

3rd October 2021


The **Methodist Church**

South Warwickshire Circuit

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

Hello everyone, and my warmest greetings to you all.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the UN body responsible for assessing the science related to climate change. As I write, I have been reading the response of António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the UN, to the IPCC's latest report. Both make grim reading. He states:

“Today’s IPCC Working Group 1 Report is a code red for humanity. The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk. Global heating is affecting every region on Earth, with many of the changes becoming irreversible...

We are at imminent risk of hitting 1.5 degrees [global temperature rise] in the near term. The only way to prevent exceeding this threshold is by urgently stepping up our efforts, and pursuing the most ambitious path... Every fraction of a degree counts. Greenhouse gas concentrations are at record levels. Extreme weather and climate disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity. That is why this year’s United Nations climate conference in Glasgow is so important”.

It is clear that whatever steps have already been taken to lower global temperature rises are nowhere near enough. We must reconsider what we are doing at every level, in our personal lives, our work lives and in our church lives. Everything needs a radical re-think, locally, nationally, and globally, because the world simply cannot carry on like this. Creation is groaning, and this extraordinary world that God created and pronounced good, is desperately in need of re-creation.

Thinking on this, the words of 1 Timothy 6: 6-10 feel very significant.

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains’.

The world stands at a crucial junction. Do we carry on as we have been doing, or are we able to journey in a new direction, that has at its heart both justice for creation and justice for the poor? Are we able to seek ‘godliness combined with contentment’? Consumerism, our greed for material comforts, for more and better *stuff*, has driven this planet to a place of great ecological danger. This is also a place of great global inequality, as the richest peoples of the world get richer and the poorest struggle harder and harder to survive. St Augustine wrote with such wisdom ‘*You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you*’. *Stuff* won’t satisfy us, but our holy and eternal God can.

Against this weighty backdrop, Methodism is asking itself similar questions. Our own church climate has changed. In a world where we there is now Covid-19, as we move forward from Conference decisions regarding marriage and relationships, as we are painfully aware of numerical decline, can we adapt to survive? Can we journey in a new direction, that places our **‘for all’** commitment above everything else?

Methodism faces some big questions at the current time. But there is also a critical need to lift our heads up and out of our own debates, and respond to these huge environmental challenges.

So, may I encourage us all to do what we can, in whatever ways we can. Let’s take small steps to become more ecologically aware, more eco-friendly, more pro-active, and encourage others to do the same. Let’s

commit to pray for world leaders, and for COP 26. Let's pray for our fragile earth, and for how Methodism is engaging with eco-justice. And let us thank God, with every fibre of our being, that we have hope, a real and tangible hope given to us through Jesus Christ.

May God bless us as we journey on.

Rev Sally Jones

You can read more about the IPCC report here: <https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

You can read more of António Guterres' response here: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/node/259178>

Reminder: Dial – a – Prayer, Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to news: 0808 281 2478

Circuit Service

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

Please access the YouTube video by clicking the following link or typing it into your browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxjE93MqkTWQomY>

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

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 for the password (07412 401988).

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 <i>(Day off – Friday)</i>	07368 875790	iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk
Rev Sally Jones <i>(Day off – Monday; Study day – Friday)</i>	01926 740846	sally.jones@methodist.org.uk
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Rev. Audrey Simpson <i>(Day off – Friday)</i>	01789 267971	revaes@gmail.com ,
Rev. Jemima Strain <i>(Part-time)</i>	<i>Rev Jemima is on Sabbatical</i>	
Rev. Richard Wilde <i>(Part-time)</i>	07971 218356	revrichardwilde@gmail.com ,
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