



**St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch**

April 2020 Newsletter

Message from the Manse



Dear Friends,

A phrase that keeps springing to mind at the moment is "In the days before the flood.." - words from Matthew 24:38, when Jesus is warning about how none will know when he will return. In future years we may be saying "In the days before Covid-19", as we face up to the reality of big changes to our world and way of life - and yet for many, the parallel still works - plans were being made for weddings, baptisms, and all sorts of things that have suddenly ground to a halt.

And yet life goes on. With more difficulties, more restrictions, yes - but the world has not stopped turning, and God is still God. We continue to worship, we continue to pray, we continue to find ways to be in fellowship with one another - by phone, by letter, by email. People continue to show care and compassion - in some cases in extraordinary ways, and ways that no-one had previously even thought possible. We are even finding ways to smile, even sometimes laugh, at the predicament we are in.

Which brings me to something else related to that reading. Many years ago, back in my University days, a friend of mine was asked to read in Chapel - and it was that exact reading from Matthew 24. She was somewhat nervous about it, and for days beforehand was practicing it. However, having a lively sense of humour herself and having friends with the same, this wasn't easy. She would try practicing in the stairwell - only to look up and see a friend in a nearby kitchen sending her up. Practicing in front of her friends saw them joining in - complete with actions. Came the great day; the hymn was sung, and she prepared, nervously, to step forward... only for the Invited Preacher to move to the Microphone, announce, and read himself, that Gospel Passage.

For months afterwards, all you had to do to get her dissolving in fits of laughter was to say the words "In the days before the flood..."

One of the ways we can make things less scary is to laugh at them - and ourselves. Another is to remember that the one who sent the flood set His promise in the sky that this would never happen again. This is a tough time - but with God, we will not be overwhelmed.

God Bless,

Rob

Steward's Letter



Dear all,

I am writing this stewards letter at this very difficult time. We must all play our part in the war against this most dangerous virus the likes of which none of us have ever experienced in our lives.

Our Church will be closed until further notice which is very sad as I am aware it plays an important part in our lives :Sheila and I are adopting to a new regime by doing jobs around bungalow. Decorating one room each week will keep us busy for 8 weeks. We have begun playing chess each day, having not played since I left school.

Gardening is also good for all of us and will give some much needed exercise. I have got lots of seedlings growing and am not sure what I will do with them all.

If any of you need to speak to me please phone 01948880218 and I will help in any way I can .

The next 3 weeks are going to be the most difficult time. So please, we all must " Stay in"and "Stay safe " but it may take many weeks until it is finally back to normal.

Thinking of you all.

God Bless you all

Maurice

And from Avril

Dear all,

I think we are all feeling rather stunned by how fast events have moved. I am so glad that I am part of a loving, caring community that will do its best to support each other because at times like this we will surely all need help at some point no matter how independent we like to be.

Staying in touch is going to be vital. It doesn't have to be a long phone call or message but it really does need to be made. Please let Rev. Rob or the stewards know if you are concerned about someone. Let's do our best to make sure no-one slips through the net. Above all, as we are apart, let's grow together as a community of prayer with all the mysterious connections that brings.

Let's draw on the strength of one much greater than all our troubles.

And until we meet again,

“May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.”

Avril

Thank You

On behalf of the church, I would like to place on record our thanks for the Donations made at the Coffee Morning held on the 14th March 2020 and donations received on Sunday 15th March and the previous Sunday. This amounted to £2,124. This money has enabled us to pay the church Insurance which is just over £2000. Your generosity is up on last year.

Many Thanks.

P.S. If you brought an envelope in on behalf of someone else, please can you pass on our thanks.

If you are talking on the telephone to church people who will not receive this Newsletter via email, please can you mention this.

Brian Faulkner (Supporting the Treasurer).

David Morgan

Some of you will have read on Pew News about the death of David Morgan. David & Beryl worshipped with us occasionally on a Sunday morning sitting near the back somewhere just in front Maurice and Sheila. They came to us when their chapel, Tallarn Green, the other church in our Mission Area, didn't have a morning service. What a number of you may not know was that David was a Local Preacher who retired many years ago, having come on the Castle Hill Plan in 1966. David was our Local Preacher's Secretary from 1989 – 2010, when the new Circuit was formed. We remember Beryl, Helen and Alison in our prayers. A Thanksgiving Service will be held later.

Concerts at St John's

Thanks to everyone who bought tickets for Sing, Sing, Sing. Obviously things are now on hold until we know how things are going to turn out. We are hoping, that when life returns to "normal" that rehearsals can re-start and that we can re-schedule our concert for later in the year. Obviously, if the concert fails to take place, I will reimburse you! Please keep hold of your tickets.

The second concert this year should be on Saturday 3rd October when we have invited the Winterley Brass Band to help us celebrate our Harvest. Again, we don't know what is going to happen with this event yet.

In the meantime, the important thing is to stay healthy and stay safe! Roll on when we can all meet together in fellowship again! We must trust & believe we will all be well enough to meet again. We just don't know when that will be.

Forward in Faith!

Jim

Bible Month

This year the Local Preachers' Meeting decided to delay Bible Month (nothing to do with the present conditions) to October. All preachers will be asked to concentrate our thoughts on the Book of Ruth. It is quite possible that we at St. John's will commence one week later due to our Harvest Festival. That depends on the current situation.

PRAYER REQUESTS



Pray for those known to us personally who are in need of God's comfort.

The corona virus has now impacted us all and our prayers are for an end to the problem and ask God to help ourselves, our neighbours, our country and across the world.

St John's

Pray for all our members who are facing self isolation or who are supporting relatives and friends.

Whitchurch

Pray for our town that it may face the difficult times with loving care and respect for others

Our nation

As God works out His purposes in our nation, pray that in His mercy, truth and good sense will prevail so that the current crisis can be tackled in a spirit of order and calm

Our world

Pray that the nations of this world having faced a common threat will learn to live in harmony and that the loving power of our Saviour will fill the hearts of their leaders
Thanks be to God!

An Easter Day Prayer by Martin Manser

'I know that my Redeemer lives' Wow!

I worship you Lord Jesus Christ, for this amazing fact that you came back to life and are alive right now. This really is awesome!

Amidst all the questions I still have about life one certainty rings out to every point of the universe: Christ is Risen!

The immortal One has died for all sin and for all sinners in every time and in every place.

Christ has been brought back to eternal life; surely this is the most thrilling victory of all time!

Lord Jesus Christ, you really are the son of God
I worship you in praise and adoration.
I give myself afresh to you right now on this day of all days.

Equip me with the power that raised Christ from the dead, to serve you today and all the days ahead.

In Christ's name, I pray. Amen.

Easter (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

Easter means— hope prevails over despair, Jesus reigns as Lord of Lords and King of Kings... Easter says to us that despite everything to the contrary, His will for us will prevail, love will prevail over hate, justice over injustice and oppression, peace over exploitation and bitterness

Ruth Parrott

Ruth is the wife of our former Minister Michael.

At a recent gathering of the MWiB, Ruth was appointed to be President of Methodist Women in Britain for 2021 /2022. This means that she will be Vice President this year 2020/2021. During these two years, Ruth will travel throughout this country and abroad representing Methodist Women.

This year Ruth has been planning and has begun walking the 'Two Saints's Way', a 93-mile pilgrim path which passes through the District with the intention of covering the route in stages over the next two years.

We send our congratulations to Ruth. We may have heard a little about this at our Chapel Anniversary that was due in May and is now unlikely to take place.

Seen in the Shropshire Star 2weeks ago.

Why is coronavirus spreading so quickly?

Because we travel too much,

Why is the city air unfit to breath?

Because we travel too much,

Why are temperatures rising?

Because we travel too much,

Why are the storms and floods so extreme?

You have probably guessed by now,

Because we travel too much.

Maurice

(Perhaps this takes isolation too far! ED.)

Not an Easter Egg but lots of Sweets

(Name the sweets from the clue)

1. Where all refined people live?
2. Edible fasteners
3. Middle Eastern pleasure
4. Home for alcoholic dentures
5. Theme
6. Planet not too far away
7. Singing insect
8. 100% precious metal
9. Before nine
10. Between the two
11. Complete but not the bolt
12. Tiny precious stones
13. Millie's boy
14. Goods from France
15. Bookies talking backwards
16. Thief in "SS"
17. A Galaxy
18. Wobbly little children
19. Eating outdoors
20. Put an end to the talking

And Remember! -The Telephone (Michael Quoist)

I have just hung up; why did he telephone?

I don't know

O! I get it... I talked a lot and listened little.

Forgive me Lord, it was a monologue and not a dialogue.

I explained my idea and did not get his;

Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing,

Since I didn't listen, I didn't help,

Since I didn't listen, we didn't communicate.

Forgive me Lord for we were connected, and now we are cut off.

Keep in touch!



May Lunch-time Concerts

Sadly the Lunch-time Concerts planned for May have been postponed. We hope to arrange them for another time when all the chaos is over

Ruth Mulliner

FOODBANK IS STILL OPERATIONAL

Foodbank has been incredibly busy over the last few weeks – Friday 20th seeing 25 customers. This means that a lot of food will be going out whilst it is unlikely that there will be as much coming in as usual with churches and organisations closed until further notice.

If you wish to donate food, Foodbank will be open between 9.30am and 11.30am on Tuesdays and Fridays. Food can be left during those hours at Bargates but there can be no contact with staff. Therefore it means leaving gifts at the door. If you do leave food and want an acknowledgement you will need to leave a slip in the bag with your name and contact details.

There will be no clients around as, following authorised referrals made by phone, food will be delivered directly to clients.

Hazel

Keep Smiling



**"THIS COMPUTER IS EQUIPPED WITH AN
AIRBAG IN CASE YOU FALL ASLEEP."**

George Bernard Shaw and Winston Churchill did not get on too well. In the thirties, when Churchill was in the political wilderness, Shaw sent him four tickets for the first night of his new play, adding "These are for you and your friends—if you have any."

Churchill returned the tickets saying he was already engaged on that evening—"But, I would very much like to have tickets for the second night—if there is one!"

An Irishman was accused of assaulting a woman and was lined up in an identity parade. The woman was brought into the room where the row of men were standing and the Irishman pointed at her and said "That's her!"

(I'm half Irish! - Ed)

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May Newsletter

Please let Chris Crowther have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 23rd April.

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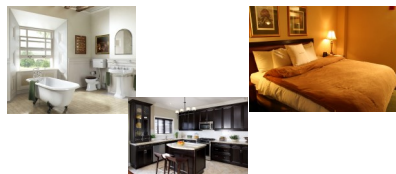
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