

The Methodist Church

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield, Shirehampton Methodist Churches and St Peter's Pilning.

Minister: Rev Patrick Stonehewer T: 0117 924 8407, E: patrick.stonehewer@methodist.org.uk

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 14th February 2021



Pancake Day and Ash Wednesday this week

The season of Lent begins this week. This time of preparation for the celebration of Easter was introduced in the fourth century, with more days being added later to link with the 40 days Jesus spent fasting and being tempted in the wilderness. Ashes were traditionally placed on the heads of believers as a sign of penitence, making the connection with Jesus' decision to turn towards Jerusalem and go to his death. Biblically, 40 days represent 'a long period of time,' including the examples of the Flood lasting 40 days and nights, the Hebrew people spending 40 years wandering in the wilderness before reaching the Promised Land, and Moses spending 40 days with God on Mount Sinai before receiving the Ten Commandments.

In a period when it's easy to feel that we've waited a long time for hopeful signs, and that we've given up more than enough, we may well need to look for encouragement and handle Lent differently. Psalm 68:19 tells us that God carries our burdens, turning us towards praise and blessing: perhaps you have something which you would willingly let go of and lay down during Lent, to allow yourself space to receive God's blessing?

Lord, bless to us this season of Lent.

Bless the things we lay down, that we might appreciate the things we have more gratefully.

Bless the things we pick up, that we might learn what it means to live well in your world.

Bless the things we give away, that we might understand the true meaning of compassion.

Bless the things we lend, that we might share in your story as disciples and followers.

Bless to us this season of Lent. Amen. (prayer from rootsontheweb.com)

Rev Patrick

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield and Shirehampton. During the current period of lockdown our services will be held on Zoom only. Please see the last page of these notices for details of Zoom, including how to dial in. If you would like support with accessing these services online or via the phone, please make contact with a Church Steward or Rev Patrick.

Joint Service on 14th February will be led by Peter Jones, Local Preacher and a Circuit Steward.

Joint Service on 21st February is All Age Worship and will be led by Matthew Forsyth, Churches and Volunteer Officer for "All We Can".

St Peter's, Pilning, jointly with Almondsbury Parish Church. Sunday 14th February at 10.00 via Facebook live www.facebook.com/St-Marys-Church-Almondsbury-730715950415825/

Junior Church sessions continue online every Sunday at 10:00. Email Helen before Saturday midday (treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk) for the Zoom access details.

Evening prayer. 4.00pm each Monday, led by members of St Peter's, Pilning, using Zoom (link below).

Ash Wednesday Service. February 17 at 7.45pm on Zoom (link below). Please join us for a short service to mark the beginning of Lent.

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.

Afterzoom tea - each Sunday at 3.30, to share news informally and see friends. Please see the last page of this news sheet for the details for Zoom, including how to phone in.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS

Sunday 14th February, Songs of Praise at 1.15 on BBC1. Sean Fletcher is at Ripon Cathedral in North Yorkshire to hear reflections on Lent.

Sunday Worship. BBC Radio 4 LW on 14th February at 08.10 - 'Facets of Love'.
21st February at 08.10 - Lent 1 - 'Jesus and the Father: United'

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

Start the week with a coffee and chat from 10.00am on Monday, by joining (virtual) Open Church Cafe, hosted by St Peter's Pilning. If you would like to join, please contact Jonathan and Olwen, Churchwardens St Peter's Pilning via churchwardenpilning@gmail.com for the online link.

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 notices@horfieldmethodist.org.uk or 0117 969 1908.

GENERAL NOTICES

Do you want to play a part in shaping the future of our Circuit? Covid-19 has accelerated changes that were already taking place in our churches throughout the Circuit. As the pandemic is brought under control and restrictions are eased, what should the future life, work, worship, and witness of our Circuit look like? **Do you have thoughts and ideas about:** What of our past is still relevant for our future and so should continue? What have we started in the past year that has worked well and should be developed further? What emerging opportunities will make our churches more vibrant and relevant to society today? **Do you feel that God is calling you:** To use the knowledge, experience or insights He has given you to shape our future? To become part

of an enthusiastic team committed to developing the mission of the Circuit? "And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." (Joel 2: 28-29)

There is now an opportunity for people, from all parts of the Circuit, to join our team of Circuit Stewards. Our aim is to have as wide a representation as possible to form a strong and well-balanced team. If you would like to know more please contact Dottie North, seniorcircuitsteward@bsgc.org.uk or any one of our current team: Jenny Cornell; Mike Culshaw; Vicky Davies; Janet George; Christine Jones; Peter Jones; Ros Sledge. We look forward to hearing from you!

There's lots of interest in this month's newsletter from the **Methodist Church Learning Network** for the South-West, including book reviews, details of courses and plenty more:

methodist-news.org.uk/BVI-77RAS-6FEB09971C9E29B8KTAWAVOA549EB5C96AE71B/cr.aspx

How did John Wesley speak out against the slave trade? The New Room invite you to the next in their series of 'Wes talks' on Monday 15 February between 7.30 - 8.30pm. The event is online for an entry price of £5, and features Rev Dr Catherine Okoronkwo (Bishop's Advisor on Racial Justice, Diocese of Bristol), Gary Best (Author of 'Slavery and Bristol,' New Room historian) and Dr Madge Dresser (Honorary Professor in Historical Studies, University of Bristol). Book online at: newroombristol.org.uk/events where you can also find details about other forthcoming events.

The New Room. Free online activities for families to enjoy. Look on the website and social media to join between 15 and 19 February.

Make Music Day Meet Up, South West. On Wednesday 17 February at 4.30 for everyone who would like to perform, lead or host a music event in the South West. Make Music Day is on 21 June.

Lent 2021 - Touching the Earth Lightly: Supporting the Circuit's desire to become an Eco Circuit, this year's Lent materials aim to help us reflect on our relationship with God's creation - how we might both live well in it and encounter God through it. They will include;

Weekly resources based on the lectionary to help local preachers and worship leaders prepare (including a Lenten liturgy, weekly prayers, sermon pointers, and suggested hymns).

Daily short prayerful Facebook reflections

A downloadable calendar of practical daily environmental challenges

A list of related books suitable for reading as a group or individual

We hope to publish these as soon as possible - watch this space for further information!

We live in tough times. The pandemic continues to highlight the inequalities that sweep too many people into poverty. But we have also been reminded of the values that matter most: mutuality, compassion and community. As we journey forward together, we have the chance to do things differently. If we are to build a society in which everyone can live a full life, free from poverty, we must ensure the voices of people who are struggling to make ends meet are heard. Join people around the UK in prayer, giving and action at a special online event for Church Action on Poverty Sunday, 21 February at 6pm. Register at www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/

Horfield. The funeral of Margaret Jones will take place at lunch time on Friday 26 February: the cortège will pass Horfield Methodist Church at approximately 12.20pm, and you are invited to stand near to the church building from 12.15pm. If you choose to attend, please wear a face covering at all times, observe social distancing arrangements throughout and leave promptly after the cortège has departed.

Horfield. The group working towards an award for an eco-church will meet again on Monday, 1st March at 7.30 p.m. We encourage you to join us.

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; Pauline Lush, Lucy Manners, Jim Marshall, Amanda McGlade

DEVOTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

This week's lectionary readings: (Sunday before Lent)

2 Kings 2: 1-12, Psalm 50: 1- 6, 2 Corinthians 4: 3-6, Mark 9: 2-9

This week's reflection is provided by David Bainbridge (Horfield).

Mountains are a significant feature of the biblical landscape, revered as places of sacred power and special encounters with God. It was there on a mountain that Peter, James, and John witnessed that amazing sight, Jesus was transfigured before them. As Mark in his account describes it, "his clothes became dazzling white." Alongside him stood those two great figures of the Old Testament, Moses, and Elijah, symbolising the law and the prophets and Jesus' fulfilment of their prophetic roles. Then they heard a voice coming through the cloud saying, "this is my son whom I love, with him I am well pleased, listen to him." As well as revealing the divine nature of Jesus to those three disciples what an affirmation for Jesus himself as he embarked on that journey which would lead to his death on a cross. Peter, in suggesting that they build three dwellings appears to be seeking to prolong the experience. He was soon to learn that whilst this was not possible, they would never forget it, hadn't they just experienced a glimpse of God.

This is one of those ethereal mystical happenings which doesn't readily relate to 21st century life, an age of great scientific discovery and achievement. Yet life is not just one exciting journey of discovery with all the attendant risks that some new discoveries can bring. Much of our lives is marked by its very ordinariness, the same routines, and for all of us there are times of struggle. So, where does "The Transfiguration" fit into the much more complex yet equally troubled world of the 21st century.

Well, of one thing I am sure, and that is we all need to see as those three disciples saw that day on the mountain something of the divine nature. We need to glimpse and catch hold of something that is beyond our normal experience, which shows us something of the nature of God. So that we can reflect on the moment, even long after the event and recognise it as something special. A moment of renewal, a greater vision that can serve to sustain us long after the experience.

This vision, or glimpse or experience of God, call it what you will, may come to us in many ways. It may be as we view a glorious landscape, a mountain peak, a beautiful sunset or as we become absorbed in some great choral symphony. It may be during a time of prayer or reflection, or we may see it in the face of a parent holding a new-born child. There again it may be in the life of some person that we see God's love in a special way, so that we feel uplifted and inspired.

Several years ago, I had the privilege of standing on Gokya Peak in the Himalayas, looking across to the summit of Everest, imagining what it must have been like for Edmund Hilary and Norgay Tenzing as they stood on the summit of the world's highest mountain. It was certainly a life changing experience for Edmund Hilary, something of a personal transformation which led him to see the Sherpa people in a new light. From then on, he became dedicated to building schools and hospitals in Nepal and ensuring the trust he founded made a difference in the lives of those mountain people.

The American singer and songwriter John Denver in the lyrics to his song "The eagle and the Hawke," wrote:

"Come dance with the west wind and touch on the mountain tops

Sail o'er the canyons and up to the stars

And reach for the heavens and hope for the future

And all that we can be and not what we are."

"And all that we can be and not what we are." Such awe inspiring, uplifting moments can give us a sense of all that we can be, and when God's people, when you and I open our hearts to his love, which finds expression in acts of love, when that happens, Christ is again transformed.

Prayer

We thank you Father for those special moments of nearness to you, for all the places where we sense your presence and the people whose love and friendship is a blessing to us.

Help us to see your glory hidden in the heart of life and may it be reflected in our lives, in love and service to those around us. Amen.

Our thanks to David for this week's devotions