

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 churches serving communities across the local area.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.

Sunday 23 October 2022



You don't need me to tell you that there has been plenty of turbulence in the political arena over recent weeks. Amidst the views about the style and competence of the senior leadership of the government, there is significant debate about sustained economic growth, with those questioning this being portrayed as the 'anti-growth coalition.'

Is the church part of the anti-growth coalition? Given that we are on course to use up far in excess of the resources that the Earth contains, going for growth is possibly not the best way of living within the planet's means. Our current lifestyles and consumerism are not sustainable if we want to save the planet and our well-being; our very survival is intimately connected to living sustainably.

In parallel to that, I'd hope that most would want to see decently funded education, health, social care and welfare - all part of living in a just society. We want schools where children learn and flourish. We want a world where young and old are not blighted by poverty, complemented by a health and social care system that supports those unable to live independently or care for themselves. Community facilities, such as libraries and parks, museums and culture also support the well-being of the wider community.

What would it be like to measure growth not purely in terms of economic indicators, but in terms of all that enriches our lives and improves the well-being of the young, the vulnerable, indeed us all - bringing hope and enabling us all to flourish?

Rev Patrick (based on an article in rootsontheweb.com)

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR SUNDAY 23 October and the week

Horfield at 10.00. Conducted by Rev. Patrick Stonehewer & Dawn Nadim with Holy Communion.

Horfield at 12.30- Christian Believers Fellowship at 12.30. Led by William Carey.

Bishopston at 10.30. Conducted by D. North

Shirehampton at 11.00. Coffee and conversation

St Peter's, Pilning and Easter Compton at 10.00. Conducted by the Anglican Team

Easter Compton. Wednesday 26 October at 3.00. Reflective Space led by the Ark Team.

Welcome to Dawn Nadim, a local preacher in the Tiverton and Wellington Circuit, will be working alongside Rev Patrick this week as part of her candidature for presbyteral ministry. She will mostly be at Horfield-based activities, but please do pray for Dawn as she completes this placement and completes the reflection and follow up work over the coming weeks.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 23 October and the week

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. Wholeness and Hope, from Lancaster Priory, exploring St. Luke's Gospel in the week of his feast day.

Songs of Praise. BBC 1 at 13.15. Greater Manchester Milestone Moments.

Daily Service at 09.45. BBC Radio 4, Long Wave.

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>

St. Peter's, Pilning Open Café Church 24 October, 10.00 - 12.00, for coffee, tea, cake, and chat.

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR SUNDAY 30 October and the week

Horfield at 10.00. Conducted by C. Sledge

Horfield at 12.30 Christian Believers Fellowship, led by William Carey.

Bishopston at 10.30 Conducted by Rev. J. Emmett

Shirehampton at 11.00. Local Arrangement

Pilning and Easter Compton at 10.00. Conducted by Rev. P. Stonehewer with Holy Communion

Easter Compton. Wednesday 2 November at 3.00. Reflective Space led by the Ark Team.

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

Introductions to the Notices. We would like to include others to share their views on their faith and a variety of topics when we provide introductions to these combined notices. A number of people have written interesting articles over the last few months, and we would like that to continue. If you would like to contribute, please contact Eurfron using the details given above.

Rebels for Social Justice - John Frost, Chartism and the Welcome Project Holy Trinity Church Hall, Horfield Bristol. BS7 8ST Saturday 22nd October, 11am - 2pm, speakers including Revd. Canon David McGladdery - Rector of Horfield, Pete Strong (John Frost Society), Caroline Plaice (Church Warden), Richard Frame (John Frost Society). Lunch included.

Come and Sing Handel's Messiah at Victoria Methodist Church 1a, Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1NU Sunday October 23rd 2022 at 2pm with performance at 7 pm with Orchestra (Leader: Andrew Rees) Charlotte Newstead - Soprano Thomas Wood - Tenor Shelley Cox - Alto Charlie Morris - Baritone Conductor: Lyn Lloyd-Jones Cost: £15 (£6 for students/under 18s) (includes copy loan and refreshments) To register, please email: vicmethevents@gmail.com

Shirehampton - Play hub - Monday 24 October 10am - 1pm Free play session including trains, miniature curling and more! All welcome.

Support P. J.'s Charity sleepout On the 27th of October, Rev P.J. Jackson will be sleeping outside with 1625 Independent People to raise money and awareness for young people facing homelessness in the Bristol and the South West. The money raised will go towards supporting specialist projects and services to empower young people to gain the skills to overcome their trauma and build the confidence they need to achieve their goals and thrive as independent adults. Please donate to help them and sponsor her to achieve a target of £200.00! <https://1625ip.enthuse.com/pf/p-j-jackson-9e9de-c0780>

Horfield - Art Club on 28 October is cancelled because the new hall floor will be being fitted.

What is the Spirit saying to the Church? Bible Study on the Book of Revelation. Six study sessions on Wednesday afternoons from 9th November to 14th December led by Rev. Richard Sharples at Parkway Methodist Church. Contact Richard directly for more information richard.sharples@methodist.org.uk

Carols and Steam Saturday 3rd December - 6.45 for 7.00-9.00pm at Bitton Station. Ride the Avon Valley Railway and sing carols. Full details including prices and booking information available via Adam Biddlestone circuitengagement@bsgc.org.uk 07809 820074 £8 adults, £4 5-16 year olds, under 5s free

Horfield - Christmas Fayre 26 November, 10.30am - 12.30pm. We shall be pleased to receive offers of good quality, saleable items for: the Christmas and gift stall; handmade items for the craft stall; fiction and up-to-date non-fiction books; homemade cakes (list of ingredients required); toys & games; and bottles (non-alcoholic). There will be a list of items which you can sign up to contribute towards raffle prizes. This list will be available in church alongside the sign-up sheet for volunteers. All contributions can be brought to church from Sunday 13th November. Thank you.

Horfield - Christmas photos Those who attended the recent exhibition will know we have some great photographers in our midst! The cards we produced from some of the photos were very popular. We would like to try this with Christmas cards and sell them at the Christmas fayre. If you have photos which can be sent digitally of winter scenes, robins, Christmas trees etc, that you think are suitable, please email mail@horfieldmethodist.org.uk by 31st October and we'll select some few to make into cards.

Horfield & 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: George Otoo, Philip Parr, Alima & Tom Parkes/Oyebanji, John & Eurfron Parry.

Horfield - Thank you to Lou and Helen who have laid insulation in the ceiling above the office and to Monique who has continued to care for our grounds by creating a small, planted plot near the notice board. These have all fitted into our eco-churchGroup's plans.

Horfield. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in organising the Brass Band Concert last week. Everyone enjoyed the evening and we look forward to a return visit.

Horfield. Congratulations to Hazel Thorn on celebrating her 82 Birthday last week. She would like to thank everyone for their good wishes

The Circuit now has an Eventbrite Account which will be used as the main way to book in for forthcoming Circuit events. The first events to use this new booking system are 'Journeying through Matthew's Gospel' and 'Carols & Steam' or contact Adam Biddlestone circuitengagement@bsgc.org.uk 078096 20074

Victoria Methodist Church was delighted to host the wedding of Holly Lerchundi Willis and Pippa Haggitt on Saturday October 8th. It was the first wedding for a same-sex couple to have taken place in the church, and indeed within the wider Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit.

My Community Bristol Do you have a learning disability? Are you passionate about Bristol, especially the area of Horfield, Lockleaze, Ashley, Bishopston and Ashley Down? Do you like to work with different people to build relationships? We have a job called Community Connector. This is a part time role until March 2024 and we will pay £10.24 per hour. You can find out more about the role on the website: <https://jobs.mencap.org.uk/vacancies/26989/communityconnector.html> Or you can find the role profile here: <https://tinyurl.com/2fdc4h56> or an Easy Read role profile here: <https://tinyurl.com/yyubaru>

Reflection on the Lectionary Sunday 23rd October (Ordinary 30)

Psalm 65; Joel 2 : 23 - 32 ; 2 Timothy 3 : 14 - 4 : 5; Luke 18 : 9 - 14

The reflection is provided by Local Preacher, Dottie North (Victoria).

In today's Lectionary reading from Luke's gospel Jesus tells the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector to some who were sure they were right with God. Two men went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax collector, standing far off, wouldn't even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "*God, be merciful to me, a sinner!*" Jesus tells his listeners, "*This man went home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.*"

God, I thank you that I am not like..... Now fill in the blank with whatever it might be for you. We may not pray quite like the Pharisee, but maybe we sometimes have expressed those kinds of opinions in conversation? Have you ever kept those thoughts to yourself in silent self-righteousness? The one thing we cannot in all honesty say is, "*God, I thank you that I am not like the Pharisee,*" because if we do say that then our own words become evidence that that is exactly who we are. That is not who we want to be. We want to be the justified tax collector because we have come to believe that Pharisees are narrow, legalistic hypocrites. To hold that belief sort of sounds like the Pharisee, doesn't it?

Jesus' parable sets a trap for us. It is not a trap to catch and condemn us as Pharisees. It is not a trap to separate tax collectors and Pharisees. Rather, it is a trap that stops us and brings us face to face with the reality of our life and relationship with God.

From the outside the Pharisee and tax collector seem very different. They are not, however, as different as we might think, for on the inside they are both in need of God. The difference is not their place in society. The real difference is that the tax collector recognises his need, but the Pharisee does not. The difference is that the Pharisee keeps score, while the tax collector acknowledges those have sometimes been my own thoughts, I can't help but wonder what is really going on here. It is one of those "*me thinks thou dost protest too much*" kind of moments. What are we hiding? What's underneath all that, "*Look at me, look at what I do, what I have and who I am not like?*" Who is the Pharisee trying to convince? God or himself? His prayer is directed not so much to God but to himself. He is not actually describing his faith or spiritual practices; it's more like he is keeping score.

Anytime we begin keeping score of our own life against the life of another we are in danger of behaving like the Pharisee. "*I am not a crook, a rogue, or a womanizer. I do not extort money like this tax collector. I not only follow the law I exceed its requirements. I am a good faithful Jew.*" He probably was. There is no reason to doubt that what he says is true. The problem is that when we think we have everything - answers, doctrine, law, piety, reputation, stuff, success, all due to our own efforts - when we think we have the requisite number of points, then do we have need of God?

From the outside the Pharisee and tax collector seem very different. They are not, however, as different as we might think, for on the inside they are both in need of God. The difference is not their place in society. The real difference is that the tax collector recognises his need, but the Pharisee does not. The difference is that the Pharisee keeps score, while the tax collector cries out, "*God be merciful to me, a sinner!*" He is demonstrating his need for God in his life.

This parable offers an invitation to stop keeping score, to acknowledge and hold before God the dead places of our life: the failures and disappointments; the break ups and break downs; the emptiness, sufferings, addictions; the places of our life where we no longer dream dreams, have visions, or prophesy. That is what the tax collector did. We don't know how the story ends. It tells us, rather, how it might begin. The beginning of a new story, a new life, is a choice God sets before each one of us. It is a choice we make every time we tally up the points. It is a choice we make every time we cry out for mercy.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen

Our thanks to Dottie for this reflection