



7<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

How hard do you find it to talk about God? Thought so! I don't mean in a formal sense, in church or in the Bible, where it's expected. We're generally comfortable following the actions of God in the Old Testament, talking to and through the prophets, and in the New Testament in the person of Jesus, teaching, healing, challenging, comforting. But when it comes to talking of our own experience of God we dry up. Perhaps this is because we live in a secular society. American presidents of all persuasions seem happy to talk about praying, but a British politician dare not be caught doing so for fear of being labelled weird. Or is it a reticence to claim an action of God in our lives when there is no way to prove it? Who would want to risk looking silly? Or does it just sound too grandiose to say God has been active in my life today? Too much like blowing your own trumpet.

And yet when someone is bold enough to do it, just watch how powerful it is. You may know Trey Hall, Director of Evangelism for the Methodist Church, and formerly our Birmingham District Mission Enabler. On 19<sup>th</sup> Feb he spoke on Radio 2 about his own experience as a researcher at an AA meeting, and an unexpected challenge from one of the group, who seemed to know what Trey was unable to admit to himself. (It's well worth listening to – click on the link below, starting at 1hr 43, available until March 18th.) What struck me as much as his story was the effect on the presenter Jayne Middlemiss, who was in tears by the end.

Not all of us have such a dramatic story to tell. For many, including myself, personal experience of God feels more like little and often than big and impressive. I tend to have a better sense of God's presence in my life in hindsight. How frustrating is that! At the end of each day it's a good habit to review the day's events and reflect on when you've sensed His presence. If the answer is I'm not sure, so be it, honesty with yourself is essential. But when the answer is positive treasure it, commit it to memory and imagine yourself telling someone else about it.

At Kenilworth Methodist Church's new Grounds for Hope, each day during the November lockdown we used a chalkboard to display a different message of encouragement. 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020 was World Road Traffic Accident Day and that day my wife wrote a message around that theme. Walking back home afterwards she met a friend she hadn't spoken to in a while, with his partner. As they got talking Fi told them what she had been doing and the partner seemed moved. When Fi asked her what was the matter she explained her father had died in a RTA twenty years ago. She said she now wanted to go and see the message straight away. In that moment God had been present, not in an earthquake, wind or fire, but in a still small voice. How often does this happen yet we hesitate to acknowledge it, even to ourselves, let alone to others?

Gracious Father, grant us the wisdom to see you at work in our lives, and the courage to share it with others. Amen

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000sb0c?fbclid=IwAR1ltr\\_uUhYb2Hcm3hu9yDvB\\_sOCQG2tMF9352-vNLbli9n0Gyq\\_efq152s](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000sb0c?fbclid=IwAR1ltr_uUhYb2Hcm3hu9yDvB_sOCQG2tMF9352-vNLbli9n0Gyq_efq152s)

*Trevor Pethick, Circuit Steward*

**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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:

[tinyurl.com/SWCplaylist](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxjE93MqkTWQomY) or if this doesn't work, try the long version:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxjE93MqkTWQomY>

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

Rev Jemima, Michael Sharman & Graeme Russell have created **Family Worship Time** video which is available from 9:15 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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/watch?v=PLzyDSCOYMtQsCToUfQ3sforT5J7geU2-D>

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

Website: [www.methodist-swc.org.uk](http://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	<a href="mailto:iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk">iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk</a>
Rev. Barbara Greenwood	01926 740846	<a href="mailto:barbara.greenwood@methodist.org.uk">barbara.greenwood@methodist.org.uk</a> ,
Rev. Jeongsook Kim	01926 426084	<a href="mailto:revjeongsook@gmail.com">revjeongsook@gmail.com</a> ,
Rev. Audrey Simpson	01789 267971	<a href="mailto:revaes@gmail.com">revaes@gmail.com</a> ,
Rev. Jemima Strain	07969 345389	<a href="mailto:jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk">jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk</a> ,
Rev. Sam McBratney	07706 586860	<a href="mailto:s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk">s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk</a> ,
Rev. Richard Wilde	07971 218356	<a href="mailto:revrichardwilde@gmail.com">revrichardwilde@gmail.com</a> ,
Chris Flood	07772 292033	<a href="mailto:chrisflood_erniescheu@hotmail.com">chrisflood_erniescheu@hotmail.com</a> ,

**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*