

**FEBRUARY 2021**

# **TOGETHER**



*METHODIST CHURCHES*

*PORTISHEAD  
High Street*

*REDCLIFFE BAY  
Queens Road*

*Minister: Revd Nick Moxon*

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## ***From Rev Nick Moxon***

On the 1st of February the first portion of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), considered the most comprehensive and accurate dictionary of the English language, was published. Today, the OED is the definitive authority on the meaning, pronunciation and history of over half a million words, past and present. Each year they produce their word of the year. Towards the end of 2020 they expanded that to encompass several 'Words of an Unprecedented Year'. You won't be surprised to hear they included Covid-19, lockdown, circuit-breaker, support bubbles, key workers, furlough. They also included , Black Lives Matter and bushfires. Use of the word pandemic increased by more than 57,000% in 2020.

Casper Grathwohl, the president of Oxford Dictionaries, said:"It's both unprecedented and a little ironic - in a year that left us speechless, 2020 has been filled with new words unlike any other."

I wonder what word you would use to describe this past year and what you are experiencing now. I would guess that for many of us it would include some painful and sad words.

I have often said if we want to see how people in the Bible responded to the gamut of human emotions and experiences we can look no further than the book of Psalms. In those 150 songs are words of praise and victory, of assurance and blessing, of confusion and doubt, of anger and fear.

I was recently reading Psalm 63 which was one of the many psalms written by David. It's a psalm telling of David's passion for God (verses 1-4), of God being David's delight (verses 5-8) and his defence (verses 9-11). What caught my attention was that these positive words were written whilst David was fleeing to the desert escaping his son who was trying to capture and kill him. In

amongst fearing and fleeing for his life his belief and trust in God was positive.

We may not be in a position of being pursued into the desert but many of us will feel sad and lost and even bereaved with what we have experienced and lost over these past 12 months. We can often allow those feelings to cloud our view of God, distort who He is and turn us away from Him. I am prone to allow that to happen to me.

I would like to encourage, even challenge, you this month to write down words of gratitude and light in amongst your daily experience whatever that may be. And in doing so may you discover a God who is with you and for you and may He become your passion, your delight and your defence.

**Nick**

## CHURCH CALENDAR

*In view of the latest lockdown restrictions it has been decided not to hold Sunday Services in the Churches. This decision may be reviewed at the end of January. Any change will be in the Minister's weekly pastoral letter or on the websites*

### **February 2021**

3rd Wednesday 8.00pm Bible Study (Zoom)  
9.00 pm Prayers

7th Sunday 10.00 am Zoom Service, on line Rev Nick Moxon

11th Thursday 10.00 -10.45 am Zoom Coffee Morning

14th Sunday 10.00 am Zoom Service, on line Rev Nick Moxon

17th Wednesday 8.00pm Bible Study (Zoom)  
9.00 pm Prayers

21st Sunday 10.00am Zoom Service on line Mrs Jean Balcombe

25th Thursday 10.00 -10.45 am Zoom Coffee Morning  
28th Sunday 10.00am Zoom Service on line Rev Nick Moxon



### Online Zoom Service

The Sunday Service will be broadcast on-line at 10.00 am each Sunday. If you would like to join in please log on just before 10am.to:

[www.portisheadmethodist.wixsite.com/worship](http://www.portisheadmethodist.wixsite.com/worship)

Each week an e-mail is sent with a Pastoral Letter and details of the following Sunday's Worship.

For those who don't have access to the internet you will be able to use a worship sheet, which is delivered each week., For those unable to join in at 10 am on Sunday the worship will be recorded and accessible on the website at any time after that point.

On 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month there is a Bible Study from 8.00 – 8.45 pm, and Prayers for 15 minutes at 9.00pm - access through the link above. (These will not be recorded.)

If you would like to be on the circulation for the worship sheet please contact the Church Office or leave a message via "Contact us" on the Redcliffe Bay web site.

This magazine is being distributed, either as an attachment for those on e-mail or a printed copy for those who receive the pastoral letter though their letterbox.

## **GENERAL NEWS**

### CHRISTMAS MINISTRY

This past Christmas was very different for us all as it was in church also. Many of our usual activities and services were either postponed or changed. However what we did do was well received. I thought it would be interesting to hear about what happened during the festive season in 2020.

### *Care Bags*

42 bags were given out to folk from our two churches to share our love with them. Each bag had a small Christmas cake, magazine, knitted cross, home made soaps and chocolates and a card made by the young people at church.

### *Gift Tree*

Once again we put up a tree on the High Street, filled it with tags and collected the gifts bought by the community. As with last year the people of Portishead were so generous and we were able to give out over 300 gifts on their behalf. Charities and groups supported included Bristol Methodist Centre, Andrew House, Domestic abuse groups, One25, Nichola Corey Foundation and local residential homes.

### *Christmas Lunch*

Although we were unable to gather people together to share with them a meal and entertainment we did deliver 36 Christmas lunches to folk within the town. We could only have done this with the help of volunteers both from the churches and the community. We had people who prepared the food, cooked the meal and delivered them. Along with the food each person received a gift bag with a box of biscuits and a Christmas cracker.

### *Carol Service*

We decided to pre-record our carol service and upload it onto Youtube for people to watch. Many of us watched it at 6pm on the 20th. To date the service has had over 200 views from around the country.

### *Christingle Service*

Usually we welcome over 150 people to High Street on Christmas Eve for our Christingle service. This year we live streamed the service on Zoom with people booking in online and then receiving a pack containing everything needed to make a Christingle which we did during the service. We gave out over 80 packs to people around the town and a good time was had by all!

I would to thank all those who were involved in making this last Christmas season so special for so many people.

*Nick*

### COMMUNITY DRIVE THROUGH CAROLS.

On Sunday 13th December Churches Together in Portishead organised a Community Drive through Carols event, which took place in Sainsbury's car park. All 240 spaces were soon booked. but it was possible to view it on line. If you missed it, a 5 minute video can be viewed at :



<https://www.facebook.com/portisheadchurchestogether/videos/3448925388557627>

### NEW YEAR MESSAGE ON FACEBOOK

Orla gave a New Year message on Facebook/YouTube. See it at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYrZKO4T6Vg&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3thg06E-7omULcO5FIIUv91tLynHB\\_s7rftTx9\\_Fc8NcScPbVFlmcqzxE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYrZKO4T6Vg&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3thg06E-7omULcO5FIIUv91tLynHB_s7rftTx9_Fc8NcScPbVFlmcqzxE)

### KEEPING IN TOUCH

To keep people in touch with each other:

**Monday Morning Mail** –There is an opportunity for you to send an e-mail to a group within the church, sharing what you have been doing over the past week. Being part of this group means that you will also receive news from everyone else. If you would like to be a part of this group please let Fran know.

**Fortnightly Zoom coffee morning** - on a Thursday morning from 10-10.45am via Zoom You can find the link here:

<https://portisheadmethodist.wixsite.com/worship/coffee-chat>

MYSTERY BOOK AND JIGSAW DELIVERY. High St. has a number of reading books and jigsaws at church which we would like to share with anyone. If you are interested in receiving a book and a jigsaw please get in touch with Fran in the office. We will then drop off your mystery items and pick them up when you've finished with them.



VACANCY Due to the upcoming

retirement of the current post holder we are looking to recruit a new **Gordano Area CAP Debt Centre Manager** from May 2021.

The Gordano Area Debt Centre covers the area of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead is run by 7 churches in the area in partnership with Christians Against Poverty. Representatives of the churches meet regularly as a Steering Group to support the Debt Centre Manager.

The Debt Centre has been running for nearly three years supporting clients on their journey to be debt free through home visits and on-going support. As Manager you will be responsible for running the centre and delivering individual debt advice as provided by CAP.

The role also involves promoting the work of CAP within the area, connecting with referral agencies, fundraising, and recruiting, training and supporting a team of volunteer Befrienders and coordinating the supportive prayer network.

There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement that the successful applicant will be a practising Christian. They will be a committed member of a local church and will have a strong daily relationship with God. They will be eager to share their Christian faith as well as having the skills to manage the relationships with clients and IT based administrative skills. Full training is provided by CAP and financial adviser qualifications are not required. The role is for 16 hours a week, with occasional evening and weekend work as necessary. Salary £9,744 (FTE £22,837). The job specification can be found at:

[https://capuk.org/downloads/cap\\_debt\\_help/debt\\_centre\\_manager\\_job\\_profile.pdf](https://capuk.org/downloads/cap_debt_help/debt_centre_manager_job_profile.pdf)

The deadline for applications is **19 February 2021**

Please contact Rev Nick Moxon on email [nickmoxon@btinternet.com](mailto:nickmoxon@btinternet.com) or 398881 with any questions and for an application form.

*Interviews will be held in the first week of March 2021 and if successful, training would take place in May and June.*

PRESIDENCY WRITES TO THE UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH

The President and the Vice-President of the Methodist Conference have written a letter of support to the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church assuring them of the prayers of the Methodist people of Great Britain:



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Methodist Church in Britain values its concordat relationship with the United Methodist Church and has benefited greatly and in many ways from our sharing with Methodists in the United States of America. Like many around the world, therefore, we rejoice when you rejoice and weep when you weep.

At this time of political transition in the USA, we wanted to assure you of the prayers of the Methodist people here. We understand (and indeed to some degree experience ourselves) the way in which deeply held convictions can divide people in communities, in families, and in churches, and we understand the frustration that those who would be peacemakers feel when faced by groups with contradictory and apparently irreconcilable narratives. We pray with you that the call to civility might be heeded; may the Methodist people be emboldened to offer pardon where there is injury, hope where there is despair, and love where there is division.

Yours in Christ,

*The Rev Richard Teal President of the Methodist Conference  
2020/2021*

*Mrs Carolyn Lawrence Vice-President* \_

You can follow The President and Vice President on their Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/MethodistPresidency](http://www.facebook.com/MethodistPresidency) where on most Mondays at 12:45pm they host a Facebook Live session.

*If you don't have access to the internet you may like to* Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514 Listen to a pastoral message from the President and Vice President: 0808 281 2695 Listen to the Methodist Podcast: 0808 281 2478 .

## METHODIST YOUTH PRESIDENT ELECTION RESULTS



Following the election held online in December as part of 3Generate365, the Methodist Children and Youth Assembly, it has been announced that the next Youth President will be Daud Irfan, aged 21, from Cardiff.

Daud will become the new Youth President for the connexional year 2021/22 at a service to be held this autumn. On receiving the news of

his success, Daud commented; "I would like to thank all the children and young people who took part in the voting process. I feel honoured to have been elected. I am humbled that God has blessed me with this responsibility and I am excited to see what the coming year holds.

"The focus of my year will be on God's Church being a home for all. While, as a nation, we try to overcome the grip of Covid and pray steadfastly for world peace, as a Church we need to stand together in unity not only for our local churches but for our communities as a whole."

The Methodist Youth President is a salaried position working full-time for one year to serve the children and young people of the Methodist Church in Britain. The role involves meeting and representing the young Methodist people to ensure that their voices are heard and to help them be involved in every aspect of Church life.

The Rev Dr. Stephen Wigley, Chair of the Wales Synod of the Methodist Church who supported Daud, commented: "I am delighted to hear the news of Daud Irfan's election. I have known Daud for some 15 years since he and his family arrived in Cardiff. His experience will enable him to enrich and encourage both young Christians and the wider Church in his year as Youth President."

Daud's father, Rev John Irfan, is a Synod Enabler for culturally diverse congregations with the Wales Synod. Revd Irfan commented: "For myself and Daud's mother, Raheela, it is a huge honour to see

Daud elected into the position of Methodist Youth President. It's a fruit of our upbringing as God graced us according to His word. As a minister, I want to encourage Daud to work faithfully in the year ahead and I pray that he will be a blessing for many young people."

## OPEN DOORS

The organisation Open Doors works in over 60 countries, supplying Bibles, training church leaders, providing practical support and emergency relief, and supporting Christians who suffer for their faith.

In the UK and Ireland, Open Doors works to raise awareness of global persecution, mobilising prayer, support and action among Christians. It has a *World Watch List 2021 Report*, which was launched to MPs. 97 MPs attended the launch and the remaining 553 MPs are yet to receive it. The report will inform them of the 50 hardest countries in which to be a Christian and what they can do to advocate on their behalf. As a constituent you have the power to ensure your MP has the information to support our persecuted family. Go to [www.opendoorsuk.org/news](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news) to ensure our MP has the report, and thank him if he attended the launch. Numbers matter, the more people contact MPs the more action is likely. No internet? then write to Dr Liam Fox MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

## ASH WEDNESDAY -17th FEBRUARY

On Ash Wednesday, the palm leaves and crosses saved from last year's Palm Sunday are burnt into grey ashes. They are then smeared in the shape of a cross onto the foreheads of Christian people.

It's a powerful symbol – an unexpected image. If you're walking down the street or coming out of a shop and you happen to pass someone who has recently been at a church service and is marked with this prominent Lenten sign, you'll look twice. The cross makes a person stand out.

But not just the person. This sign, whether worn on the forehead or not, signals for all Western Christians the beginning of Lent. Focussed reflection follows as it did for Jesus when he spent 40 days in the wilderness prior to three years of itinerant ministry. We can

use the StF section headed [The Faithful Christ: Lent and Temptation](#) (StF 234 – 241) to sing about that period of deep self-reflection: Forty days and forty nights and Jesus, tempted in the desert (StF 236 and 237).

It is our period of reflection too. As Paul Wood and Ian Worsfold write:

... You call us to the wilderness  
to concentrate the mind  
on letting go of many things  
that stifle humankind.

But Ash Wednesday is not just about repairing ourselves as individuals. It is also about re-establishing good and balanced relationships with those around us.

In the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox traditions, the beginning of Lent is signalled differently – not just on a different date but with a different day. “Clean Monday”, a day of strict fasting, reminds Eastern Christians that Lent begins with good intentions and a desire to clean our spiritual house. On this day, and frequently throughout Lent, Christians pray the Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian (pictured)

O Lord and Master of my life, keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, grant to me, your servant, the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love. O Lord and King, grant me the grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother; for you are blessed now and ever and forever. Amen.

It’s a prayer for self-awareness and of awareness of our brothers and sisters.



And should we choose to read or speak these words this year, will we also take note that these are the words of a Syrian man? Will we picture in our mind other Syrians, our sisters and brothers who have been made homeless and chosen to run from the places they know best because of war, oppression, and complex international relationships? Will they and others like them be part of our Ash Wednesday reflections on the flawed behaviour of humankind, and of our roles in that?

## **PRAYERS**



### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021

World Day Of Prayer formally Women's World Day Of Prayer. Due to the uncertainty of coronavirus we have decided to cancel this year's service. For anyone wanting to make a donation their bank details are Nat. West Sort code 55.70.13 Account number 69039569. If anyone would like a service booklet please let me know & I will get one to you.

*Sheila* Tel.842014

### CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY Prayer Needs

*from Joanna Pritchett Local Manager:*

For new referrals to come in steadily. Praise God for our new referrals and those who are working on becoming debt free.

For those living in deprivation, with little prospect of work and poor health, both mental and physical.

For clients who have lost their jobs, to find new employment and know God's strength during these difficult times.

For new clients as they learn what is required for CAP to be able to help them become debt free, especially the challenge of sourcing the necessary paper work and records.

For the new Debt Centre Manager recruitment process. Pray that God will call someone to this roll and for those leading the recruitment process.

For Head Office staff in Bradford aid high community Covid levels.

For a Covid free environment - so we can restart normal face to face appointments with Befriender support for our clients.

ON ASH WEDNESDAY, as a day of confession, pray with St Augustine:

O Lord,  
The house of my soul is narrow;  
enlarge it that you may enter in.  
It is ruinous, O repair it!  
It displeases Your sight.  
I confess it, I know.



**PORTISHEAD**

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*On Twitter :* [Follow@PortisheadMC](https://twitter.com/Follow@PortisheadMC)

### NEWS OF THE FAMILY

We are glad and give thanks that Sheila Slater has returned home after emergency surgery in hospital.

### FROM MARY PAIN:

Your Christmas carrier came via Sheila. Thank you so much for its contents. The knitted cross will become a book mark and the knitted pudd will go into the decoration box for next year (after the choc is eaten, of course). Both these items are hanging on my Christmas

tree. The card was a mass of sparkly light – my interpretation. Have not used the soaps yet, but that is a treat to come. The Christmas cake was delicious. I can see the work that has gone into these gifts, it is very much appreciated. Thank you all.

Happy New Year. God Bless x

*Mary Pain*

Just trust Him for our future.

## 20:20 VISION - CHURCH REDEVELOPMENT AT PORTISHEAD METHODIST CHURCH

Work will begin at the start of February to redevelop the ground floor of the building into a cafe and community hub. Work has been delayed by a couple of weeks to finalise paperwork and funding. The fundraising group have done an amazing job in applying for and getting £200,000 worth of funds which put together with the generous donations from church members and a loan takes the amount raised to £340,000. Whilst this is short of the target of £380,000 we have been able to re-design and renegotiate the layout and costs of the centre which has brought it in line with the money we have. The building contractor will be creating our wonderful new centre which will take about 5 months.

In the meantime a small task group are looking into the possibility of employing a centre manager and finding start up costs for the role. It is hoped that the cafe will be managed by the centre manager alongside a team of volunteers.

We will keep you posted on how the work progresses over the next few months.

## **Challenge Nick**

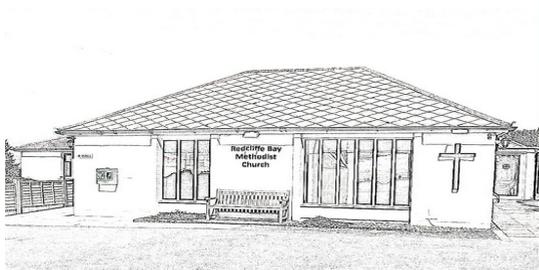
Between April and December this year I will be embarking on a fundraising idea for the redevelopment at Portishead Methodist Church.

Each month I will learn a new skill and you will decide what it is! I will publicise 2 ideas every few weeks and you will be able

to vote for which one you would like me to do. New skills will include: knitting a scarf, 150 mile bike ride, baking a cake, learning a piece on the piano, a 10 mile 'Tough Mudder' obstacle course, learning a ballroom dance, cold water swim and many more.

You will be able to contribute in different ways. You can either make a one-off donation for all the challenges or you can pay for those ones you would like me to do.

More details will be out in next month's Together magazine.



*Website:* [www.redcliffebaymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.redcliffebaymethodistchurch.org.uk)

Best wishes to all in this further period of lockdown. We are sorry to hear that Iris is back in hospital, but it is hoped she will soon move to a nursing home for rehabilitation. Iris has been such a hard worker for our Church. We miss her, and remember her and Vernon in our prayers.

Thank you to those who are keeping our Church building in good order. It is frequently checked and ventilated, the defibrillator is serviced regularly, and when the weather has allowed, there has been a bit of gardening. However, we are of course all missing our friends, and we look forward to being able to meet again soon, not only for worship but also for fellowship and conversation over coffee. Telephone calls help and are very welcome, but they are not the same as meeting face-to-face.

Nerys, who has been helping with our Church garden for a couple of years and has improved it considerably, is moving to Cornwall. We shall miss her professional skill very much. If you feel able to

help at our monthly Working Party, which starts on Saturday morning, 20th March, you will be very welcome.'

PRAYER CHAIN To take part, or if there is a prayer need, please contact Sue Mason Tel. 849553.



### **POSTSCRIPT**

**Pancake Day** 16th February

*Did you hear about the angry pancake?*

*He just flipped.*

*What did the young pancake say to the old burnt pancake? I don't like your flip side.*

*How do you make a pancake smile? Butter him up.*

*What's the best pancake topping? More pancakes*

*How do elves eat their pancakes? In short stacks.*

*When the little boy was making pancakes why did the batter run away? Because it said crack 2 eggs then beat it!*

*Did you know today is Pancake day, apparently it just creped up on us..*

*Thin French pancakes give me the crepes.*



source: <http://www.jokes4us.com/>

*Please pass copy for the March issue to:*

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*by **SUNDAY 21st February***