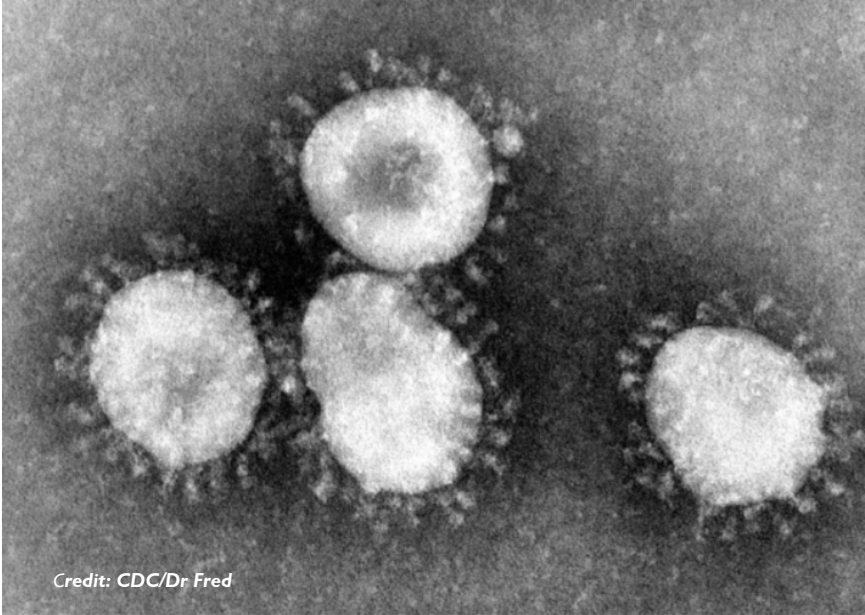




# KINGSDOWN MESSENGER



*April 2020 - May 2020*

## SERVICES FOR APRIL and MAY 2020

### April

Suspended until further notice. See pp 3-5



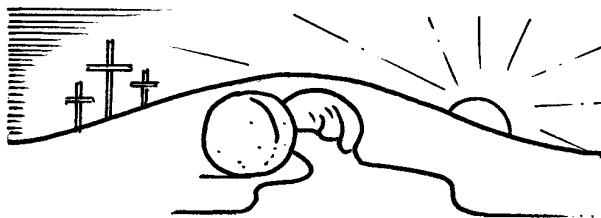
### May

Suspended until further notice. See pp 3-5

For the first time in The Messenger's history we have had to print such a notice. The Kingsdown and Circuit community have already responded to the situation we are faced with and there are now Video links, Website pages with Liturgies for use at Home and other actions to keep the Church family spiritually alive and together.

Hopefully The Messenger will help to keep your spirits up and be of interest whilst you are self isolated or maintaining a social distance. As you may have a little more time to read we have included some more general items that we hope are of interest.

We will try to get a printed copy of The Messenger delivered to those we know do not have e-mail or internet facilities. If you know of anyone Church family or not - who might like a printed or electronic copy please let us know. Our contact details are at the bottom of this page. We would welcome any articles, prayers, poems or pictures that you would like to share at this difficult time. We will do our best to maintain the spirit of Kingsdown and contact with everyone if possible.



**The KINGSDOWN MESSENGER**  
Copy deadline for the June-July issue is Friday 22 May 2020

Editors - Pam and Alan Smith  
E-mail: [magazine@kingsdownmethodist.org.uk](mailto:magazine@kingsdownmethodist.org.uk)



Dear All

We have just looked at the story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan Woman at a well in Samaria, a place not welcoming to Jews of Jesus' time.



In the middle of an area of conflict there is a well where the water needed for life can be drawn.

In the middle of an area of conflict there is a man – Jesus - from whom the living water needed for eternal life can be received.

Our church readings in this period of Lent, are still focused on the theme of “choosing life”. They emphasize our spiritual choice to turn away from all that denies God, and drains life away, and towards all that is God - his love, his life, his hope.

The story of “The Samaritan Woman at the well” is about the power of confession. The woman pretends that she has not understood what Jesus' says when he tells her that he can give water that “bubbles up to eternal life”. She pokes fun at his words – telling him that she wants this water because then she won't have to come to the well each day and fill up her bucket.

Yet she knows of the expected Messiah, and about the worship rules of both Judaism and of the Samaritans. Jesus voices the fact that she has no husband – since she has had 5 and is not married to the man she is involved with now. This suggests she is “in the wrong place” in her behaviour to worship God. She responds to this implicit idea by telling Jesus that he is in the wrong place too. Jews worship in Jerusalem, and Samaritans in Samaria, and he is in Samaria. Jesus' response incidentally amounts to saying that there is no wrong place in which to worship God.

Yet, at this earlier point in our story, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman of the living water, and she deflects his question. She cannot receive the water of eternal life because she is blocked from within. Jesus looks at her, sees what is drawing the life from her, causing her to turn from him.

I don't know if the situation she found herself in – five previous husbands, and now living with a man who is not her husband was sin but I do know

that sin does do this – it draws the life from us, makes us ashamed before God, and unable to receive the gift of life from Him.

It could have been that the Samaritan woman had been very unlucky and had seen five husbands die. A woman at this time would have had no means of personal support. It was part of Jewish Law that a widowed woman should be “taken on” by a near relative in order that she should not be destitute. This could have been the sad fate of the Samaritan woman.

But we do know that she was not married to her current partner, and that this would have been seen as a sin in her time – as a disordered way of living. We also get the sense of her rejection by society – she goes to the well to draw water at a time when she knows there will not be people around – at the hottest part of the day. Kenneth Grayston, in the Epworth Commentary on “The Gospel according to St. John”, asserts that she is displaying “Socio-sexual dependence on ... or manipulation of men”. This does sound to me a bit like blaming the woman for the sin of a society which put her, and all women, into such a dependent position.

Our interpretation of “Sin” doesn’t matter here though. Either way, the Samaritan Woman is in a damaged and dependent relationship dragging her down. It is certainly Sin that has put her in this position, it is just a question of whose sin it is. Certainly the attitude of society towards her would have given her , a feeling of living in sin – as sense of shame and unworthiness.

Yet here is Jesus speaking with her, valuing her, loving her – regardless of what others think. Jesus brings the issue to the forefront – “go fetch your husband” .... “I don’t have a husband” ... “It is true that you don’t have a husband. You have had five, and you are not married to the one you are with now”.

He names it. She accepts it. With his help the confession is made. Everything is changed, and the woman is able to move into life knowing she was fully known ... and loved ... and accepted

So OK let’s be real.

We probably feel like we are in a conflict zone too. We are only too aware of an invisible enemy – a virus – which seems to be at war with us. We will be reacting to this in different ways. How are you reacting to it? I am

anxious, angry, afraid. Your feelings might be totally different to that. We too can come to Jesus and be honest before him – we can name the issue so that it does not block us from being able to receive his life. Just be in his presence here and now and Know that he is with you.

Then we have that same choice. We can do what is life giving and near to God or we can give into anxiety and despair – spending all of our time watching News broadcasts which distress us and make us more anxious.

Jesus is the Saviour of the world. Here and now in the middle of it all. In the middle of us all.

Firstly, we must look after ourselves and others. We really can do this by putting a little more physical distance between ourselves and others, and by frequently Washing hands. We can do it by not feeling we HAVE to come to church if we are in one of the vulnerable groups and are anxious, or indeed if the Government advice becomes to stay away. We are all very duty bound, but at this time we need to remember that this is the case even if we are the stewards, or the organist or the tea- makers! We can do this by definitely not coming – whoever we are – if we are sick with a cough or a fever – however mild. Email me, phone me, message me, just to keep me in the loop and let me know how you and your loved ones are.

Then we have named it and owned it. But we then can choose to continue our journey with Jesus We can choose life! What can we do to bring life to ourselves and others?

If you are at home, as a Circuit we will look for ways to help you to worship – making a special liturgy for you to use. Your prayers for church friends, for those who use our premises, for the world will be invaluable. We also urge you to phone one another often – to keep those community links going as best you can. This is really important!

If you are fit and out, then please engage in all of the above. Let me know if you are willing to be contacted to shop for others in an emergency if they are housebound, and have no other support, and please don't forget the foodbank. (See p12 for detail)

People are so busy trying to buy as much toilet roll as they can, just for themselves, that they are forgetting those who cannot "buy"

Things are likely to change frequently over the coming weeks .... It will be important for us all to be in contact. If I don't have it ... i.e. if you don't already receive emails from me from time to time, please let me have your email address. Please also let me have landline and mobile numbers and let me know if I can share them with our superintendent minister Rachel. We intend to set up "Whats app" groups and email groups for contact.



Pray for one another.  
Pray for others.  
Pray for the world.  
Pray for me.

With love and my prayers

*Sue*

## PS

As a Methodist circuit we are asking if you can commit to praying every day at either 8 am or 8 pm. If you cannot manage this then another time of day will be fine.

Liturgies for morning and evening prayer are on the following pages to help you. Use them if they do, if you have something you like better use that.

The liturgies refer to "we" rather than I – I think this is important – to remember that we are attached, even though dispersed.

I suggest using one of the Gospels as your text for each day. If you have not done this before start with Mark's Gospel. If you have done it many times before I suggest you try John's Gospel instead.

Just read a little every day and ask God what he wants you to learn from it and pray with today.

With love and my prayers

*Sue*

PPS You can see me reading Luke 1:26-38 in a YouTube video  
<https://youtu.be/paTx7cxZMis>

# *Morning Prayer*

## Opening responses:

*From the rising of the sun, till is setting in the west*

*God's Holy name be praised*

*On the lips of children, by the babies at the breast*

*God's Holy name be praised*

*In the visions of the old, and the dreaming of the young*

*God's Holy name be praised*

*In the banquet of heaven, and the forgotten corners of our hearts*

*God's Holy name be praised*

*Let all that has life and breath, praise the Lord*

*Amen. We praise the Lord*

## *Song for the day ahead*

*Today I awake and God is before me*

*At night, as I dreamt He summoned the day*

*For God never sleeps but patterns the morning*

*With slither of gold or glory in grey*

*Today I affirm the Spirit within me*

*At worship and work, in struggle and rest*

*The Spirit inspires all life which is changing*

*From fear to faith, from broken to blest*

*Today I enjoy the Trinity round me,*

*Above and beneath before and behind*

*The Maker, the Son, the Spirit together-*

*They called me to life and call me their friend* (139 Singing the faith)

## The Word of God

*Read a portion of the Gospel you have chosen to read at this time*

*Reflect on what God might want you to draw from it today.*

Prayers *O God our creator your kindness has brought the gift of a new morning, help us to leave yesterday and not worry about tomorrow but accept the uniqueness of today.*

## *Silence*

*By your love celebrated in your word, seen in your Son., brought near by your Spirit, take from us what we need to carry no longer, so that we may be free again to serve you.*

*Jesus, Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us*

*Jesus, Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us*

*I believe that God forgives and sets us free*

*We believe that God forgives and sets us free, and at the days beginning we commit ourselves to follow where Christ calls and to love one another.*

## *Collect*

*Lord in these times, when we fear we are losing hope or feel our efforts are futile, let us see in our hearts and minds the image of your resurrection and let it be a source of courage and strength.*

*At the beginning of this new day, we remember the lost and the lonely, the broken and breaking, the tried and the aching who long for the nourishment found at your feet.*

*Spend some time in silent prayer for the world, for others, and for yourself.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*Our Father who art in heaven*

*Hallowed be thy name*

*Thy Kingdom come*

*Thy will be done*

*On earth as it is in Heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread*

*And forgive us our trespasses*

*as we forgive those who trespass  
against us*

*Lead us not into temptation*

*But deliver us from evil*

*For thine is the Kingdom*

*The power and the Glory*

*Forever and Ever*

*Amen*

*The Blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon us, now and always. Amen*



## ***An Evening Liturgy (Iona)***

*When the lights are on and the house is full, and the laughter is easy, and all is well*

***Behold, I stand at the door and knock.***

*When the lights are low, and the house is still, and the talk is intense, and the air is full of wondering*

***Behold, I stand at the door and knock.***

*When the lights are off and the house is sad, and the voice is troubled and nothing seems right.*

***Behold, I stand at the door and knock.***

*And tonight, always tonight, as if there were no other people, no other houses, no other doors.*

***Behold, I stand at the door and knock.***

*Come Lord Jesus and be our guest. Stay with us for the day is ending. Bring to our houses your poverty.*

*For then we shall be rich*

*Bring to our houses your pain.*

*That in sharing it, we may also share your joy.*

*Bring to our houses your understanding of us.*

*That we may be freed to learn more of you.*

*Bring to our houses your Holy Spirit.*

*That they may be cradles of your love.*

*With friend, with stranger, with neighbour and the well-known ones. Be among us tonight.*

*For the doors of our houses we open, and the doors of our hearts we leave ajar.*

*The Word of God - Read a passage from the Gospel you have chosen to read at this time. Reflect on what God might be trying to draw you to within it.*

***Followed by The Lords Prayer and the Blessing***

# Family News

We do hope that at this anxious time you will all keep well, and try to stay in touch with relatives, friends and anyone known to you (perhaps living on their own) whose day might seem brightened by a friendly chat.

Sue Male in her letter on p3 asks if anyone wishes to join in a range of contact groups that are being set up to keep the Church family together.

Kathleen Loveridge has asked if anybody wishing to talk to her would please use her landline - 020 8560 2806 - as she is experiencing some difficulty with her mobile.



Our Circuit Superintendent Rev Rachel Bending suggests we pray for each other and our brothers and sisters around the world

As a circuit she suggests we all commit to pray for at least 5 minutes each day.

Here's a Prayer you could use:

*God of all hope we call on you today.*

*We pray for those who are living in fear:*

*Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of others' reactions to them.*

*May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.*

*We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty.*

*For those people who are worried about attending worship.*

*For those needing to make decisions in order to care for other*

*For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend.*

*Grant us your wisdom.*

*Holy God, we remember that you have promised that Nothing will separate us from your love - demonstrated to us in Jesus Christ.*

*Help us turn our eyes, hearts and minds to you.*

# Checklist: are you ready to stay at home?

- Food: do you have a way to get food delivered?
- Cleaning: are your cleaning supplies stocked up?
- Money: can you budget for any higher bills or expenses? Will you save money from lower transport costs that you could spend elsewhere?
- Work: can you work from home or not? If not, what are your rights to payment or benefits?
- Medication: do you have enough medication, or a way to get more?
- Health: can you reorganise any planned therapy or treatments?
- Commitments: can someone else help you care for any dependents, walk your dog, or take care of any other commitments?
- Connectivity: have you checked the contact details of the people you see regularly, like their phone numbers or email addresses?
- Routine: can you create a routine or timetable for yourself? And if you live with other people, should you create a household schedule?
- Do you need to agree how the household will run with everyone at home all day?
- Exercise: is there any physical activity you can do inside your home, such as going up and down the stairs, using bean tins as weights, or exercises you can do in your chair?
- Nature: have you thought how you could access nature? Can you get some seeds and planting equipment, houseplants or living herbs?
- Entertainment: have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?
- Relax: have you got materials so you can do something creative, such as paper and colouring pencils?

This list came from website of Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Other helpful links can be found on The Methodist Church web site.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/the-methodist-blog/coronavirus>

# CHRISTIAN AID NEWS



Last Monday I received two boxes containing the Kingsdown materials for Christian Aid Week 2020!

The only items which we shall be able to use are the envelopes for Church donations - the remainder will be recycled.

This year the Christian Aid Week focus was to have been on the life threatening drought in Kenya.

Ruby Warne

## THE CHRISTIAN AID BOX IN THE CHURCH FOYER

Please do continue to save stamps and specs, as well as mobile phones and Inkjets for THE BOX.

Ruby Warne



In the current situation Foodbanks are likely to be even more necessary to support those in difficulties. At present most of the church-based café distribution points for the **Ealing Foodbank** are continuing to operate with some necessary changes to usual procedures for hygiene reasons.

Stocks in the warehouse are now beginning to run low. Since it won't be possible to make donations of items at church, an alternative, very efficient way is to donate money on-line via the Ealing Foodbank's website.

<https://ealing.foodbank.org.uk>

which has a very clear red donate button.

**You can give without loving,  
but you can't love without giving.**

Kingsdown Methodist Church, Northfield Avenue, W13

# BOOK FAIR



**Books Cakes Gifts Plants**  
**Bric-a-Brac**

**Saturday May**

**CANCELLED**

10am to 12.30pm

Proceeds to:



# Boy's Brigade Champions

Saturday 7 March was one of the big days in this year's events calendar for 10th Ealing Boys' Brigade: the London District Band & Drill Competition, and this year it was held in Bexleyheath, a two-hour long journey on a busy and chilly Saturday afternoon.



Our older Boys had been practising since before Christmas for this day, and they hoped not only to match last year's success (one impressive trophy) but to exceed it. Several of our lads participated in the smaller events (Best Bugler, Best Drummer, etc), but it was the big team events on which we were really focused (Best Drill Squad, Best Overall Band, Best Open Band, Best Musically Accurate Band).



An hour or so after arrival, our Drill Squad was called to the competition hall and Drillmaster David Lane put the Boys through their paces, following a complex series of manoeuvres, all delivered with razor-sharp reflexes which certainly impressed the staff (but would it impress the judges?).

Another hour passed and our Marching Band assembled ready for its moment in the spotlight. As per last year's arrangement, we joined together with our brothers from 4th Ealing BB (St Paul's Ealing) for this event, and we dubbed ourselves The Mark Myhan Band, in honour of that Company's late Captain who passed away two years ago.

The Boys hit the floor as if they owned it and, following a ruthless uniform inspection, we were given the go ahead to play our routine, including the designated test piece that we'd been polishing up for the last few months. Oh, they were tremendously good and there was such a sense of confidence and finesse about these young men that belied their years. They left the hall to rapturous applause and returned soon after for the nail-biting awards ceremony.



To our shock and delight, we captured all four big team trophies listed above, and we also cheered on 4th Ealing as they were announced as Best Bugle Team in London for the second year running. The staff were jubilant and a little teary with emotion, knowing how hard these Boys had worked. For the front row of Drummers, this would be their final performance as BB members as they are now approaching their eighteenth birthdays and will soon be honourably discharged. But what a way to finish over a dozen years of dedicated service!

The staff are to be heartily congratulated for their encouragement of and belief in the Boys. Thank you to Matt Plews (percussion), Mark Tobias and Dan Plews (bugles), and Dave Powlson (bells). Thanks especially to Drillmaster and Bandmaster David Lane who oversaw the whole procedure from start to finish. It is moments like this that really make the job of a BB Officer worthwhile --



watching Boys grow into young men who will give their all for the team. Thank you to the Kingsdown family for their unfailing support.

**Tony Plews**  
Captain

# A time to turn to God in prayer and supplication

If there was ever a time to turn to God in prayer and supplication, this is it. So, we invite you to join in praying for:

Our Government and local authorities who bear the responsibility of confronting this challenge. They cannot afford to get their response wrong.

WHO and all health professionals who are working to safeguard our public health.

Industry leaders who must take huge decisions to confront this challenge to our economy.

The leaders of our local community, who provide care and guidance for those they lead.

Finally, let us pray for ourselves and our loved ones, for courage and endurance at this most demanding of times.

Christianity is based on hope in a God that does not fail us. We are the Easter People, and know that even in the worst circumstances, God is with us and will hear our prayers. He will answer us.

As Easter approaches, this is a time to let the light of Christ shine His healing rays throughout the world, and throughout our community.

May the Lord, our Chief Shepherd and our Refuge, grant mercy and grace upon the nations of the world in this time of trouble and distress.

The following verses remind us that we are right to trust in God:

‘Those who live in the shelter of the Most High  
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.  
This I declare about the Lord:  
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;  
He is my God, and I trust Him.  
For He will rescue you from every trap  
and protect you from deadly disease.  
He will cover you with His feathers.  
He will shelter you with His wings.  
His faithful promises are  
your armour and protection.’

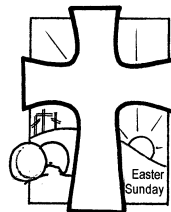
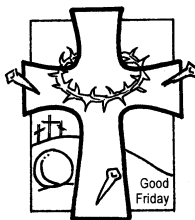
*Psalm 91:1-4, (NLT)*



For I am the Lord your God  
who takes hold of your right hand  
and says to you, Do not fear;  
I will help you.

Isaiah 41:13 (NIV)

from Parish Pump



## Why didn't you save me?

He was a Christian and he loved swimming in the sea. One day, a passing boat saw him swimming in a rough sea a long way from shore and someone shouted, "Do you need help?" The swimmer replied, "No, I am sure God will save me." Later, a fishing boat passed near and the fisherman called out, "It's pretty rough out here, can I help you get back to shore?" The man replied, "It's OK thanks, I know God will save me." The story goes that the man drowned and went to heaven. He asked God, "Why didn't you save me?" And God replied, "Didn't you see the two boats?"

from ACE Forum

## A Morning Prayer



So far today God, I have done alright. I haven't gossiped, I haven't lost my temper and I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. And I haven't told anyone to mind their own business and stay out of mine. I'm really glad about all that. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed and from then on I'm probably going to need a lot of help.

from ACE Forum

# The Good Old Days

Were they really the good old days?  
We met and we married a long time ago,  
We worked for long hours and wages were low.  
No telly, no bath, oh yes, it was hard  
And just one cold water tap way up the yard.

No holidays abroad, no carpets on floors,  
But we'd fuel on the fire and we never locked doors!  
Our children arrived - no pill in those days,  
And we brought them all up without welfare aids.

No valium, no drugs and no LSD,  
We cured our pains with a good cup of tea.  
If any were sick, they were treated at once,  
Not 'fill in this form and come back in six months.'

No vandals, no burglars – there was nothing to rob,  
In fact we were rich with a couple of bob!  
People were happy in those far off days,  
Kinder and caring in so many ways.

Milkmen and postmen would whistle and sing,  
And a night at the flicks was a very big thing.  
We all had our share of trouble and strife  
But we just had to face it and get on with life.

And now as we look back through so many years,  
We don't dwell on bad times, the troubles and tears,  
We remember the blessings of family accord  
And give thanks to God our Father and Lord.

from ACE Forum

**The fact there is a highway to Hell and only a  
stairway to heaven says a lot about anticipated  
traffic numbers**

## *The Mirror*

### *A Good Friday poem*

*Three 't's on the scrubby hill, neatly crossed the Roman way,  
The naked 'i's, skewered like worms, dotted burgundy with blood,  
As clear to the passing eye as three billboards by a roadside:*

*Death to the thief. Death to the rebel. Death to the author of life,  
Not even important enough to murder on His own, He,  
Just one in three, the uprooted vine stretched out on a barren tree:*

*The anointed poured out, the gift scorned  
The able disabled, the healer torn,  
The way barred, the truth buried,  
The life killed, the door bouldered,  
The King mocked, the reconciler, reviled,*

*Grace, beauty, glory in spited spittle defiled,  
The light snuffed out... Darkness at noon,  
The world dancing to its self-enthroning tune,  
The shepherd like a lamb to such slaughter.  
The teacher taught his final lesson. In torture.*

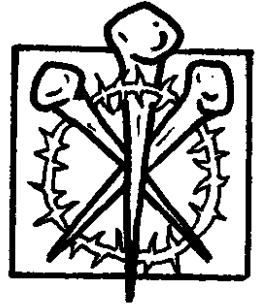
*I know, I know on this Good Friday, that Sunday is but a blink away.  
But this Friday is each and every year our 'why' day.*

*I look up from the water eddying out of the bathroom sink,  
And see the billboard on the wall in front of me:  
Whose rebellion required such grim reparations?  
For whom would love submit to such savage butchery?  
And the face on the billboard mouths slowly back, "Me".*

*by Mark Greene*

## *Easter Story*

*The thud of nails on open palms,  
'Father forgive' was all He said,  
'Finished' was His final cry,  
As death approached God bowed His head.*



*Born of a woman He entered our world,  
Fully man yet fully divine,  
Such is the mystery beyond comprehension  
That One such as this should step into time.*

*He came to die and rise again  
The firstfruits of the Father's love,  
That man should follow in His train  
On wings of light to realms above.*

*by Megan Carter*

## **Palm waving**



It was Palm Sunday, but five-year-old Jamie stayed at home with mum because of a bad cold. When his father and sisters returned, they were carrying several palm fronds. His sister explained: "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by."

"That's not fair!" Jamie protested. "The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"



Is there someone in your family, church family, work colleague or local friend who might be self isolating and would be pleased to have a chat with someone.



**If there is then make that call.**

## *The Floods*

*For people battered by forceful storms  
For communities battling rising floods  
For emergency services stretched to the limit  
We pray*

*For farmers losing straw and crops  
For shopkeepers losing high street trade  
For repeat victims losing strength and hope  
We pray*

*For resilience and resolve to change  
For impatience with using flood plains  
For commitment to protect riverbanks and coasts  
We pray*

*In Jesus' name we pray*

Amen

**By the Revd Barbara Glasson,  
President of the Methodist Conference**

## **WALPOLE CHAT WITH A COPPER**

Planned meetings have been suspended till further notice.  
If there are issues that concern you please send us an email  
with the issue you would like to talk about.

Follow us on Twitter :@MPSWalpole

Office Number : 0208 246 9174

Ward Mobile: 02087212949

Email: [walpole.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:walpole.snt@met.police.uk)



# Gen Z - who are they??

If there was a prize to be given for the number of key people you've influenced before you are 18, Greta Thunberg would probably win. She has had an extraordinary time of it, speaking at major conferences, going to key venues and meeting many important world leaders. Yet she is only 17. She is part of the 'Gen Z' generation.

Who are the 'Gen Z'? First, let's set them in context.

The large numbers of people born after the ending of the Second World War, especially in the UK, were 'baby boomers', which was then shortened to just 'boomer.'

Births in the second half of the 1960s and 1970s were fewer in number; they "stopped the boom" as it were. Then Douglas Coupland published his book *Gen X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* in 1991 and the phrase instantly stuck: they were "Gen X" (born 1964 to 1982) from then on.

The children of Gen X could naturally be called Gen Y, and they were, at first. But as they were born between 1983 and 2001, the term 'Millennials' was irresistible. Their children are all Gen Z, here taken as 2002 to 2020, that is, they are all 21st century!

They weren't born when 9/11 happened; only a few were born when Concorde was mothballed in 2003 and someone born in 2005 was only 11 when the Brexit Referendum took place!

To put Gen Z into a church context: in 2005 39% of the churches in England had no-one attending under the age of 11, and 49% had no-one between 11 and 14. So the number of Gen Z children in church is alarmingly few.

from Parish Pump



## Time for a Smile

Heads bowed in prayer, the congregation at our Church listened in complete silence to the Minister as he said, 'Now let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us.'

A little girl's voice could be heard throughout the hushed congregation as she said, "Daddy, I didn't know Jesus had a tortoise."

# Wash your hands of coronavirus scams!

Friends Against Scams aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams.



## NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS

Scams Team

### Be **aware** of people offering or selling:

- Virus testing kits - these are only offered by NHS.
- Vaccines or miracle cures - there is currently no vaccine or cure.
- Overpriced or fake goods to protect yourself from coronavirus such as anti-bacterial products.
- Shopping or medication collection services.
- Home cleaning services.

### Protect yourself and others:

- Don't be rushed into making a decision. If it sounds too good to be true it probably is.
- Only purchase goods from legitimate retailers and take a moment to think before parting with money or personal information.
- Don't assume everyone is genuine. It's okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.
- If someone claims to represent a charity, ask them for ID. Be suspicious of requests for money up front. If someone attempts to pressurise you into accepting a service they are unlikely to be genuine. Check with family and friends before accepting offers of help if you are unsure.

### Contact

For advice on scams call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on **0808 223 11 33**  
To report a scam call Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040**  
Contact your bank if you think you have been scammed.

# Some Thoughts on Corona Virus - Covid 19

Thorough and frequent hand washing with soap and water is recommended by the World Health Organisation as the first step to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

I don't know who first said, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness", but you won't find that phrase in the Bible. Ritual washings are practised by many religions, but they usually signify spiritual cleansing, not physical sanitisation. Piety isn't a substitute for hygiene, nor vice versa.

The Coronavirus, now called Covid-19, has been a daily news item for months, with the result that fear is spreading more rapidly than the disease itself. Stock markets throughout the world have plummeted; sales of disinfectant have soared. Sports fixtures have been cancelled, whole towns have been quarantined and worldwide trade is threatened.

Statistics change hourly, so anything quoted here will be out of date by the time you read it, but we need to put this plague (if that is what it is) into perspective. Do you remember the Ebola epidemic which swept through regions of Africa from 2014 onwards? More than one in three sufferers died from that virus, but there's now a vaccine which can be used when Ebola threatens. Past influenza pandemics have been nowhere near as severe. 'Asian Flu' in 1957, led to 3,550 deaths in England and Wales, or something like 2.4% of actual cases. In 2009, the fatality figure for the swine flu epidemic was about 0.026%. The figures for today's Covid-14 virus suggest that around 80% of cases are mild, 14% develop severe symptoms, 4% become critically ill and the death rate is 2%.

This virus was first publicised by Doctor Li Wenliang, who was detained and censured by the Chinese police for "spreading false rumours". Although he himself subsequently died of the disease, there can be no doubt that his courage saved many lives. There are echoes here of words from St John's Gospel: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." As for the people of China where the virus originated, the Bishop of Newcastle, Christine Hardman, tweeted a Sri Lankan poster, which shows the right Christian attitude. It says, "HATE THE VIRUS, NOT THE CHINESE. Let's pray for them instead".

**Amen.** And do wash your hands.

**Ven John Barton**

*nb The Cover picture is of the Covid 19 Virus*



## The Lamb of God

The nursery rhymes we learnt as children often focused on lambs: Mary had a little lamb, Baa baa black sheep, Little Bo-Peep and Little Boy Blue. They come to mind in springtime when we see lambs in the field jumping for joy or bleating as they run to the ewes for warmth and safety.

Murillo, a 17th century artist from Seville, had that world of childhood in mind when he painted 'St John the Baptist with the Lamb.' He looks back to the little child of Isaiah 11 leading the animals, but also we are called to think of the adult John the Baptist, who sees Jesus walking by and exclaims, "Look, here is the Lamb of God."



In the painting, St John is a child with his arms around the lamb. He stands on rocky ground with a reed cross at his feet that has the words 'Behold the Lamb of God' on the ribbon.

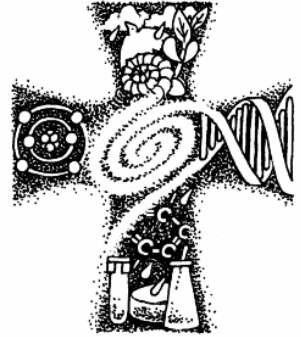
The painting hangs in the National Gallery, and it certainly lacks the strength and brilliance of other Spanish artists. But Murillo is telling us how the drama of salvation is played out by children and lambs. He is inviting us to look from that world of childhood to another part of Isaiah's prophecy, where he talks of the Messiah led like a lamb to the slaughter. We enter that drama of salvation in Holy Week this month. On Good Friday Jesus was led to His crucifixion, just as the lambs were being killed for the Passover.

We think of the world of Old Testament sacrifice, where the high priest on the day of Atonement would enter the Holy of Holies and sacrifice a ram. And we focus on Jesus who is for us both priest and sacrifice, and realise that there is a divine chemistry at work that leads us from Good Friday to Easter Day.

The writer of Hebrews meditates on this theme and proclaims that in Jesus we have a high priest of the good things that have come – eternal redemption. We are invited to appropriate that great gift for ourselves in this Holy Week of our salvation. So, we journey from the childhood days of Murillo's painting to Calvary and the Easter garden. And we can also journey beyond to the heavenly city, where Revelation tells us that all the nations walk by the light of that Lamb – the Lamb of God.

# How Can a Christian be a Scientist?

I used to ask this question as a student. I wondered, who could make it in the world of science and still hold onto their faith? Soon enough I met a good number of successful scientists who were sincere Christians, some of whom were at my own university. So what do people like this make of the opportunities and challenges that a life in science holds for a Christian?



Science is an exercise in observing and measuring things in the world, and coming up with general principles about the way things are. Exploring the world is a great thing to do to express our gratitude to the Creator. There is a sense of awe and wonder that comes when we expand our minds and our horizons by discovering things about the universe can feed into our worship.

Of course, there may be things in science that some Christians don't want to get involved in because of what they believe. But there should also be ethical issues that make them want to get stuck into new research that will help people, protect creation, or tackle injustices. I am glad to see that many senior scientists do their best to find appropriate ways to make their own faith visible, so that people like my younger self can find role models and mentors.

Another helpful thing about science is that although our beliefs may at times affect what we notice about the world and how we interpret our data, they shouldn't affect the outcome of experiments themselves. This means that a scientist can be respected by her colleagues for doing good work, regardless of what she believes and what her colleagues think of that worldview.

In my work at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, and my involvement with Christians in Science, I have the privilege of meeting a great number of scientists who are also Christians. One of the most famous living biologists is Francis Collins, who was Director of the project to decode the whole of human DNA. He wrote that it is "possible for the scientist-believer to be intellectually fulfilled and spiritually alive, both worshipping God and using the tools of science to uncover some of the awesome mysteries of His creation." (Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (Simon and Schuster, 2007)

Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

# The GREAT Escape

A Church of Scotland minister nicknamed 'Padre Mac' has been named as the inspiration behind the Great Escape.

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The Revd Professor Murdo Ewen Macdonald's "fiery sermons" motivated the famous breakout of a German Prisoner of War camp in March 1944, according to an author.



Dr Linda Barker said the Great Escape is often heralded as a plan masterminded by English officers, and the theme tune to the 1963 film of the same name is sung by England football fans.

The theologian has been given credit for a minor role in hiding tunnel sand in the famous break-out over the course of a year. However, the historian claims his influence was possibly far more significant, as he had previously made his own escape while in transit to a PoW camp.

He was a chaplain for the men of Stalag Luft III, including RAF Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, who has always been known as the mastermind of the Great Escape.

Dr Parker is the author of "Nearer My God to Thee: Airborne Chaplains in the Second World War," which examines the full story of padres who accompanied the airborne forces to all theatres of war between 1942-1945.

"Murdo Ewen Macdonald, known as Padre Mac, may have been the 'inspiration that led to many great escapes' during the Second World War," she said. "He was moved to Stalag Luft III, where the Great Escape would take place in March 1944. Here, he befriended Roger Bushell, and Harry 'Wings' Day, both instigators and organisers of the Great Escape.

"As a chaplain, he would have had access to all the troops and would have been able to speak with them, in confidence, to motivate them with the story of his own escape attempt."