



13th December 2020

The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

When was the last time you felt joyful? I realised that this question for me wasn't as hard as I thought it might be. Mine was today. I still have half-wiped mascara down my face as I'm writing this as the evidence that I happy-cried. One of my favourite people; a good neighbour; friend; our eldest two are in the same bubble at school and she works at the nursery my smallest human attends has given birth to the most gorgeous and munchiest of babies.

Pre-covid we've helped each other through the emergency childcare situations, had often very muddy playdates and many a heart to heart over a cuppa tea. Today I walked around the corner and dropped off some flowers. I rang the door bell and took 4 steps back with a facemask on... 'would you like to see the baby?'...

She held him in her arms at the door as I stood at a safe distance. With no idea of the strange mess of a world that he'd been born into, honestly, this tiny bundle of Joy was the most beautiful perfect human I've seen since having my own.

Oh, Tidings of Comfort and Joy.

We enter into the third week of Advent we usually celebrate Joy. As I'm writing this, I'm mindful that this year the Church of England has entitled its Advent resources 'Comfort and Joy'. I rather like this. It holds together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year. With an acknowledgement that for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, and for many of us who are still not able to gather with loved ones, we need to know God's gentle comfort.

We meet both comfort and joy in the Christ-child.

Christmas will feel different this year. We'll have eyes filled with tears and hearts filled with love. Whether there will be arms around us, or chats around screens and giggles on phones. We'll still set up trees, hang lights, write cards and open advent calendars. We'll say our prayers and we'll remember the greatest story of all. So, may you find the light which shone from the stable all those years ago and the Christ-child promising Comfort and Joy for everyone, this special Christmas time. Amen.

Rev Jemima Strain

Drive-in Carol Service:

Since we can't sing indoors, we have organized a drive-in carol service at Stoneleigh. Places are limited so we shall hold it on two days: Saturday 19th December and Sunday 20th December – both days the start time will be 2 pm. – See enclosed flyer.

Booking is ****essential**** - phone 01926 314077

or book via EventBrite: <https://tinyurl.com/SWC-Carols>

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:

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:

tinyurl.com/SWCplaylist

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.

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

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
Rev. Barbara Greenwood	01926 740846	barbara.greenwood@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Jeongsook Kim	01926 426084	revjeongsook@gmail.com ,
Rev. Audrey Simpson	01789 267971	revaes@gmail.com ,
Rev. Jemima Strain	07969 345389	jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Sam McBratney	07706 586860	s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk ,
Rev. Richard Wilde	07971 218356	revrichardwilde@gmail.com ,
Chris Flood	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