



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 December 2021



The Christmas TV adverts for 2021 have now launched, and many have an air of defiance after last year's 'cancelled Christmas,' with messages such as 'Can't stop me now!' and 'Baubles to last year!' We discovered that many of the things which had underpinned our celebrations were not as sure and certain as we'd thought, and many of the things that we put our trust in were fragile. Whilst preaching last weekend on Luke 21, in which Jesus warns about the confusion, danger and fear that humanity will face in the end times, I was reminded about the uncertainty and fear we have faced since the first news of COVID19 emerged at the end of 2019. The news of the latest variant of that virus has brought some of that back into focus.

A very human response would be to ask to 'stop the world, I want to get off,' something which is seemingly beyond possibility. But looking more closely, what is possible is to see the hope which abounds in the glimpses of the kingdom of God at work through the church and her people. All that echoes Jesus promise that '...my words will not pass away.' (Luke 21:33b). When we fix our eyes on Jesus, we are inspired by him, a sure and certain hope that will not fail - something to celebrate together.

With prayers for you all *Rev Patrick*

FORTHCOMING SERVICES on 5 December

Joint Service at Horfield with Bishopston and on Zoom at 10.00. It will include the baptism of Avery Renzo Kobi Simpson. We welcome him, parents Sekani and Rachael, and brothers Rafe and Shiloh along with family and friends. The Service will be conducted by Rev Patrick Stonehewer and include Holy Communion. We will be joined by friends from Eden Grove. 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.

Bishopston. No Service at the church.

Shirehampton at 11.00 led by J. Gardner.

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

Circuit Evening Service at Horfield at 18.00 in person or on Zoom led by Rev. Simon Edwards.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 5 December and the week

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. "The Dawn from on High"- Second Week of Advent.

Songs of Praise. BBC 1 at 12.30. Young Chorister of the Year - Final.

Daily Service at 09.45. BBC Radio 4 Long Wave.

All are invited to join us for an **Outdoor Carol Service** on Friday 10 December at 7pm hosted by 62nd Scouts at their scout hut in Rozel Rd, Horfield BS7 8SJ. This is our carol service for our young people, which we are trying in a different setting this year. Please try and support this and make it a success!

Open Café Church on 6 December 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>.

You are all invited to join our weekly **Bible Study** on Zoom, on Wednesdays from 7.45-9.15pm including some time for prayer. We are looking at the book of Daniel at the moment, which includes some well-known stories, equally some interesting insights. Zoom link details on last page. * Please note there will be no Bible Study on 15 December.

Messy Church for all ages at Horfield on Saturday, 11 December, from 11.00 until 12.30. Explore the meaning of Christmas followed by a picnic lunch.

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR 12 December

Joint Service at Horfield in person and on Zoom at 10.00 conducted by D. North.

Bishopston at 10.30 led by Rev. Patrick Stonehewer with Holy Communion.

Shirehampton at 11.00. Local Arrangement with All Age Worship.

St Peter's, Pilning with Easter Compton at 10.00 led by Adam Biddlestone.

Circuit Evening Service at Horfield at 6 pm in person or on Zoom led by Rev. L. Maydew.

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

GENERAL NOTICES

Our friends at the **New Room Bristol** are running a Messy Nativity and crafts on Tuesday December 21st.

Come dressed as a shepherd, an angel or king, hear the Christmas story and sing some carols.

See the links below for more information!

Christmas Crafts . <https://www.facebook.com/events/3096501990630824>

Nativity. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1229875317519600>

The theme for **next year's Methodist Prayer Handbook** is 'The Greatest Commandment': Matthew 22: 37-39. Further inspiration for the prayers comes from Acts 2. Imagine the Church filled with a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and completely dependent on the sovereign work of God. Imagine the Church filled with people wholly focused on loving God, loving our neighbours and loving of ourselves. Prayers are invited for the Methodist Church to be the Church that God desires, and that explore how we should live out Our Calling, as we respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ through discipleship, worship and mission. The deadline for submission of prayers and photos is Monday 10 January 2022. Please email prayers and photographs to: Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

Shirehampton. Cotswold Christian Community will be holding a Christingle Service in the Community Centre on Sunday 12 December at 5pm.

Horfield. As part of our **fundraising**, we will have a limited number of handmade 30cm Christmas wreaths which will be ready for the weekend of the 10 December at £15 each. Please email, fundraising@horfieldmethodist.org.uk with your order. If you don't



have internet access, phone 0117 9624257

Horfield. An Afternoon Christmas Tea will be held on Tuesday, 14 December from 2.30. to 3.30. This event is open to anyone who wishes to come. Please contact Eurfron on 0117 9691908 if you intend coming so that we can make sure we have ample food.

Horfield. A special year. The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed that we have celebrated no fewer than four Diamond Wedding Anniversaries amongst the congregation this year. Audrey and David Bainbridge, Hazel and Roy Thorne, John and Rachel Gowin and Eurfron and John Parry were all married in 1961. All eight of them are planning to be in church this coming Sunday, 5 December, so that we can acknowledge these milestones together, all being well with Ruby Reid whose marriage to Desmond was also in December of that year. Congratulations once more to each of them as we give thanks to God for all that they contribute to the life of our church and the wider community.

Horfield. Church offering. Along with most churches Horfield Methodist has suffered a significant drop in income due to the church being closed for two periods during the pandemic. The main impact has been loss of income from users of the building. However, whilst congregational giving is also down it has been greatly helped by those who have sent cheques, continued to set aside their weekly offerings and especially those who have made the change to standing order payments. This has not only helped the church's cash flow but also reduced the need to handle money with the risk of contamination during the pandemic.

Whilst we would encourage as many people as possible to continue making standing order payments, we recognize that some will wish to continue make their contribution via the offering plate or through the envelope scheme. Therefore, could those who wish to continue using weekly offering envelopes let me know as soon as possible so that I can order the right amount. If I don't hear from you I will assume you no longer wish to give in this way. David Bainbridge - tel. 0117 9857179

Horfield. Carol Singers needed please. One of the charitable groups which use the church hall is holding a Christmas event on Wednesday 15 December in the afternoon and have asked us to provide some carol singing for about half an hour from 1.30. If you are interested in joining in, please let Rev Patrick know.

Horfield and Bishopston. 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: Richard and Margaret Angell, David and Audrey Bainbridge, David and Ann Baverstock, Beavers, Michael Borrow, Sandy Bowcock, Daphne Brennan/Wright.

Bristol Passion Play. Together4Bristol are putting on a Passion Play at five locations around Central Bristol on Good Friday, 15 April 2022. Volunteers are needed for the street performances and supporting roles leading up to the Play and on the day. More information can be found in the briefing paper below and on the Together4Bristol website.

https://mcusercontent.com/bcf1bde8bc4a29dae7362b02a/files/e41a4e8b-7230-2278-37bf-f33cd056e6d7/Passion_Pitch_Engagement.pdf

https://www.together4bristol.org.uk/Articles/623167/Bristol_Passion_Play.aspx



Christmas Services

Bishopston

Sunday 19 December at 10.30. Coffee and Carols.

Christmas Eve 24 December at 11.30pm. Joint Christmas Communion Service at Horfield (also on Zoom).

Christmas Day 25 December at 10.30. Christmas Day Worship.

Horfield

Sunday 19 December at 6.00. Candlelit Carols (also on Zoom).

Christmas Eve 24 December at 4.00. Messy Christmas for all ages.

Christmas Eve 24 December at 11.30pm. Joint Christmas Communion Service (also on Zoom).

Christmas Day 25 December at 10.00. Christmas Day Worship (also on Zoom).

St. Peter's, Pilning

Monday 20 December at 7.30pm. Candlelit Carols at St Peter's School, Bank Rd, Pilning, Bristol BS35 4JG.

Christmas Eve 24 December at 9.30. Christmas Communion Service.

Christmas Day 25 December at 10.30. Christmas Day Worship.

Shirehampton

Sunday 19 December at 3.00. Candlelit Carols.

Christmas Eve 24 December at 11.30pm. Joint Christmas Communion Service at Horfield (also on Zoom).

Christmas Day 25 December at 10.30. Christmas Day Worship.

Dates for your diary. Horfield and Bishopston. Tuesday 7 December, Eco Church at 7.30 on Zoom. **Friday 10 December**, Scouts' Outdoor Carol Service. **Sunday 16 January**, Covenant Service and Church Meeting.

Special days this week. Friday 10 December, Save the Children - Christmas Jumper Day.

Reflection on the Lectionary, Sunday 5 December, (Advent 2)

Malachi 3 : 1 - 6; 1 Phillipians 1 : 3 - 11; Luke 3 : 1 - 6

This reflection is provided by Adam Biddlestone.

When introducing John the Baptist into his gospel and to his readers, Luke tells us that whilst in the wilderness, John hears God's word calling him to preach a message of repentance and forgiveness. Luke then takes us back to the Prophet Isaiah to give some context to this. Here, in John, is the one Isaiah foretells will come calling, 'Prepare the way for the Lord.'

The events that Luke describes come at a pivotal point in the unfolding story of the relationship between God and his people. In our chronological Biblical journey, we are leaving events of the Old Testament behind and beginning our journey into the gospels where we finally meet the much anticipated 'Son of God,' 'Messiah,' 'King of Kings' and 'Prince of Peace.'

The narrative of the Old Testament details the turbulent relationship between God and his people, the Lord will open up a new way though baptism, repentance and the forgiveness of sins. There are stumbling blocks on the way represented by valleys and mountains that are impassable, roads that are crooked and paths that are rough. This new hope overcomes these stumbling blocks as paths are made straight, valleys filled in, mountains made low and rough ways smoothed.

This season reminds us of the many who are homeless and many more who live daily with the reality of this risk. For many who are homeless, and others who are not, addictions, food poverty, debts, mental health issues, loneliness and abusive relationships are part of the life experience. For most the obvious hope will be escape, either by re-creating a life which they once had, or by building a new life which is altogether different from their previous lives. Along the journey will be many stumbling blocks, which equate to impassable valleys and mountains, crooked roads and rough paths. These will be found in overloaded support services, lack of money to secure housing, personal anxieties and insecurities, reluctant employers, spent criminal records....

Through Malachi's message the Lord Almighty commits to putting on trial those, *'who defraud labourers of their wages, oppress widows and the fatherless and deprive the foreigners among you of justice.'* In other words, those who create the stumbling blocks, I wonder who may be included as part of an updated list today?

As we hear about people living in situations mentioned above, it is all too easy to think, 'I don't know people like that,' but they may be closer than you think, you may even gather at a table with them, live in the same road, attend the same church or be in their company this Christmas. How can we ensure, as churches and individuals, that we are bridges and gates for people and not barriers and walls?

Our thanks to Adam for this reflection