

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 7 January 2024



Rainbows are beautiful and are colourful occurrences that make us smile once they are painted in the skies after a gloomy storm. However, rainbows cover more than just a multicoloured sight. It's a representation of God's promise to us; He will never again destroy the earth through a flood (Genesis 9:13). The famous quote, "there's always a rainbow after the rain" is a reference to what happened to Noah when darkness enveloped the world. A rainbow symbolism is one of many symbols from God that signifies the nature of His Love for us. The rainbow is God's bow that serves as a reminder of His promise to mankind - an unbreakable bond between the Creator and His creation. In times of trouble, in the presence of anguish, God sends the rainbow to remind His people of His promise (Ezekiel 1:28). A Rainbow symbolism shows the grace God gives to all people saved and unsaved alike.

Symbolism in the colours of the rainbow.

Red-Red stands for the Blood that Jesus shed for our sins. "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of a heifer's ashes can sanctify those who are defiled so that their flesh is cleansed, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to worship the living God". (Hebrews 9:13-14)

Orange-As the colour of fire, orange represents passion, especially that of the Fire of God, "in blazing fire, inflicting punishment on those who do not acknowledge God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus". (2 Thessalonians 1:8)

Yellow-The colour of the sun, yellow symbolizes God as the Source of all Life. As John says in his gospel, "Through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race". (John 1:4)

Green-Being the colour of plants, green is the symbol of God's bountiful blessings. "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it". (Genesis 1:11)

Blue Symbolizes God's domain over all creation, the same way that the blue sky covers all. "For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world". (John 6:33)

Indigo-Indigo stands for God's protection. "Who covers the heavens with clouds, provides rain for the earth, makes grass sprout on the mountains." (Psalms 147:8)

Violet-The colour of royalty, violet reminds us of God's Kingship. It's one of the colours of His dwelling during the Exodus. "At the entrance of the court there shall be a variegated curtain, twenty cubits long, woven of

violet, purple and scarlet yarn and of fine linen twined. It shall have four columns and four pedestals." (Exodus 27:16)

From Christian.Net

At the beginning of the year, we think of our covenant with God.

"And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.'" (Genesis 9:12-15)

WORSHIP DETAILS for 7 January

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by Rev. M. Slocombe with the Covenant Service.

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted by B. Wood.

Shirehampton at 11.00 conducted by Rev. T. Kalongo.

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

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 7 January and the week.

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. LIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS - The Bishop of Manchester looks for hope in the season of Epiphany

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

Songs of Praise. Sunday BBC1 at 1.15. NEW YEAR NEW CHALLENGES.

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>

ALFA Christian Community. Drop-ins continue on **Wednesday afternoons** 2.30-4.30pm.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 14 January.

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by Rev. P. Luxon. All Age Worship.

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted by Rev. M. Slocombe with Covenant Service.

Shirehampton at 11.00 conducted by Local Arrangement and All Aged Worship.

St Peter's, Pilning at 10.00 conducted by C. James.

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: Jayne Brown, Richard Brown, Janet Browning, Rachel Canning, Carolina Carias and Lou Carias.

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. The next Foundation Course will be at Horfield on January 27· 2024 at 2 p.m. If you have not attended a course for 4 years you must attend this course. Please give you names to your safeguarding officer as soon as possible. Safeguarding officers are Pauline, Jo, and Eurfron.

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)

"He's Behind You", "Oh, No he isn't", "Oh, Yes he is". Looking to do something different in the New Year? The Bartholomites are performing 'Beauty and the Beast' (as a panto) at Horfield Methodist church in April and are looking for a chorus to support the main parts/cast with singing and dancing. All ages are welcome to join and no experience necessary. Weekly rehearsals start on Sunday 7 January at 3pm. We are also looking for off-stage support as well. Contact thebartholomites@gmail.com for more information. Thanks for your help, Clare Robinson. (The Bartholomites)

Didn't they do well! Well done to Helen and Donna, the Bristol Blue team, who took part in, "Bargain Hunt", at 12.15 on Tuesday 2 January. Their opponents, the Re Team, were from Thornbury. Both teams did very well and made it a very interesting show to watch. You may want to watch it on iPlayer.

Dates for your Diary

Eco Group Meeting on Zoom-Thursday, 18 January

Foundation Safeguarding Training- Saturday, 27 January at 2 p.m.

Horfield & Bishopston Church Council-Wednesday, 7 February, at 7.30 p.m.

The Lectionary. Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

At Jesus' baptism the "heavens are torn open." Like the curtain in the temple being torn in two at his crucifixion, the moment speaks of the destruction of the boundary between the daily and the divine. Baptism suggests that the realm of God is right here in this person being baptized. The descent of the Holy Spirit reinforces that. God is present in this person.

Most Christians need to refine their theology of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is not a bird or ghost that comes and goes. It's God. It's always here. And it's not confined to Christians. It's in everybody. Despite the way it's worded in Acts— "the Holy Spirit came upon them"—you don't "get" the Holy Spirit at baptism. It's always there. Baptism is a symbol, a representation, of the Spirit that is *always* there. What changes is that we accept it, we *receive* it. Baptism is an invitation to allow the Spirit to guide us, to control our lives.

Jesus hears the promise of God's love and blessing. "You are my son, my Beloved" quotes Psalm 2, referring to the Messiah. "With whom I am well pleased" quotes Isaiah 42, referring to God's suffering servant. Until Jesus' followers thought about it no one had ever imagined that one person might fulfil both roles of suffering and Messiah; but they realized Jesus was a suffering, Messiah! The blessing is not only a "naming" of Jesus. It's also a claiming. God is saying, "You are mine. No matter what." My children are mine and always will be no matter what evil they suffer or evil they do. Just so, we are God's beloved, God's children, no matter what evil we may suffer or what evil we may do. Baptism announces God's blessing for us, and God's claim on us. We all need to hear these words often. Baptismal renewal is a way to accomplish that.

From "Unfolding Light" Web Site.

