



Prestwood Methodist Church

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Sunday 29th March 2020 5th Sunday in Lent

With tighter restrictions, all activities at the church building have now ceased. However, we are still here for you if you need shopping or just want a chat.

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

In our continuing Lent series, we're on Day 5 of creation.

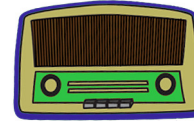
Fish and Birds – Genesis 1: 20-23

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth."

See James' commentary on this inside.

ALTERNATIVES TO CHURCH

With tighter restriction on movement, some of the streamed services that ran last week will not be available this week. However, ministers who stream from home with only household members present will be able to carry on. See tinyurl.com/vz9y45q for the Amersham Methodist Circuit channel



TV and radio:

Radio 4 Sunday Worship at 8.10am.

BBC 1 Sunday Worship at 10.45am.

Internet

11am Wesley's Chapel London bit.ly/2wGRIY8

10.30am Swan Bank Methodist Church in Burslem
www.facebook.com/swanbank

Rev Nigel Wright has suggested a further option for "a very different worship experience." Search for "Sthie" on YouTube to find Rev Andy Fishburne's 'at home' service or see andyfishburne.com/2020/03/15/sthie-at-home-online-worship for more details.

Nigel is also recommending the use of Zoom to keep in touch – more details in the email accompanying these notices, or contact Nigel for information.

By post

Worship resources can be sent by post if anyone needs them – please get in touch (details on the front) to request this.

Fish and Birds – Genesis 1: 20-23 (continued)

As a child, the inclusion of fish and birds on the same day confused me. Birds are land animals that fly sometimes, or in the cases of penguins and ostriches, not at all. However, in day 2 the waters are separated to create the oceans and the sky. On day 5 the oceans and sky are filled with animals, just as day 6 sees land animals living among the plants and dry land of day 3.

The sky and sea can seem very separate, particularly in our landlocked village. But in the 71% of the world covered by oceans, the sky and sea are much more connected. Seabirds rely on the ocean to live, mostly hunting fish, and as viewers of Blue Planet 2 might recall, some intrepid giant trevally fish hunt birds! This is an interconnected ecosystem of sky and sea, greatly at risk from human activities. Birds are caught in nets and fishing lines set for fish, while overfishing means stocks have plummeted. Migratory birds are shot in their millions over the Mediterranean, while 100 million sharks are killed every year, some from bycatch but many for their fins. Another great threat to life in the water and the air is plastic. Whales, turtles and albatrosses are often found with plastic bags, straws, packaging etc in their bodies, while the smallest plants and animals, the plankton, are killed by microplastics, created when plastic breaks down in water.

What can we do about all this? As consumers, we have a lot of power. Shopping is difficult at this time, but we can still make choices to have fewer products in unnecessary packaging, particularly fruit and vegetables. Buying from local greengrocers and refill shops will greatly reduce your plastic consumption. As for fish and poultry, read the packaging. Fish that are caught sustainably are marked with the blue Marine Stewardship Council label, while chickens kept in good conditions have the RSPCA stamp. Buy free range eggs – or perhaps adopt some chickens of your own!

Readings for this week (5th Sunday in Lent):

Ezekiel 37: 1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8: 6-11
John 11: 1-45

Prayer recommended by Revd. Romeo R Pedro Superintendent of the Northampton Circuit (suggested by John Deakin)

see methodist-churches-northampton.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/coronavirus.pdf for the full letter

Conversation will not be cancelled.
Relationships will not be cancelled.
Love will not be cancelled.
Songs will not be cancelled.
Reading will not be cancelled.
Self-care will not be cancelled.
Hope will not be cancelled.
May we lean into the good stuff that remains.
AMEN.

Jamie Tworowski

If you do normally attend church on a Sunday, I would encourage you to 'book' some time for yourself, at about the same time, each week. We are lucky enough to be distancing with four of us, and on Sunday morning we all sat down at 10.30 to join the service from Aylesbury Methodist Church via livestream onto our TV. We stood for the hymns, listened to the readings and the address, and chatted afterwards about the message.

Alternatively, just take 15 minutes to sit and read one or more of the Bible passages listed above, and think about its message for you. There are more materials that can be posted to you each week to help with prayer and Bible readings, so please give us a call (numbers on the front) if you'd like any support by post.

Worship at home

Links to the worship sheets from Nigel and from The Methodist Church are sent with an email each week, but can be provided by post if needed. Just let us know!

A prayer from Revd Nigel Wright

See Psalm 42

Living God,
We thank you for the message of hope that lies at the heart of the gospel, and for the assurance that, whatever may seem to deny it, your love will emerge victorious.
Lord Jesus Christ, we remember with gladness how you brought hope to others throughout your ministry.
Light shining in the darkness. Joy breaking into sorrow.
Holy Spirit, we pray that you will continually remind us of the hope that we have in you.
Help us to join in with what you are already doing to give your hope to the world.

AMEN.

Reflection on John 11 from The Methodist Church

Today's readings are full of hope, reminding us that the resurrection is real, and new life is possible.

Take time to read the gospel passage slowly and prayerfully again.

Is there a word or a passage that stands out to you?

Pause to spend time with that word or passage.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

If Jesus were stood before you what would you like to ask him?

Take a time to sit quietly

Prayers from the Methodist Church worship at home service sheet for 29th March 2020

Let's pray

Holy and Loving God we pray for your world, for the leaders who are making difficult decisions as every day brings new changes and challenges.

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

We pray for our nation, that decisions might be made with wisdom and care for the benefit of all.

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

We pray for our Prestwood, Gt Missenden and Kingshill. For all who live here that your peace might reign and that your perfect love might settle our fears.

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

We pray for frontline workers, doctors, nurses, carers, shop workers, refuse collectors, postal workers.

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

We pray for our loved ones, those we know who may be ill, those who are struggling, those who are confused and conflicted... (you might like to name names here)

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

And finally we pray for ourselves, you know what is on our hearts and minds, and so we offer that to you (again you might like to name your own prayers and concerns)

Lord of all, Lord for all - Hear our prayer

AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father