

The Methodist Church

Bishopston, Horfield, Shirehampton Methodist Churches & 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 churches serving communities across the local area.

Sunday 21 January 2024



Before the end of the eighteenth century, most ordinary peoples' work was tied up with the land or sea and the earth's products. Children usually followed in the footsteps of their parents. Just as in the time of Jesus, people were fishermen, farmers or craftsmen. Women were usually busy in the home caring for the family.

At the end of the eighteenth century, things changed with the Industrial Revolution. People flocked to the cities to work in factories and mines or to supply the needs of those who had moved from the countryside. It was a time of change. This change continued with the introductions of schools and colleges and free education for all. Churches had pioneered in the thirst for education when they started up Bible schools. People realised that the way for their children to progress was through education. We also hear of the new rich people who speculated to produce new products. People worked long hours for poor wages.

There were however, some benevolent owners who tried to make life easier for their workers. Some of the families that have left their mark on Bristol's history are the Fry's, the Wills' family. Most of these families were motivated by their Christian belief.

This country has seen times of depression, when workers and owners were in conflict. It was often the Churches who tried to help the situation by opening soup kitchens and giving support. Just as today people of religious faith form a large body of supporters for charities and caring organisations, such as SWEP and the Churches Night Shelter. Methodism has strong links with Trade Unions and have fought for the rights of the working man. The Tolpuddle Martyrs are an example of this.

Moving on to today, people experience a wide variety of work skills and jobs which a few years ago would not have been imagined. People emigrate to all areas of the world to share their skills and make a new life for their families. Britain consists of many people whose families originate from other areas of the World and we have benefitted from their hard work and loyalty.

As we celebrate 125 years of the life of our church, let us think of all the changes that have happened over that time and give thanks for the witness to this community.

Father, our faithful Creator, help us to continually remember You are in control. When we are anxious about all the changes, remind us that we are in the palm of your hand. May your grace and gentleness flow over us, teaching us to be flexible and to peacefully adapt to change. When we must learn new skills or new procedures, remind us not to be anxious. Help us embrace the peace that comes from an optimistic spirit. Amen.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 21 January.

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by Rev J Pye. Church Anniversary followed by "bring and share" lunch.

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted at Horfield.

Shirehampton at 11.00 conducted by Rev. M. Slocombe. Covenant Service. **St**

Peter's, Pilning at 10.00 conducted by the Anglican Team.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 21 January and the week.

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10.

Daily Service at 9.45. BBC Radio 4, Long Wave.

Songs of Praise. Sunday BBC1 at 1.15.

You will also find an online service of Morning Prayer to cover each day of the week, available from first thing each Monday at <https://westburyparkchurch.org.uk/worship-service>

Cotswold Christian Community. Every Wednesday afternoon, 2.30-4.30pm. Drop-in for cream tea and a chat at Fulligrove House. All welcome.

Coffee Morning, on Saturday 20th January, 10am-12noon, at Fulligrove House. All welcome.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 28 January Horfield

at 10.00 Local Arrangement.

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted by V. Davies.

Shirehampton at 11.00 Local Arrangement- Coffee and conversation.

St Peter's, Pilning at 10.00 conducted by Rev. M. Slocombe with the Covenant Service.

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

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: Joan Davies, Libby Deeks, Jane Duffy, Sue Dyer, Rev. Dilwyn Edwards, Margaret Edwards.

Church Anniversary Service, Sunday 21st January at Horfield. Hopefully as many of you as possible will be able to join us for this service. To mark the occasion we will be having a 'bring and share' lunch after the service. So if you are able, bring something along. It can be savoury, sweet, nibbles - anything you like. Please bring a list of ingredients. Hopefully we'll have something for everyone

Safeguarding Training. All volunteers who have an active role in the life of the church must complete the Methodist Safeguarding Foundation Training, every four years. If you work with children or vulnerable adults or have a position of responsibility, it is mandatory that you take this course. The Methodist Church insists that all volunteers must be trained. If you have received training from another organisation you still have to complete the Methodist Course.

The next Foundation Course will be at Horfield on 27 January, at 2 p.m. If you have not attended a course for 4 years you must attend this course. Please give your names to your safeguarding officer as soon as possible. Safeguarding officers are Pauline, Jo, and Eurfron.

If you need to apply for the on-line Advanced Training, which also has to be revised after 4 years, please notify Eurfron so that she can enrol you on the Course.

The Bristol Methodist Centre. From Epiphany, 6 January, to Candlemas, 2 February, Bristol Methodist Centre together with our colleagues at inHope invite you to join in a month of prayer seeking to bring light to homeless, marginalised and vulnerable people in Bristol. We have put together a prayer diary with a short prayer for each day. Please use this as you are able at home, in fellowship groups and worship settings. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this. [Prayer Diary \(Ctrl & Click\)](#)

Night Shelter and SWEP. Some people have been helping with hosting and cooking for those who have been sheltering during the poor weather this winter. Their support is greatly appreciated. There is a way that we, who cannot give physical help can support by contributing to the cost of food. If you can contribute please contact Jenny, Donna, or a steward. Thank you.

Bristol Children's Hospital. Thank you to everyone who has donated toiletry items or tea/coffee, hot chocolate etc for families of patients at Bristol Children's Hospital. Friends for Parents is still an active group of volunteers who visit families and fill the containers in the parents' rooms. The visiting has resumed post Covid but are still not able to visit each ward, but families continue to be grateful for the hot drinks and toiletry items (the small ones from hotels are ideal.) Often families arrive in an emergency and do not have toiletries etc. There is a box for donations at the back of the worship area and Alison Young will collect and give to the volunteers. Many thanks.

Make 'enjoying nature' your priority. From bird watching to writing about or drawing something that inspires you in nature, growing your own fruit or vegetables, or exploring an area of outstanding natural beauty in the UK, be sure to fall in love with nature in a new way this coming year and allow it to lead your thoughts towards God our Creator. Further ideas can be found at arocha.org.uk/ideas-to-enjoy-nature/ Lou.

Housing Matters and Clean Slate advice drop-in will be at the Lockleaze Hub on the following dates between 11am-1pm. No need to book! 17 Jan, 31 Jan, 14 Feb, 28 Feb.

Free family Walks. Sat 10 Feb, Buzz Community Gardens. Meet at the Hub Gainsborough Square at 10 a.m.

Learn the basics of pruning fruit trees and have a go! 09:30- 2pm, 25 January. Other opportunities to practice pruning (with or without the training) starting at the Cameron Centre, Cameron Walk, Lockleaze, then walking over to The Orchard, Stoke Park (near Lyndsay Road Car Park). Reserve your free place: eventbrite.co.uk/e/winter-fruit-tree-pruning-intro-tickets-767500252917

Tree Planting day. Sunday 25 February, 10-4pm at Muller Road Recreation Ground. Do your bit for nature, and the climate, by planting some trees! Learn how to do it properly, meet nice people, and drink tea! We will be planting native woodland patches on the slope across Muller Road Recreation ground. Join us, and it could be one of the most important things you do this year - thousands of wildlife species depend on trees for food and shelter. By absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, trees help to combat climate change. Planting them in your local park means you can watch them grow, and flourish! FREE - Just turn up on the day! Contact the Really Wild Lockleaze team on reallywild@lockleazent.co.uk, 01179141129 or pop into The Hub on Gainsborough Square, BS79FB.

Help. A Ukrainian mother and daughter are looking for accommodation near a Grand Piano. The pianist is being educated at Clifton college. The contact mobile is 07957 465080.

Dates for your Diary. Foundation Safeguarding Training. Saturday, 27 January at 2 p.m.

Lectionary Readings:

Jonah 3, v1-5, 10.	Jonah goes to Nineveh.
Psalms 62, v5-12.	God is powerful and kind.
1 Corinthians 7, v29-31.	The Lord will soon come. Mark
1, v14-20.	Jesus begins his work.

Are you heading in the right direction?

Some people are told explicitly by God, where to go and what to do.

Jonah is understandably reluctant to go to the capital city of Israel's enemy Assyria, to relay God's message of impending doom. But he did go, at the second time of asking. The people of Nineveh hear God's message and much to Jonah's surprise, they repent of their evil ways and show genuine sorrow and remorse. God responds by displaying compassion, by forgiving their sins and not destroying the city as he had planned to do, much to Jonah's annoyance!

Jesus says that we should turn back to God (a necessary part of repentance), and believe the good news about God's kingdom.

Jesus doesn't tell his disciples which way to go, he says, "*follow me*". Jesus is not offering to hold the hand of every disciple, nor is he suggesting that God will control us like robots. Jesus points to a better way; a way of living in a right relationship with God.

Jesus invites us to follow, as he leads us towards God's kingdom. This kingdom is not a 'somewhere else' type country, but a 'place' where God rules.

This 'place' includes:

- The hearts and minds of those who believe that 'Jesus is Lord' (*Romans 10 v 9,10*).
- Communities where God's love is shown to others (*Matthew 25 v31-46*); by people who practice justice and mercy (*Matthew 5*).
- A place where people recognise their need for God's gift of forgiveness (*1 John 1 v 8,9*), and where forgiven people freely forgive others. (*Matthew 6 v14*).

We are invited to journey with Jesus towards the heart of God, (*John 14*), a place of safety says the Psalmist, where we can experience (God given) inner peace.

Jesus says that the kingdom will soon be here, (*Mark 1 v15*). Mark and the other New Testament writers explain how Jesus ushers in the kingdom of God and (the good news of) how through Christ's death and resurrection; sin, death, evil and Satan are destroyed and we are reconciled with God.

Paul tells us that the world as we know it is passing away. John tells us that this world will be replaced by God's everlasting kingdom. A renewed and reconciled heaven and earth (*Rev 21*).

By way of an answer to our initial question, all the lectionary readings this week suggest that the 'right' direction is towards God.

The question remains, are you headed in the 'right' direction? Towards the one who truly loves you.

Bible quotations are taken from the Contemporary English version.

From the Ipswich Circuit of the Methodist Church.