

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 27 August 2023



While looking through my e-mails earlier this month I came across this item in "Green Prints", about laughter.

- **Laughing puts your body at ease.** When you laugh, your body relaxes its muscles and releases stress.
- **Laughing makes you feel good.** When you laugh, endorphins get released and deliver you the feel-good status you deserve.
- **Laughing helps you fight diseases.** When you laugh, your immune system is boosted as disease-fighting cells increase, improving your ability to fight infections and to ward off all types of diseases.
- **Laughing can protect your heart and even help you lose weight.** Sounds crazy? Not really! When you regularly laugh, you get better blood flow which can help protect your entire cardiovascular system. Plus, laughing burns calories—so when you regularly laugh, you could shed a few pounds over a year's time.
- **Laughing makes you happy.** When you laugh with others, you can avoid stressful situations and conflict and laughing can help free you from harbouring grudges that just make you feel bad.
- **Laughing might even help you live longer!** One study found that those battling cancer lived longer and happier lives when ingested with regular doses of humour and laughter.

It's true: laughter is strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. As children, we used to laugh hundreds of times a day, but as adults, life tends to be more serious and laughter more infrequent. But by seeking out more opportunities for humour and laughter, you can improve your emotional health, strengthen your relationships, find greater happiness—and even add years to your life. Dr Angela Bisignano writes, "Laughter helps to reduce stress, set the tone, and impact people's dispositions. I believe God may have given people a means to help deal with stressful times and trying circumstances by the simple remedy of laughter."

Prayer

Remind us how to laugh, to see the hope we have in you. As people of redemption, we need the catharsis of laughter, and the relief of humour.

Open our mouths for more than questions or condemnation, but let our laughter rise to the heavens.

Purify our being through the release of tension, and congeniality.

Let us praise you.

Let us be joyful.

Let us laugh.

In love and gratitude,

Amen.

WORSHIP DETAILS for 27 August.

Horfield at 10.00. No service. Joint service at Bishopston.

Bishopston at 10.30. Local Arrangement.

Shirehampton at 11.00. Local Arrangement.

St. Peter's, Pilning at 10.00. Rev. T. Kalongo with Holy Communion.

Please note there will be no Zoom Service during the morning today.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 27 August and the week

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. GREENBELT 50 from the Bouton Estate, Northamptonshire.

Songs of Praise. BBC 1 at 1.15. CHRISTOPHER WREN'S 300, exploring London churches designed by the master architect.

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

Cotswold Christian Community. On Bank Holiday Monday 28 August, 2.30-5pm, there will be a fun afternoon at the Community Centre, Dursley Road, BS11 9XH. All welcome - free refreshments, games, craft and children's drama (from 4pm).

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 3 September

Horfield at 10.00. Conducted by D. North

Bishopston at 10.30. Conducted by Rev. M. Slocombe with Holy Communion.

Shirehampton at 11.00. Conducted by C. Leese

St. Peter's, Pilning at 10.00. Conducted by P. Van Rossum with Holy Communion.

Circuit Welcome Service. Sunday 3 September, 4.00 p.m. at Zion United Church, Frampton Cotterell. A service to welcome Rev. Sharon Lovelock and Rev. Martin Slocombe as they begin their ministries within our Circuit.

The Circuit Welcome Service will be available through Zion's YouTube Channel, the link to the service is:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4jhgjwaazk>

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: - Pam Gannon, John Gard, Judith Gardiner, Ehsan Ghasemi, Jane Gosh, Denis Gordon.

Horfield. Art club will start again on Friday 8th September.

Horfield. Please look at the Eco notice board for an outline of all the activities of the Group to date and also the latest Eco newsletter. Both these documents are available online.

Horfield. Congratulations to Efua who has done well in her A Level results and will be going to study Geography at the University of London in September. We pray for all young people who are associated with our churches and wish them well in their chosen career path.

Generous God, your call on our lives is always towards life, hope and grace.

We pray for all those young people who received their exam results only to be left with uncertainty and confusion.

We give thanks that you journey with them in joy and in sorrow.

We ask your blessing on them as they navigate their next step knowing that you are there for them always.

As we rejoice with those who will receive good news, we ask your blessing on them, knowing that you celebrate with us whenever life is rich and rewarding.

Bless also, we pray, those who are burdened with anxious thoughts.

And comfort those who may face disappointment.

*Finally, we pray for those who still wait, in hope and amid uncertainty:
keep watch with them, loving God, and be their strength. Amen*
(The Methodist Church Web Site)

Horfield. How can you help in the church's outreach to the community? We urgently need more volunteers at our Little Fishes Group on Friday mornings. You can help by making tea/ coffee for the parents, working on the craft table, helping with setting up on Thursday evenings or clearing away after the session. It does not have to be every week; you can come when it is convenient for you. This is a very successful venture, and it would be a pity if it must disband through lack of support from the church. Please talk to Helen, Janet, or Loraine if you can help.

Bristol Women's Voice has started supporting young women in Bristol to create a Young Women's Forum. Find out more here: <https://www.bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/young-womens-forum/>

We meet every last Tuesday of the month, in central Bristol, at The Station. All events and workshops are FREE and bus tickets are reimbursed.

Our next upcoming event is a **Public Speaking for Young Women workshop**, on Tuesday, 29 August, 5pm - 6.30pm at The Station: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/698868724167?aff=oddtcreator>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1122100502089475>

Upcoming events for October and November are a Creative Writing workshop and an Open Mic event.

Final Big Summer Breakfast. This popular monthly breakfast at Ebenezer Church is happening on Friday 15th September. There were over 40 people at the August with a great community feel. Come along! Regular Community Breakfast restarting in October.

Speedquiz Night. Friday 22 September. 7.30pm at Ebenezer Church (286 Filton Avenue)

Test your knowledge and speed in our smartphone pub quiz. You don't need to be a genius, just quick!! Sign up as a team (of 5 maximum) or individually. One smartphone/tablet needed per team.

Come and join us for an evening of laughter and banter. BYO drinks and snacks. Book in your team here - www.ebe.org.uk/speedquiznight (£5 per team)

Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing Group. Starting Tuesday 19 September at 6pm, including an evening meal.

These are safe and supportive spaces for people from any background to attend. We journey together for 6 weeks to explore how to maintain mental and emotional wellbeing in the midst of our often messy lives. Subjects include anxiety, depression, shame, anger, disappointment and loss. Full details and sign up - www.ebe.org.uk/wellbeinggroup

Is your bicycle covered by your home insurance?

Learn more about bicycle cover on our home insurance policy and ways you can protect yours from theft both at home and away.

[Protecting bicycles](#)



Free online training courses to help business protect against cyber threats and online fraud. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cyber-security-training-for-business>

Come and Sing Messiah. Saturday 16th September. Join Bristol Choral Society and a choir of 150 people to sing Handel's classic choral work in an afternoon <https://www.bristolchoral.co.uk/Come-and-Sing-Messiah>

How we make church accessible for all, whether online or onsite is one aspect we will be learning more about in our **Exploring Digital online conference** on Saturday 30 September. Rev Katie Tupling is one of our keynote speakers and she will be reflecting on the themes of presence, accessibility, inclusion and belonging. It's not too late to sign up for the day. Details and booking here methodist.org.uk/ExploringDigital/

Horfield and Bishopston. Dates for your diary

Circuit Meeting. Thursday 14 September, 7.30 p.m. at St. Chad's, Rodway Road, Patchway BS34 5ED.

Fish and Chip supper. 29 September.

Brass Band concert. 6 October.

Eco Art Exhibition. 21 October.

Christmas Fayre. 18 November.

Christmas Journey. 4 December (more information to follow after this Sunday's service)

Church Anniversary service (with Jonathan Pye). 21 January 2024.

Reflection on the Lectionary Sunday 27th August (Ordinary 21)

Psalms 124; Exodus 1 : 8 - 2 : 10; Romans 12 : 1 - 8; Matthew 16 : 13 - 20

The reflection for this week is by Local Preacher, David Bainbridge (Horfield).

Jesus asks his disciples, "who do people say the son of man is?" The response was, "some people think you are John the Baptist, some think you are Elijah, others think you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets." If people believed him to be a prophet, then at least they had understood something important about him. He would certainly challenge them as a prophet but also lead them in new and unexpected ways. But then came the all-important question, "who do you say that I am?" It's not surprising that Peter was the one to answer, and although he often got it wrong this time, he was right. "You are the Christ son of the living God." It was the right answer, but it had the wrong idea behind it as his later behaviour would show. He still expected Jesus to behave in a certain way, more in keeping with the expectations most Jews had for their Messiah. More the conquering hero than the man who would suffer and die for his people. Yet Peter's affirmation demanded commitment and brought responsibility. He was given the keys of the Kingdom. These keys were a powerful symbol of authority and responsibility. The keys to bind and loose were part of Jewish culture and a key was presented to those who had completed their courses of study in law.

In our Methodist tradition, we would see that authority vested in all who claim to be disciples of Jesus. With it comes the responsibility to help people turn away from behaviour that is destructive yet equally important to ensure that we affirm and encourage that which is good.

I recall in my youth listening to some preachers who were strong on judgment but short on grace, which left me wondering whether Peter would ever let me through those gates. Coming from a farming background we would only do what was deemed to be essential work on a Sunday - feeding animals. Harvesting hay was not permissible despite the vagaries of weather on the northern Pennines. It didn't matter if you risked a ruined crop because you failed to take advantage of a fine Sunday during a wet summer. I've seen this happen with the crop, exposed to the weather ruined and animals having to be fed with hay that was dusty and most unpalatable with no protein value at all. The poor cattle had to suffer, and, in my view, it was an example of too much binding.

Jesus, of course, didn't hesitate to challenge behaviour that violated God's law, but it was done in a spirit of love. He didn't wait for people to repent before showing that he really cared for them. He didn't wait for them to change their behaviour before having dinner with them or touching them and healing them. and by his example, he was showing his disciples how to use the keys that were entrusted to them, that their real purpose was not to punish or exact revenge but to open the door to the kingdom of God. We are called to speak out on issues that we feel are against God's will and challenge behaviour that is harmful but if we hold to the example of Jesus then we do it in love. Our prime motivation being to liberate, to use the keys we have been given to open the door to the Kingdom of God and the last word should always be that of Jesus on the cross, one of forgiveness.

Prayer. *Heavenly Father, we seek your wisdom, guidance, courage and strength to speak out in love against all that is against your will and to affirm and encourage all that accords with the values of your Kingdom.*

Our thanks to David for this reflection.