

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.bsqc.org.uk)
a family of churches serving communities across the local area.

Sunday 16 July



The national governing body of the Methodist Church, the Conference, met recently in Birmingham, and overwhelmingly recommitted the Methodist Church to being a Justice-seeking Church. This step hopes to encourage more Methodists in acting for justice, alongside their local communities, focusing efforts on contributing to change in key areas including poverty, refugees, the environment, discrimination and peace. It is the result of a two-year process of conversation and listening (including some members of our own churches), sharing visions of what a just world looks like. It's hoped that we will spend time looking at this project this autumn by providing some opportunities for study and reflection, and then help to underpin practical action.

One of the closing acts of the Conference is to confirm the places where each minister will serve in the coming year. This included Martin's move into the circuit to assume responsibilities at Bishopston, Horfield, Pilning and Shirehampton from the beginning of September, and to confirm my move to a new role elsewhere in the circuit.

As I make this move, I've reminded myself about the words of the ordination service for Presbyters, which include: '*Remember your call: Declare the Good News. Celebrate the sacraments. Serve the needy. Minister to the sick. Welcome the stranger. Seek the lost.*' Much of this statement reflects that call to seek justice for the world, our neighbourhoods and within our communities of faith. That's not always an easy task, and can prove unpopular.

'He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me.' (Ezekiel 2:1-2, NRSV) recounts the call of God through the presence of the Spirit, something I hope we can all recognise in some shape. The next few verses don't make for easy reading, as they record Ezekiel being sent to a rebellious people, something which I hope doesn't happen for Martin or me over the coming months! Whilst offering thanks for God, my prayer is that that we will all hear God's voice afresh in and through changes in ministry, just as Ezekiel hoped to be recognised as coming from God (Ezekiel 2:5b).

Turning that around, Ezekiel's words prompt us to pray for open minds and hearts for all those encountering new situations, whether in ministry and other aspects of life, as we seek to recognise God in those around us.

With thanks for your prayerful and practical support whilst I have served in and amongst you.

Blessings Rev Patrick

We all thank you Lord, for how you've used Patrick in our churches and what he means to us. We will miss him! We ask that you fill his heart and mind with good memories from his ministry amongst us. We know you are guiding him and his work and you are preparing us for a new person as well. May we all, together, give you praise and thanks for the many blessings you have given to him, and us, during his caring ministry amongst us. We pray these things in the loving name of Jesus Christ, **Amen**.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 16 July

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by A. Smith. All Age Worship.

Bishopston at 10.30 No Service

Shirehampton at 11.00 conducted by Rev. P. Stonehewer with Holy Communion. This is Patrick's last Service as our Minister.

St. Peter's, Pilning at 10.00 conducted by J. Creech

Circuit leaving service - Sunday 16 July at 4.00pm. There will be a Circuit Leaving Service at Parkway Methodist Church, Jubilee Rd, Baptist Mills, Bristol BS2 9RS to recognise the ministry of Rev Patrick Stonehewer and Rev Richard Sharples as they move onto new appointments this summer and to mark the contribution to the Circuit of Janet George and Ros Sledge who have served as Circuit Stewards for extended periods of time. Please join us for this service of thanksgiving and blessing.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 16 July and the week

Sunday Worship Radio 4 at 8.10. From Margam Abbey Church, South Wales, on the theme of fruitfulness with the Bishop of Llandaff

Songs of Praise. BBC 2 at 13.00. Creative Faith from Torbay.

Daily Service at 9.45. 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>.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 23 July

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by R. Clews

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted by K. Luxon

Shirehampton at 11. Local Arrangement

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

ALFA Christian Community

12th July NO drop-in - resumes every Wednesday afternoon, 2.30-4.30pm from 19th July. All welcome.

17th July - Quiet Garden Morning, 10.30am-12.30pm, at Fulligrove House. The theme is "Lead me in the way everlasting." **Coffee Morning**, this month will be on **Saturday 29th July, 10am-12noon**, at Fulligrove House/Garden.

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

Horfield and Bishopston. We send our love and best wishes to Marnie and her family who was baptised last weekend during Messy Church, the first person to be baptised as a member of that; she was also a member of our Little Fishes Toddler Group a few years ago.

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: Margaret Angell-Alpass, Kim Adams, Jennifer Addo, Marion Andrews, Richard Angell, Cherry Arnal. We also pray for Patrick, Sandy and the family as they prepare for their move on to new churches in the Circuit.

EDI Training Session Saturday 29th July 1.30 - 4.30 p.m. at Hanham Methodist Church. Session led by Anna Wheatley To book a place e-mail contacthanhammethodist@gmail.com

Circuit Welcome Service Sunday 3rd September 4.00 p.m. at Zion United Church, Frampton Cotterell, during which Revs Sharon Lovelock and Martin Slocombe will be welcomed to the circuit, and Rev Patrick Stonehewer will be re-welcomed. Please do join us for this important occasion for all of us.

North Bristol & South Glos Foodbank. Financial donations make a huge difference to our work as a charity. Find all the details on how you can give on our website: nbsg.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money. Contact :- info@nbsg.foodbank.org.uk Tel : 0117 472 5172 or www.nbsg.foodbank.org.uk.

Sat 23 Sep - Müllers' Y&C Conference **When:** Saturday 23rd September 2023, 09:30-16:00 **Where:** St Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford, BS34 8PD **Price:** £10-£30 **For further details and booking:** please visit www.mullers.org/ycconference Do you want to see children and young people thrive in your church? Do you feel under-resourced to minister to teenagers? Would you like to envision and train your Sunday School volunteers?

Müllers' Y&C conference is for anyone whose Christian faith motivates them to serve under 18s and their families. Whether salaried or voluntary, church leadership or congregation member, church based or 'secular', there will be something for everyone. **Seminars include:**

- Mental health in children and young people
- Recruiting and managing volunteers
- Strengthening your relationship with local schools
- Working with parents

Help hedgehogs in hot weather.

Hedgehogs particularly need help in a heatwave, as their usual prey of slugs, snails and worms are often unavailable. Leaving out a juicy snack, such as mealworms or canned dog food, can help in sustained warm weather. If you have a garden pond, ensure there's always a way for hedgehogs (and other small mammals) to climb out if they fall in. You can help hydrate hedgehogs by filling a small shallow bowl with stones and pouring a few inches of water into it.

Trialling innovative new radiant heating chandeliers over the winter, St Matthew's Church in Kingsdown has enjoyed improved heating comfort, with reductions in carbon emissions and much lower running costs, compared to their gas heating system. With increasing carbon efficiency of the National Grid, the success of this trial looks set to play a key role in achieving the Church of England's net zero targets. The new fittings were conceived by Architect Simon Pugh-Jones, who recognised that radiant heating is a good theory for churches but one which has often been poorly delivered.

Reflection on the Lectionary Sunday 16th July (Ordinary 15)

Psalm 119 : 105 - 112; Genesis 25 : 19 - 34; Romans 8 : 1 - 11; Matthew 13 : 1 - 9, 18 - 23

The reflection for this week is by Local Preacher, Jenny Clark, Yate.

The lesson today is a very familiar parable, and this part of Mathews Gospel shows Jesus as the teacher. Jesus tells the parable of the Sower. The seed sown falls into four categories and that which is fruitful also provides different levels of success. Jesus instructs those who have ears to listen, indicating there is a deeper meaning to the story He has told. Thankfully, Jesus takes His disciples to a place where He can add an explanation to this Parable. The seed is the Word of God and listening carefully gives the essence of what happens to the Word when it is shared with others. The disciples seem to be given the challenge of being Sowers of the Word as they are being given insights and instructions that will explain how the Word of the Kingdom will be received. The seed that fell on the ground is carried away by birds and we are told the evil one has this opportunity to steal away the truth so that no one can start to understand or be exposed to the Kingdom. The seed that ends

up withering and choked by weeds indicate that the Word is shared but understanding is not enough to avoid the distractions that challenge what the Kingdom can offer to believers. The seed that is sown in good soil is successful but in different measure showing that there are different positive outcomes with a response to the Kingdom.

Following through with the detail of this Parable, the soil must be in good condition and the Sower competent for success, but that success is also dependant on the unseen work below the surface of the soil. That is the Word of the Kingdom working to bring a successful harvest. The disciples needed to understand that without understanding, the Word, good soil and the Sower, then there is no harvest!

Working in Education, duties involving supervising young people at playtime, was part of my job. A colleague who was a great teacher had been a Police Officer for several years and he was an expert at finding sheltered spots to avoid the wind, sun and rain in the playground. He observed and managed any crisis, but the young people never really got to know him as he didn't interact with them. Many other staff walked and chatted with individuals and knew what problems were building. Positive interactions seemed to build trust and community in very informal ways.

Introducing seeds of the Kingdom takes time, for growth and help to overcome challenges. Quick results aren't very often the best and helping others to see the distractions and challenge them before they are overcome, is part of our Christian fellowship. If the disciples were called to sow the seed then we are too, and there is an ongoing responsibility to maintain and nurture the soil of growth for God's abundance to develop.

Prayer

Loving Lord, there are many times when we feel unable to take on new responsibilities and feel inadequate for many reasons, yet we know that you have called us into your service as we are. Help us to recognise that the Spirit continues to work through us as Sowers of your living word. Refresh us and sustain us as we journey together. Amen.

Our thanks to Jenny for this reflection.