



29th November 2020

The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

Today, 29th November, is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is the first season of the church liturgical year in Western Christianity. The name is derived from a Latin word for "coming; arrival." The season is a time of preparation and expectation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming.

Every year Advent is the time when we should be looking forward to Christmas as a special time for welcoming Jesus into our lives, a time to make plans to meet up with family and friends, a time to find joy and peace when we meet in church to light our Advent candles, and sing our traditional hymns, and hear the story of Jesus's birth from the Prophets and the Gospel once again. But this year things are very different. The Coronavirus is still claiming lots of lives, bringing grief and sorrow to many families and making everything difficult for us all. Social distancing is keeping us apart from each other; our church services are but poor copies of real thing! We cannot sing any of our advent hymns and carols.

When will a vaccine be available for everyone so that some semblance of hope and normality will be brought back into our lives? But, however hard it may be, we must not let the virus win. We must stay together as best we can to welcome Jesus into our lives once again. We must in Advent not let the pandemic stop us loving and caring for each other as we wait quietly and patiently and journey to Bethlehem to find joy and hope in the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Advent generally, and today's Gospel reading in particular, calls us to 'active' waiting and watching. It has the sense of preparing space for when God arrives. Active waiting and watching is not sitting around. It is not even keeping a wary eye out, while otherwise carrying on as normal. It is preparing ourselves by creating space for God when he arrives. Advent reminds us that our prayer and meditation should be focused on making space for God, both around us – e.g. making time in our daily lives – but also within us.

The Advent journey is an opportunity to assess how our faith is measuring up. Mark 13.34 describes a man who leaves his slaves in charge when he goes on a journey. They are to be active and vigilant. No phone call or message will announce his return. In his absence things must work just as usual, so that when he returns all will be ready for him.

If Jesus called tomorrow, would you be ready for him?

Keep alert! Keep safe and well !

Rev. Jeongsook Kim

Reminder: Dial – a – Prayer, Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to news:

0808 281 2478

Sunday Worship and Daily Prayers

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 the 1st and 3rd Sunday mornings at: <https://www.facebook.com/Birminghammethodistdistrict/live>

See over for details of the **Circuit Service**

Circuit Service

The Circuit continues to provide a pre-recorded service each week, via YouTube, Facebook and our website – see below for details:

Change of YouTube account:

Please note, the Circuit now has its own YouTube account, which means that the URL has changed.

Please access the YouTube video by clicking the following link or typing it into your browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxiE93MqkTWQomY>

If you regularly watch the Circuit Service, do consider subscribing to the Channel.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SW.Methodist/>

Website: www.methodist-swc.org.uk

A full text of this service is available on the website, and is being sent by post to all those people who do not use the Internet so they can join in too. These worship opportunities will be available and sent to you every Sunday. We will be offering worship in a similar way each Sunday as the health crisis continues.

TV & radio opportunities for worship:

Radio 4, Sunday Worship, Sunday 8:10am,

Radio 4 Long Wave, Daily Service, 9.45am Mon-Fri,

Radio 3, Choral Evensong, Sunday 3pm.

BBC 1, Sunday Worship, Sunday 10.45am,

BBC 1, Songs of Praise, Sunday 1:15pm

(The times of the TV services can alter, please check the times)

Daily prayers at 10am are led by members of the circuit via zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/328494818>

All members of the Circuit are invited to join, **you do not need a zoom account to join**. You can also join by **telephone**. Please contact Michael Sharman on 07412 401988 if you'd like help getting in.

Weekly Prayers: - during this current lockdown, you are invited to join in with weekly zoom prayers, on Wednesdays at 11 am. Call 07716 20 22 09 for joining details.

Pastoral Support

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 Dr Iain Ballard and he will link you up with help locally to you.

Rev Dr Iain Ballard	07368 875790	iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk
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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