



13th June 2021

The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

Have you ever noticed how often agriculture features in the teachings of Jesus? Again and again, he relates his own ministry and the Kingdom of God to seeds, vines, sheep, farmworkers and fields. We suspect that Jesus wasn't himself a farmer so he is not speaking from his own experience, but in a language most of his listeners would understand and appreciate.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed is one of the lectionary readings set for today. Perhaps it's a sign of Jesus' lack of expertise that he wrongly refers to the mustard seed as the smallest and the mustard plant as the largest. His message about the Kingdom of God is no less profound:

- that small is beautiful - a reminder that the consistent message of Scripture is that God chooses the small, the weak and the insignificant to shame our notions of power and success.
- that the aim is service - the largeness of the mustard plant is only relevant inasmuch as it provides shelter for others.
- that growth is beyond our control - whatever the skill of the farmer, the real work goes on whilst he sleeps.

The church emerging from lockdown is an institution struggling to redefine its purpose and mission. I suspect there will be a rush to return to busyness and activity, not because we have discerned that it is useful, but rather it will give us the comfortable feelings of familiarity. Yet, one of the most important lessons of the last year, it seems to me, is that feeling of powerlessness we have all felt in relation to an enemy we cannot even see. For it is powerlessness that God seeks in us as the fertile ground of vocation.

St Oscar Romero put it like this:

“The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

We plant a seed that will one day grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.

This enables us to do something and to do it very well.”

Rev Sam McBratney

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, eg Methodist Central Hall (London) streams worship each Sunday at 11:00 am (<https://mchw.live/>)

Circuit Service

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

[tinyurl.com/SWCplaylist](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvxxjE93MqkTWQomY) or if this doesn't work, try the long version:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvxxjE93MqkTWQomY>

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.

Family Worship Time

Rev Jemima, Michael Sharman & Graeme Russell have created **Family Worship Time** video which is available from 9:15 am on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month through our YouTube Channel – and can be accessed here: [tinyurl.com/SWC-FWT](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLzyDSCOYMtQsCToUfQ3sforT5J7geU2-D) again if this doesn't work, try the longer version: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQsCToUfQ3sforT5J7geU2-D>

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 zoom meetings are now protected by password – please contact Michael Sharman (see below) for the password.

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.

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 (Day off – Friday)	07368 875790	iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk
Rev. Barbara Greenwood (Day off – Friday)	01926 740846	barbara.greenwood@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Jeongsook Kim (Day off – Tuesday)	01926 426084	revjeongsook@gmail.com ,
Rev. Audrey Simpson (Day off – Friday)	01789 267971	revaes@gmail.com ,
Rev. Jemima Strain (Part-time)	07969 345389	jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Sam McBratney (Part-time)	07706 586860	s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Richard Wilde (Part-time)	07971 218356	revrichardwilde@gmail.com ,
Chris Flood (Part-time)	07772 292033	chrisflood_erniescheu@hotmail.com ,

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