



'BEING CHURCH'

Boston Spa and Clifford Methodist
Churches

ISSUE 1: 22nd March 2020

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'Being Church' in difficult times

How many times have we been told 'Church' is not the building, it is the people, living faithfully, supporting each other and being the family of Christ in their community? Well, now is our opportunity to put that to the test!

The Coronavirus epidemic and the actions being taken to mitigate it are having profound effects on our daily lives and this will continue for an unknown period of time. Throughout the country, signs are going up saying 'Church closed' – but nothing could be further from the truth! Our buildings are out of action, that's all.

So, how do we maintain the fabric of our Church life, worshipping and caring for each other, until such time as we can return 'home' to the Church building? Well, this newsletter is a part of that and will be produced every week, as a way to keep in touch and to 'signpost' to other sites and sources of help.

This is a testing time in the life of the Church and there may be major difficulties and upsets that we have to face in the coming weeks. But we face them together – with each other and with the God who created and sustains all life.

Rev. Steve

Keeping in touch:

Do you have an email address that you're happy to share with the Church leadership team? **If so, email us with the details so that we can keep you up to date with online resources.** For everyone, we are available on the phone to share ideas and concerns.

This week:

- Ways to worship
- Pastoral support
- Sharing prayer concerns
- Scripture / 'Thought for the Week'
- Social media
- And finally

Ways to worship: There are so many ways we can continue to hold God at the centre of our lives:

- Worship at home – if you go to <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/> you will find a short service which will be shared by many Methodists this Sunday 22nd March. (Hard copies attached for those receiving this 'through the door')
- If you'd like to borrow a Hymn Book – contact us and we'll try and get one to you
- If you have access to the internet, Wesley Chapel will be live streaming services on Sunday at 09:45 and 11:00 – go to www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA
- If you don't have access to the internet, then BBC 'Songs of Praise' on Sunday is on the theme of Mothering Sunday – BBC at 1:15
- Churches Together in England are calling on the whole Church community nationally, **at 7pm this Sunday**, to light a candle in the windows of our homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer. This will probably be repeated weekly – watch this space!



Pastoral support: We're pretty good at looking after each other – but in these times of social distancing and self-isolation we need to maybe curb our natural instincts! Phone conversations, emails, Facetime, letter writing (re-learn that skill!) are all good. Visiting and hugging, not so much. The Pastoral team will try to keep in touch and if you have concerns, contact your Pastoral Visitor, Rev. Steve or Donald

Sharing prayer concerns: The next few weeks are going to raise many prayer concerns – national / local issues and for those individuals we know and love. We can **all** pray – God will listen even if we don't feel we have the right words! In addition however, subject to maintaining confidentiality where appropriate, we are asking for 'Prayer Warriors' who will commit to praying daily for other people's concerns. Could that be you? If so, or if you have immediate worries, contact one of the team.

Scripture: The Bible is of course full of messages of hope which have sustained people through hard times – here's just one:

Psalm 46:1-3 'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging'

Social Media: As always, Facebook is full of useful information, dangerous misinformation and funny stuff. If you want the first and last but not the middle one, then in addition to our own Church page, also look up Yorkshire North and East Methodists for good ideas and that 'I'm part of something larger' feeling.

And finally

During these difficult times, spare a thought for the UK's band of happy burglars. With everyone staying at home and looking out for each other, it must be a nightmare for them!

Stay safe and remember we love you and, more importantly, Jesus loves you!