaiah is talking about (Isaiah 53 verses 7 - 8) and instruct him that Isaiah's words are not pointing to himself but the Jesus. This leads the eunuch to a point he has most likely been waiting for, he now believes and want to mark that belief through Baptism, *'What can stand in the way of my being baptised?'* he asked Philip. Philip responds and the eunuch is baptised in the Holy Spirit.

How often are we brave enough to open a conversation with, *'Do you understand what you are reading (hearing)?'* or *'How can I understand unless someone explains it to me?'* Recent initiatives from the Methodist Church, including a year of testimony, Time to Talk of God, encourage us to engage in conversation with others, how often do we take that opportunity? The commission of Jesus to his disciples in Acts 1 : 8 passes down through the generations of disciples to us, *'you will be my witnesses in Horfield, Kingswood, Patchway, Thornbury and in all Bristol and South Gloucestershire.'*

Prayer; Loving God, we thank you for opportunities to share in conversation with others about our faith. As we ask questions and provide answers, may we continue to grow in faith, develop relationships and community'. Amen

Our thanks to Adam for his reflections.