

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>

God's table is open to all

Sunday 5 September 2021



According to the creation story recorded in the book of *Genesis*, during six days God created the earth, beginning with day and night, continuing with water and dry land, populating the land with vegetation, creating the sun, moon and stars. Then filling the waters, the skies and the land with animals before creating humanity, tasking us with the care of everything which had been made. Content, God rests on the seventh day.

Within the spectrum of Christian tradition, there are those who understand this account literally, equally those who read it as a metaphor, or somewhere in-between. Whatever our personal view, the beauty of creation is plain to see all around us. Whilst I was picking some blackberries a few days ago, I couldn't help but notice the variety of things around me, including many other plants, a variety of insects and several birds flying by. The sun was also peeking out in between patches of cloud, with a breeze carrying a hint of rain. All this, in just a small space at the end of our garden, and I hope you can encounter the same where you are.

Return to the story of creation and, for a moment, consider all the parts of our world that it includes and how they interlink. There couldn't be: a day without night, dry land without the sea, fruits and seeds without dry land to grow on, fish without the sea for them to live in, birds without the sky, and finally, humans, who can't exist without water to drink, land to live on, plants to eat and everything else around us.

Take out just one of those elements because we have destroyed it with our actions, and the rest will begin to become unbalanced and flounder. For example, it is said that without bees, humanity will die out within four years. How we treat God's creation really matters: in our worship over the coming few weeks, as preparations for the COP26 Summit in Glasgow later this year continue, we will be exploring how we care for God's creation in our worship and our prayers.

Creator God, forgive us for the mess we have made of your planet, for our lording it over other living things. Help us to make amends and to treat your beautiful world with respect and care. Amen (rootsontheweb.com)
Rev Patrick

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Joint Service at 10.00 at Horfield and on Zoom at 10.00 with Bishopston and Easter Compton, led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer, with Holy Communion.

Shirehampton at 11.00 led by K. Luxon.

St Peter's Pilning at 10.00 led by Rev. P Rowe with Holy Communion.

Horfield Junior Church. Hopefully, we will start again shortly. Watch this space!

All Churches at 4.00 at Horfield Church and Zoom. You are all invited to the Circuit Welcome Service for our new Superintendent, Rev Novette Headley & Rev Samuel Uwimana. (in-person by invitation). Zoom details below.

For those attending Horfield in person: please arrive in good time for the service so you can register your details for Covid-19 purposes. Please enter via the left-hand doors from Gloucester Road, with the side (red) door in Churchways Avenue solely for those needing level access. Please wear a face covering whilst in the building (unless you have a medical exemption) and follow other Covid-19 arrangements within the building including maintaining two metres social distancing at all times. Do not attend worship in person if you have any symptoms of Covid-19. Please understand that if 40 people have arrived before you then we will not be able to let you in. You will continue to be able to join the service via Zoom

All Age devotions for everyone, available via www.rootsontheweb.com

Open Café Church on 6 September from 10.00 onwards hosted by St Peter's, Pilning. Please contact churchwardenpilning@gmail.com for the joining details.

Evening Prayer every Wednesday at 4.00 hosted by St Peter's, Pilning, using the Church of England "Join us in Daily Prayer" <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-andworship/joinusservice-daily-prayer>

Bible Study. You are all invited to join our weekly Bible Study on Zoom, which starts again on Wednesday 15 September, 7.45-9.15pm including some time for prayer. We will be continuing to look at Mark's Gospel, using the material provided for Bible Month. Zoom links below

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 5 September

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. London's Square Mile is working hard to welcome workers back to the nation's financial centre. Led by Rev Katherine Hedderley.

Songs of Praise. BBC 1 at 1.15. The Journey to Forgiveness. A father who found faith after his daughter's fatal reaction to sesame seeds.

Daily Service at 09.45 each weekday - BBC Radio 4 LW

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR 12 September

Joint Service at Horfield and on Zoom with Easter Compton at 10.00 led by Rev. D. Edwards **Bishopston** at 10.30 led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer, with Holy Communion.

Shirehampton at 11.00. A Local Arrangement with the Cotswold Centre. **St.**

Peter's Pilning at 10.00 led by C. Leese. **At 16.00** a Taize Service.

WEEKLY NOTICES. Please send items to Eurfron by Tuesday, eurfron@blueyonder.co.uk or 969 1908.

CHURCH LETTINGS. Please contact Heather on bookings@horfieldmethodist.org.uk

GENERAL NOTICES

Shirehampton. There will be a short Church Council meeting in the church at 12noon on Sunday 19 September, following morning worship to deal with some items regarding the JTE Hub. The regular autumn Church Council will be on Sunday 17 October

Climate Change. It's an amazing testimony to show love for God and neighbour by caring for creation and acting on climate change. Churches across Britain and Ireland will be coming together on Sunday 5 September, to pray

and to present pledges to Government to take steps to address climate change. It will be a time to share in worship, celebrate what churches are doing, and commit ourselves to further action. A national service will be broadcast live at 4pm that afternoon from Glasgow Cathedral - at the heart of the city where the UN climate talks will take place in November - with contributions from Christians around the nations. Join in! There will be music and inspirational videos from 3:30 and the service itself will begin at 4:00. Register via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nations-climate-sunday-service-churches-prepare-for-cop-26tickets165258230817> to be sent the full details for joining online.

You may already have heard about the **Camino to COP 26**. As we are daily faced with the terrifying reality of Climate Change, an interfaith alliance led by XR Faith Bridge and inspired by the faith tradition of pilgrimage and by the great justice marches of the past, is leading a 'pilgrimage for climate justice' from Westminster to Glasgow. There will be a second starting point here in Bristol joining the London walkers in Birmingham. This is a walk for everyone. It is an opportunity to spread the word about the urgent need to ACT NOW to address the climate emergency. It will be an opportunity to build a community of faith and courage and hope for the future as times get darker. This is a pilgrimage affirming our connection to the earth and to one another; it will encourage everyone on the way to "unite for our sacred earth".

The walk, which leaves from Bristol on September 9, is an opportunity for connection and outreach. It is expressly NOT a disruptive or civilly disobedient action. It will be possible to join the walk for short stages along the way. You will find more details about the walk on the website www.caminotocop.com.

Shire Climate Emergency Group is hosting a morning of talks and discussion about COP26 and about the Camino to COP on **Saturday 4 September in Shirehampton Public Hall from 10:00 -1:00**. We very much hope you or your representatives will join us on the 4th and that you will encourage your congregations to come.

We hope many of you will come along on September 4 to learn more about the critical importance of COP 26 and about how we, as ordinary people joined in faith, can play our part.

Garden of Eden story - help wanted! Our friends at Holy Trinity (Horfield Parish Church) are putting on a performance of 'Eden' which is a musical drama written by their new Director of Music, Jonathan Crow (coincidentally the son of a Methodist minister who trained in Bristol many moons ago)

The performance will be on Saturday 25 September at 4pm and there will be a fine array of musicians. The team are looking for collaboration in drama. There is a small youth group and even smaller Sunday School at Holy Trinity, so they are inviting anyone interested in performing the drama which includes some acting and narration. There is no need for singing apart from in one song which is a Procession of Animals and is rather fun. Jonathan led a performance of this work in Plymouth 20 years ago and it has catchy tunes - with good soloists and instrumentalists it has the potential to be very good indeed. If you are interested, please contact jonathancrow103@yahoo.com Rehearsals will be on Thursdays 2, 9, 16 & 23 September.

5 ANNIVERSARY PARTY!!!

The Old Library in Eastville is excited to be back open, and want to celebrate with our wonderful community. It has already been five years since the Old Library opened as a community centre, and we want to celebrate with a big party full of games, music, a BBQ, and lots of fun for family and friends. Spread the word to everyone and come along and have some fun! All money raised will go towards supporting the Old Library.

Date and Time: 1 - 6pm, 11 September

Address: The Old Library Community Hub, Muller Road, Eastville, Bristol, BS5 6UQ

There will be an AGM meeting at 11am before the party, for anyone who wants to get more involved in the Old Library.

Horfield. An important part of our discipleship is to pray for our community and one another. This week you are asked to pray for the following and their families: Samuel, Veronica, Efua, Nana and Oswald Mensah, Nancy Murombedzi, The Musicians, Carol Nelson.

Horfield. Eurfron and John wish to thank everyone for their good wishes, cards, e-mails and gifts on the occasion of their 60th Wedding anniversary.

Dates for your diary

Horfield Thursday 9 September. Leadership Team

Shirehampton. Sunday 19 at 12 noon. A short Church Council Meeting following Morning Worship.

All churches.

Sunday 5 September. Nations' Climate Sunday Service in Glasgow prior to COP26.

Saturday 11 September. Synod at Kingswood School, Bath.

Thursday 16 September. Circuit Meeting at Westbury Park (St Albans). **Special**

days this week

September 6. Migraine Awareness Week September 6. National Read a Book Day

September 7. Youth Mental Health Day September 8. International Literacy Day

September 10/19. Heritage Open Days.

Lectionary readings for Sunday 5 September (Ordinary 23) Psalm

125 : 1 -9; Isaiah 35 : 4 – 7a; James 2 : 1 – 10, 14 - 17; Mark 7 : 24 - 37

This

reflection is provided by Local Preacher, Adam Biddlestone (Zion).

I write my reflection on Biblical passages, which include references to the blind, deaf, lame and mute and Jesus' healing of a demon possessed girl and a deaf and mute man, on a day when I have met with a small group which supports the work of Bristol Diocese's Disability Adviser. The on-going role of this group is to support Alice in her role which seeks to promote inclusion for those living with disabilities, recognise their gifts and experiences and enable them to contribute to the life of our churches and communities.

There is no doubt that society is greatly enriched by those who live with a wide range of disabilities. For many it shapes their identities and makes them who they are. The Paralympics have again reminded us of the amazing talent and sporting achievements of people with disabilities, their strength and courage to overcome huge barriers to succeed.

The three verses from Isaiah include a vision which the miracles Jesus performs fulfils, as he heals the SyroPhoenician woman's daughter (Mark 7 : 24 - 30) and the deaf and mute man (Mark 7 : 31 - 37). Their identity as Gentiles means they are outside of God's chosen people, the Israelites, which together with their physical and mental illnesses means they are outsiders and excluded. It took courage to cry out, to make themselves visible. Jesus' initial response to the Syro-Phoenician woman reinforces the prejudice people face because of their cultural identity. A heated exchange takes place between them. Inspired by her persistence and faith the daughter is healed of her demon. Jesus is transformed too, this encounter makes way for the deaf and mute man and other Gentiles to come to Jesus with their requests for his love and healing.

For almost thirty years I have been very interested in the writings of my friend John Hull, a blind Christian and author of many books through which he shares his experiences. The entry in his diary, Touching the Rock which journals his journey into blindness, for 28th April 1986 recalls how whilst attending Mass in Notre Dame Cathedral, Montreal and listening to the beautiful organ music, he found himself saying, 'I accept the gift (of his blindness), I accept the gift.' For John this moment was a significant part of a process of healing which did not include the restoration of his sight.

Our understanding of healing in a Christian context goes beyond a blind person gaining sight, or a cancer patient receiving the all-clear. Healing comes through individuals being welcomed, valued, accepted, included and

respected, something which society and the church has not always done. Therefore, we are all agents of healing for the vast range of disabilities and illnesses that people in our churches and communities live with, the seen and unseen, the ones we know about and the ones we don't. Any one of us could join the disabled community and may need to experience this kind of healing. Let us model the behaviour and attitudes we would wish to receive from others. **Prayer**

Lord, help us to welcome and include all who are part of the life of our church. Help us to recognise how diversity of experience and ability enriches our life. Amen.

Our thanks to Adam for this reflection