

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

**Welcome to this week's letter**

As we approach Palm Sunday and Holy Week there is a continued sadness in the air because we cannot gather for the various times of worship and devotion that are usual during the coming days. There will be prayers sent by post for the rest of Holy Week and we include those for Monday alongside the service sheet for Palm Sunday with this letter. We continue to pray for all those deeply affected by the ongoing health crisis.

As human beings, especially in the so-called developed world, we want to know things. We are cultures built on knowledge and the ability to know what is coming next in our lives. In many countries the medical model of health and care has taken over to such an extent that many have nowhere to turn when it fails them. In these days of invisible virus we find ourselves hoping that the government, or more especially, health services will find a way of saving us, when in fact what the health service offers is not always healing but human care in the midst of pain and death. This is true nature of humanity, shown in the selfless care and sometimes sacrifice of those who attend to our medical needs. As people of faith we have our faith to hold onto when all else seems to fail. We do not reject medical service, that would be a foolish waste of one of God's gifts, but we do offer something other. Jesus had recourse to healing many times in the gospels and he healed many as called upon by the cries of those who loved those who were sick and dying. However, Jesus could not heal everyone, many people were still sick and many died, despite his presence on earth. Jesus did not come to *stop* us dying, but to *save* us from the power death holds over us. He is the rock to which we cling as we face tragedy and death. If Holy Week tells us nothing else, it tells us that.

A reminder that if you are in pastoral need of any kind please contact your own Minister direct by email or phone. We may also be able to arrange practical help with shopping and so on. Our details are below. **If in any doubt, please contact Rev. Peter Powers and he will link you up with help locally to you.**

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There are plenty of opportunities to join in worship if you have the internet. We are encouraging everyone to link up with the live stream worship being offered by the Birmingham District via FaceBook on Sunday mornings at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Birminghammethodistdistrict/>

In addition, we will be offering a service online on the Circuit's own FaceBook page and on YouTube. The links are below:

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=142865293925553&id=110929903785759](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=142865293925553&id=110929903785759)

A full text of this service is also available at this link and is being sent by post to all those people who do not use the Internet so they can join in too. These two worship opportunities will be available and sent to you every Sunday.

We will be offering worship in a similar way each Sunday, and every day during Holy Week, as well as special services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of us.

Keep safe. Keep caring. Keep praying.

With every blessing to you and yours.

*The Ministers and Stewards of the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit of Churches*