

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 21st March 2021

Almighty God, you are always working,
though the seed may be hidden in the ground.
We worship you, hidden, mysterious and purposeful.
Forgive us for giving up on you when it seems that our prayers are unanswered. Forgive us for giving up on ourselves,
when we feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges we face.

We place our trust in you again today
relying on your sovereign power,
resting in the knowledge of your love,
rejoicing in our salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

As we come to pray for the world and for ourselves,
I invite you to imagine you are looking down onto a ploughed field ready for planting, watching as seeds are sown into the ground.
Let's imagine that each prayer we bring to God is a seed, planted in hope.
Let us plant in God's field together:

First, let us think of people who need our prayers.
I invite you to think of family and those you are close to (pause); people in your neighbourhood and those you work with (pause)

Now, let us think of places where people are suffering
Perhaps through hunger (pause) or violence (pause); through poor physical or mental health (pause);
overwork or lack of work (pause).

Let us think of places where the earth itself is suffering
Through drought, or flood (pause); through exploitation of resources (pause); through pollution (pause).
May God nurture our prayers, bringing growth, new life and fruitfulness

Let us pray for those, including ourselves, whom God is using to work his field, being partners in all he is working to bring about growth, new life and fruitfulness (pause).
Loving God, as we remember all who are working for the common good, we pray that you would strengthen the weary, inspire those with responsibility and fill your people with your Spirit, that your Kingdom may come on earth, as in Heaven. Amen.

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 21 March will be led by Rev. Aboseh Ngwana.

Joint service on 28 March will be All Age Worship led by Rev Patrick Stonehewer.

St Peter's, Pilning, jointly with Almondsbury Parish Church. Sunday 14 March 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.

Bible Study - the Wednesday group will continue until Holy Week, following material provided by All We Can. After Easter, you are all invited to join with colleagues across the circuit to study the book of Acts, looking at the whole book with companion passages from Luke's Gospel. This will journey into deeper discipleship through engaging with the Methodist Way of Life and alongside the contemporary mission and ministry of the Church today, with contributions from people across our Circuit. Please do consider joining this - for more details contact David Bainbridge or Rev Patrick.

Worship during Holy Week. There will be a 30 minute act of worship on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and (Maundy) Thursday in Holy Week, starting at 7.30pm. Good Friday worship will start at 10am, led by Adam Biddlestone from the Circuit Team. Please join using the Zoom links below.

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 Worship - BBC Radio 4 on March 21 at 8.10 includes a moment of remembrance led by The Archbishop of York to mark the loss of 120,000 lives in the Coronavirus pandemic.

Sunday Lent Worship - BBC1 on 21 March at 11.30. Service from St. Martin's Church, Maidstone, led by Rev Joyce Addison, with writer Chine McDonald.

Songs of Praise - BBC2 on 21 March at 1.15. . Rev Kate Bottley visits Roche Abbey in Yorkshire.

Daily Service. Each weekday on BBC Radio 4 LW at 09.45 - Jesus reaches out to those in need.

Start the week with a coffee and chat from 10.00 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. Join our Touching the Earth Lightly Facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/275195130693427> A resource pack, containing all these resources, is available through the Circuit website and by e-mail

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/

World Day of Prayer. We are very pleased that with Patrick's cooperation we will be able to hold a World Day of Prayer Service on Sunday 21st March at 4.30 pm. We thank all those who have previously supported this service and hope many of you will be able to join us this year on Zoom. Please bring a stone with you. We have some service booklets available that we may be able to deliver beforehand or to anyone who may not be able to access Zoom. Telephone 0117 9624569 for delivery. Best wishes from Alison, Carolyn and Marilyn (Zoom details below)

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



The Noise - run by churches across the city to support local outreach projects - will soon be looking for volunteers to support small outdoor activities over the May Bank Holiday weekend. We are hoping to join an outdoor community trail event at Horfield - if you would like to help with this please contact Jenny Cornell or Rev Patrick. Volunteer registration is now available via bristolnoise.org.uk

Working in partnership with Christian Aid, the Circuit is launching a campaign where you can donate as an expression of thanks for your vaccination. The money will be used by Christian Aid to fund clean water, hygiene kits and PPE facilities in communities to enable COVID vaccinations to be distributed safely. For more details and a fundraising link please visit giving.tapsimple.org/online/christian-aid/giving-thanks-for-our-vaccines-across-bristol-south-gloucestershire-methodist-circuit We are hoping to raise £2,000 across the Circuit.

The last twelve months have been so very difficult for all of us. We have faced challenges, and sadly, many of us have lost loved ones, opportunities, jobs, and many other things that are important to us. A new short film 'Bristol Remembers' marks the anniversary of the first lockdown. Featuring reflections from leaders and key workers from across the city, it's a chance to come together and remember those who have died, to acknowledge and speak into grief and loss, and to share in the hope we have for the future. Visit www.wearebristol.co.uk to watch.

Horfield Fundraising. Items for Mothering Sunday and Easter are now available (with more to be added in the next few weeks). Please look at <http://www.horfieldmethodist.org.uk/fundraising/> for further details.

Horfield - date for your diary. We will be holding the Church General Meeting on Sunday 25 April, straight after the morning service using Zoom. We will be offering a few topics for discussion ahead of the meeting so that everyone can be contacted beforehand and therefore contribute to the discussion in some way either on the day or previously. More details to follow.

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; Sue Pollard, Jamie & Mary Quilala, Lorraine Richardson, Desmond & Ruby Reid.

Horfield. The next meeting of the Eco Group will be on Monday 29 March at 8 p.m.

Horfield. There will be a meeting for "Stewards Plus" on 15 April at 7.30 p.m. at the Church.

DEVOTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

Reflection on the Lectionary. Jeremiah 31 : 31 – 34; Psalm 51 : 1 – 12; Hebrews 5 : 5 – 10; John 12 : 20 – 33

This week's reflection is provided by Local Preacher Rachel Spencer (SBMC, Knowle)

John 12:20-33

Sunday 21 March is Census Day. In the 2011 census, 60% of respondents acknowledged that they were Christian. That's interesting - imagine if all of those people came to church! Humanists UK disagree with the wording of the religion question, claiming that it presumes that everyone has a religion and leads to people choosing one on the basis of cultural background rather than genuine belief. Your answer to this question may be straightforward but I think it gives us an opportunity to consider what it means to say that we are Christian, if that is how you see yourself. And it comes only two weeks before Easter, when we remember the events that are central to our identity as followers of Christ.

What does today's gospel reading remind us about what it means to be a Christian? Jesus uses the image of a grain of wheat. Perhaps this is a metaphor that you will easily understand if you are a gardener. It is astonishing when you consider the life and beauty that comes from tiny seeds. You plant something small, that looks dead, into the soil and you wait. For days or even weeks you wait and see whether anything will grow.

From The Message translation, 'Anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. If you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal'. It takes bravery to do that. To give everything to God and to be prepared to give up even the parts of our lives that we love most, to wait and see what God plans for us. Perhaps there are parts of us that we're not quite ready to allow to die. Maybe it will only be by trusting God completely, and with everything, that we will open ourselves to the tremendous possibilities for growth that he offers. Maybe the growth and life that come from such self-sacrifice will bear fruit that others will notice. Maybe that will bring people to us, as they did to the disciples with Jesus, saying, 'We want to see Jesus'. In this reading Jesus talks of his imminent death, saying, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." Our calling is to enable others to see Jesus that they might also die to their old lives and grow, instead, in the love of God.

I expect that most of those who will tick the 'Christian' box on the census will not be prepared to go to these extremes; to give up everything to follow Jesus. As we journey through these last days towards Easter let us reflect on how much of ourselves we are prepared to give to the one who gave everything for us on the cross.

Our thanks to Rachel for this reflection.