



22nd November 2020

The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

When I read the gospel for this Sunday, **Matthew 25:31-46**, I am reminded of the old story of a monastery which had fallen on hard times. Numbers were down, with only one or two a year seeking to join the order and visitors no longer came there to be nourished by prayer. The monks grew tetchy with each other. No one appreciated Brother Joseph's cooking and those who had come in from working on the farm tramped their mud all over the floors that Brother Anselm had spent hours cleaning; the zeal had gone from their worship. Everyone went to sleep with a heavy heart.

The worried Abbot told his brothers he was going to seek the advice of a wise man who lived nearby. The wise man told the Abbot that when the community was next gathered for prayer he should simply say five words and then sit down.

The next day at prayers the Abbot stood up, the brothers waited to hear what the wise man had told him. The Abbot looked each of his brothers in the eye and simply said 'The Messiah is among us.'

In the days that followed, the monks pondered this riddle, and wondered what it could mean. The messiah is among US? Who could it be?

Almost imperceptibly at first things began to change. The odd thankyou was returned to Br. Joseph who in turn started to use some tasty new ingredients to spice up his cooking. The brothers started to use the boot scraper by the door and take off their boots before going into the main building, and in turn Br. Anselm began to cut fresh flowers from the garden and place them in the hall way to greet them as came in from the farm. Gradually laughter could be heard as the brothers took their exercise. Worship seemed to have more life about it. Over time their compassion for each other grew. No longer was their service and appreciation of each other a chore to be done in case the person was the Messiah. Rather it became a pleasure to help each other.

The Abbot went to see the wise man again and said 'You were right – the Messiah is indeed among us, when you look carefully you can see the Lord's image in each and every one of us.'

Every blessing

Audrey Simpson

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>

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.

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