

6th April 2020

Holy Week

Holy Week has become more and more part of our Christian journey over the years. We have embraced Bible study groups during Lent and Holy Week is the culmination of our reflective study and times of prayer.

This year Lent has ended with us being confined to our homes largely. We have not been able to gather in our groups or at our church services. This is set to continue for some while yet.

We have also become more and more aware of the gifts of new technology and been reminded of 'old' technology too. We continue to send many emails and communications by social media, an antidote to social distancing. We have also sent by the old post worship sheets and prayers to around 250 of our folk that do not use the Internet. We will continue to post weekly and this letter comes with something for each day of Holy Week, including special longer services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. All of these services will also be available on social media and You Tube. Combining the old and the new is part of the challenge set before the church, it always has been. Recently Jemima and I were on a training course held in the church of St. Mary de Crypt in Gloucester that was a favourite preaching place of Rev. George Whitefield who gave his first sermon there in 1736. Whitefield was a companion and contemporary of the Wesley brothers and there were all part of Charles Wesley's Holy Club whilst they were in Oxford. They had to embrace new ways of doing things as, being denied access to preach in most Anglican Churches, they took to the open air to share the gospel message with people. It was wonderful to be able to stand in the pulpit where he had stood. We too are being asked to embrace what it means to be a 'church without walls' and I have no doubt that the lessons we learn from the coming weeks and months will not leave us, but rather lead us on to new ways of worship, learning and caring, service and mission in the years to come.

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.**

Rev. Barbara Greenwood 01926740846 barbara.greenwood@methodist.org.uk

Rev. Audrey Simpson 01789267971 revaes@gmail.com

Rev. Jeongsook Kim 07741461060 revjeongsook@gmail.com

Chris Flood 07772 292033 chrisflood_erniescheu@hotmail.com

Rev. Jemima Strain 07969345389 jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk

Rev. Sam McBratney 07706586860 s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk

Rev. Richard Wilde 07971218356 revrichardwilde@gmail.com

Rev. Peter Powers 07941328155 revpeter.mwc@gmail.com

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 services 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

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 as the health crisis continues.

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