



## Prestwood Methodist Church

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### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

As you will have heard, most Christian churches across the UK have decided that churches will be closed for public worship until further notice to support attempts to limit the spread of COVID-19. However, we would like to continue to send you notices to show we haven't forgotten you, and we are still here if anyone would like a chat on the phone.

For as long as this lasts, we will provide you with details of the readings for the week and other news, prayers or thoughts that people want to share.

If you do not want to receive this each week, please contact Bridget or Malcolm (contact details above).

Please note: the church is still open for prayer. The regular Thursday morning prayer meeting will continue at 10am, but please do not attend if you have any flu-like symptoms. If you would like access to pray in the church alone at any other time please contact us as above to arrange this.

## ALTERNATIVES TO CHURCH

While there are no church services for the foreseeable future, there are alternatives depending on whether you have access to a radio, TV or the Internet. If you know any other sources, please contact us and we can share it next week.



### Radio

Radio 4 Sunday Worship at 8.10am.

### Television

BBC 1 'Songs of Praise' at 1.15 pm, although bear in mind this isn't a full end-to-end church service. The BBC are planning something more comprehensive, and we'll update you when there is news.

If you can access Revelation TV (Freesat 692, Freeview 264, Sky 581) 10.30 am 'Church without walls'

### Internet

Aylesbury Methodist church has a livestream at 10.30 am on Sunday. Watch live, or watch it later at [www.aylesburymethodists.org.uk](http://www.aylesburymethodists.org.uk)

Other streamed services can be found at [www.methodist.org.uk/worship-during-coronavirus](http://www.methodist.org.uk/worship-during-coronavirus)

**Revd Adam Wells has a daily reflection on YouTube at [tinyurl.com/vz9y45q](https://tinyurl.com/vz9y45q) (or search Amersham Methodist Circuit).**

## SAYING YES TO LIFE (from James Appleby)

*And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the fourth day.*

This week we look at the cosmic majesty of the universe. The moon is 240,000 miles from earth, the sun 92.5 million miles and you could fit 1.3 million earths inside of it. The sun is one of perhaps 400 billion stars in the milky way, which itself could be one of two trillion galaxies!

Given that the universe is so huge and that our planet is so small, we can often forget our own significance. For the other weeks in Lent we are looking at inherently earthly phenomena; water, plants, animals, things over which we can be said to "have dominion". So far humans have had a minimal impact on outer space besides a few satellites, rovers and six successful moon landings. However, we do impact our ability to enjoy much of this marvellous creation due to air and light pollution. Smog and car exhaust fumes block much of the sky in busy cities, and the always-on lights drown out the faint twinkling stars. We are fortunate that we live in a village.

While we have little impact on the sun and moon, they have a large impact on us. As discussed in week one, sunlight is the life giver for everything on earth. The moon draws the tides and lights the night. And were it not for the planet Thea knocking the earth onto a tilted axis we wouldn't have the seasons which define much of our lives. The colossal universe reminds us that ultimately, we are at God's mercy. And given that earth is the only liveable planet we know of, caring for it is all the more important.

## Readings for this week (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent):

1 Samuel 16: 1-13  
Psalm 23  
John 9: 1-41

### Helpful hymn verse:

Not the first verse of this well-known hymn, but perhaps relevant to our situation:

Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come;  
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

### Prayer from Revd Barbara Glasson, President of Methodist Conference:

Loving God;  
if we are ill, strengthen us;  
if we are tired, fortify our spirits;  
if we are anxious, help us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air.

Help us not to stockpile treasures from supermarkets in the barns of our larders.

Don't let fear cause us to overlook the needs of others more vulnerable than ourselves.

Fix our eyes on your story and our hearts on your grace.

Help us always to hold fast to the good,  
see the good in others,  
and remember there is just one world, one hope,  
one everlasting love, with baskets of bread for everyone.

In Jesus we make our prayer,  
the one who suffered, died and was raised to new life,  
in whom we trust these days and all days,

AMEN.

## WORSHIP AT HOME

Revd Nigel Wright will be producing a weekly reading, reflection and prayer, and the Methodist Church have a weekly service sheet for people to use at home. If you would like to receive either of these by post or by email, please let us know. Here's a sample from both for this week:

**A prayer from Revd Nigel Wright** - based on Mark 10:35-45 - The Request of James & John

We thank you for those who have been a mother or like a mother to us,  
for those who have shown us your love and your care through their words and actions,  
for those who have served us.

We are sorry for how easy it is to take love for granted, failing to express our thanks for the care we receive, and slow to demonstrate our appreciation.

We are sorry too for how we have taken your love for granted and pray that you will guide us how to show your love to others at this time.

We pray in particular for all affected by the coronavirus, for those who have been bereaved by it and for a swift recovery for those who are ill.

AMEN.

## Prayers from the Methodist Church worship at home service sheet for 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

On this Mothering Sunday, we pray for all Mums. The good ones and the not so good. We remember all those who would have liked to have children but for whatever reason could not.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty:

for those people who are worried about leaving their home and those who cannot;

for those needing to make decisions in order to care for other.

We pray for carers, doctors and nurses.

We continue to pray for those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend an act of worship today.

I especially want to pray for *(add your own thoughts here)*.

Holy God, present with us now, guide me in all I do and say – that it might reflect your love for the world.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father .....