

**MAY 2020**

# **TOGETHER**



**METHODIST CHURCHES**

**PORTISHEAD**  
*High Street*

**REDCLIFFE BAY**  
*Queens Road*

*Minister: Revd Nick Moxon*

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## From Rev Nick Moxon

Greetings everyone.

Last week I popped into both High Street and Redcliffe Bay to pick up some items and have a general look around to make sure everything was ok (I know that others have been faithfully doing this each week as well and I want to thank them for doing this).

I went into each of the worship areas and sat for a while. As I sat I tried to remember when the last time I was there to lead worship. Now, my memory isn't too good at the best of times, but I couldn't remember what I said or who was there. And it made me sad. I then thought that this was probably the longest time that worship hadn't taken place in that sacred space since the building had been built. I then wondered when it would be that the worship area would be full again of people worshipping, praying, laughing, chatting and drinking coffee and I didn't know - none of us do.

I have always believed that the church is not just the building but the people and I still do. However, church buildings are important as well. It's where we, as God's family, share life together. It's where we experience the joys and sorrows of human life.

Part of my role as a minister for the past 20 years has been to look at where the church can be active away from established buildings and in new ways. That is not to say I have rejected dedicated premises for mission and ministry. However over the past 4 years whilst being in Portishead I have had a deepening desire and passion that our church buildings stand tall and proud in our community and that they play an important part not in our lives but in the life of the town.

Our buildings are a constant reminder to the whole town that people still gather together to offer worship to a living God. Our buildings are places where welcome and acceptance have been offered and lives have been transformed by the love, peace and healing from God.

As I reflect on what we are going through at the moment I have no doubt that its not only we who have been affected by our church buildings being closed but the town as well.

And so whilst we continue to be church wherever we are during this lockdown, let's give thanks to God for the buildings He has gifted us with and pray that when we are allowed to open our doors again the worship and witness that will flow from our buildings will be even more life-enhancing and life-transforming.

God bless  
**Nick**

# CHURCH CALENDAR

## **MAY**

*The usual Calendar is no longer relevant as the Churches are closed for Services and all other activities, till further notice.*

The Minister has arranged for a short service, on-line, starting at 10.00 am each Sunday. If you would like to join in please log on to:

[www.portisheadmethodist.wixsite.com/worship](http://www.portisheadmethodist.wixsite.com/worship) just before 10am.

Each week an e-mail will be 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 will be posted each week, safe in the knowledge that they are joining with 'your congregation' in worship. For those unable to join in at 10am on Sunday the worship will be recorded and accessible on the website at any time after that point.

On Wednesdays there will be a Bible Study from 8.00 – 8.45 pm followed by Prayers - live on-line.

An on line Quiz Night from 7 pm will be on Friday 1st May. 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.

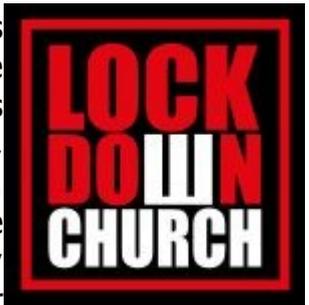
Thursday 20th May Ascension Day  
Sunday 31st May Pentecost

## **GENERAL NEWS**

### LOCKDOWN CHURCH

#### HOW ARE YOU DOING CHURCH UNDER LOCKDOWN?

In the past few weeks our movements have been severely restricted due to Covid-19. This is a very new experience for us but for persecuted Christians around the world these kinds of restrictions are not unusual. They often have their buildings closed, are prevented from meeting together, and some are forced to spend time in isolation. However, in those circumstances they have learned to keep going and even to thrive. They have lots of practice at doing church under lockdown.



It has been amazing to see how churches and prayer groups across the world have adapted creatively to our own current restrictions and have continued to 'meet together' through live streaming, video calling apps and social media sharing. These restrictions are set to continue for some time and perhaps now more than ever, we can identify with the daily experiences of persecuted Christians. Perhaps

also, now more than ever, we need their wisdom and example to help us.

In response, Release International has created a new Lockdown Church resource. Go to

[www.releaseinternational.org](http://www.releaseinternational.org) to find Bible talks, short films, interactive activities, songs and prayers, all designed to help you worship, reflect and identify with our persecuted family during this period of lockdown.

Praise God that His church lives and thrives under lockdown. Welcome to Lockdown Church.

### METHODIST CHURCH GRANTS £65,000 TO HELP OVERSEAS CHURCHES MEET CORONAVIRUS CHALLENGE

The Methodist Church of Britain has released almost £65,000 in grant aid to support partner Churches and overseas projects that have been affected by the coronavirus crisis. The money has been made available from the World Mission Fund, donated by the Methodist people to support mutual partnership with Churches overseas. The emergency, 'solidarity' grants are given in response to an urgent crisis and to provide immediate aid for humanitarian or missional purposes overseas.

#### Church of South India

A solidarity grant of £10,000 is to be given to the Church of South India to assist their response to the crisis. In south India, where severe poverty makes the situation especially dangerous, many are struggling, particularly those with disabilities, casual labourers, the aged, women and children. Packed slums, with a lack of sanitation, means that the virus could quickly take hold in communities. Church of South India schools are being used to house the homeless and the Church hospitals are working with the district government authorities to prepare for a pandemic. Church community kitchens are distributing food and essentials and youth groups are preparing hand sanitizers and masks, and spreading awareness among public on safety and sanitization.

#### Maua Methodist Hospital, Kenya

A grant of £10,000 from the World Mission Fund has been sent to Maua Methodist Hospital in Kenya to purchase personal protective

equipment to be used in the hospital and by a newly formed rapid response team to treat coronavirus patients in the community. Methodist Mission Partner Dr Claire Smithson is with the Methodist Church in Kenya, and says that, "All non-elective surgeries and non-essential services in the hospital have been closed down and many staff have been sent home. However, medical staff are very vulnerable to infection spread due to lack of essential resources."

#### Methodist Church (Upper Myanmar ) Conference

The Methodist Church of Upper Myanmar is to receive a solidarity grant of £10,000. In Myanmar the virus has meant many people are out of work and the price of basic food such as rice has increased significantly. The money will be used to help around 200 families who are being supported by the Church.

#### Pacific Theological College, Fiji

A grant of £5,200 has been given to the Pacific Theological College in Fiji for corona virus protection measures and to enable learning to continue online. The college is based in Suva, the capital city of Fiji, where many people are 'in lockdown'. Pacific Theological College a regional, ecumenical theological college offering academic programmes and serving the churches of the Pacific Islands.

#### Latin America and the Caribbean, CIEMAL

The Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean has been granted £9,225. CIEMAL is an organisation that works on behalf of regional Methodist church partners in Latin America and the Caribbean to encourage unity, solidarity, regional working and collaboration. The Council's work is threatened as Methodist Churches across the region, whose giving supports CIEMAL, are unable to meet due to coronavirus.

#### Methodist Christian Community of Venezuela

Venezuela is one of the least prepared nations in the world to deal with coronavirus. A grant of £10,000 has been made available to buy food, hygiene products, medicine and facemasks for the 30 families the church supports who are vulnerable and in desperate need.

#### Italy -The Methodist Retreat Centre 'Ecumene'

Many people have died from the coronavirus in Italy, where the Methodist Church has been hit especially hard. The on-going crisis

has meant that the Methodist Retreat Centre 'Ecumene', just outside Rome, is threatened with closure. A grant of £10,000 has been made to help the centre survive.

Andy Dye, Programme Team Leader in Global Relationships, commented, "Grants from the World Mission Fund are a response from the Methodist Church in Britain to a partner who is facing particularly difficult circumstances or an emergency situation. Although the grants may seem quite small in the global scale of things, they are a rapid response that express solidarity in partnership and can often open the door for our partners to receive other funding from around the world. For us and our partners these grants are an important part of our shared work in God's mission."

"As the crisis develops and the infection spreads to some of the world's poorest communities, we are going to be working with our sister organisation All We Can, the international development and emergency relief organisation of the Methodist Church, to provide further response to the unfolding situation."

## AN OPEN LETTER FROM SAM MONAGHAN THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF MHA TO METHODISTS

Dear Methodist Friends

Help us get vital personal protective equipment (PPE) for our care workers, residents and their relatives

I am writing to ask for your support for Methodist Homes (MHA) staff, residents and their families, during what is an unparalleled time of challenge in our care homes.

Our church has a proud tradition of social justice and concern, out of which MHA itself was born 76 years ago. So I am asking you to stand alongside us at this vital time to ensure that those most vulnerable and those working on the frontline to care for them, have access to the correct and necessary PPE and testing.

You can support us by signing our petition to ask the Government to ensure adequate and consistent supplies of



PPE and timely and ample testing for residents and staff.  
([www.mha.org.uk/ppe-petition](http://www.mha.org.uk/ppe-petition))

You can donate to help us purchase the vital PPE we need – face masks, gloves, goggles, aprons and gowns, vital to limit spread and protect staff, residents and their relatives  
([bit.ly/2wLej68](http://bit.ly/2wLej68))

You can volunteer in our homes and Live at Home Schemes, crucial to countering the increased loneliness and isolation of so many vulnerable elderly people during the lockdown  
([www.mha.org.uk/careers/current-vacancies/mha-needs-you/](http://www.mha.org.uk/careers/current-vacancies/mha-needs-you/))

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, our committed workforce has been working tirelessly to support the residents we care for. We, and our suppliers, have been working around the clock to source and move PPE to where it is needed, to ensure the safety of our residents and colleagues, but it is proving increasingly difficult to do so.

Nurses, carers, cleaners, maintenance workers, chefs, volunteers and many more are going into our services, half of which have coronavirus outbreaks. They do so to care for and protect some of the most vulnerable in society.

That's why we need your help. We have been petitioning Government since the outset of the pandemic to address these shortfalls and to recognise the vulnerability of those in care homes alongside those in the NHS. Only now is it starting to be recognised that we are the second front line, and we need to be properly equipped with all the tools to safely do that job.

Additionally, we need PPE so families are able to say farewell to their loved ones as they approach the end of their lives, as they are not currently allowed in our homes for the protection of residents, staff and themselves. We are therefore asking the Government to provide our homes with adequate and reliable PPE not just for our residents and colleagues, but also to offer to families.

We are now hearing that the Government are going to make more provision for PPE and testing in care homes, but these plans are light on detail and timescales. So we will continue

to need to source PPE from commercial organisations, costing sometimes five times the price of Government supplies, because those supplies have proved inconsistent and inadequate. And we will continue to need to transport PPE across the country between our homes, to meet need when homes experience a Covid 19 outbreak. And we will continue to cast a light on how vulnerable those in our homes are, residents and staff, to this pandemic. We have already lost over 200 residents where they have been confirmed or suspected as having Covid 19; and we have lost two of our colleagues.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

*Sam Monaghan* Chief Executive, MHA

*Sam was interviewed during the BBC TV news on 16th April.*

### A prayer for MHA

God of mercy

At this time of anxiety and fear

We thank you for the dedicated work of MHA.

We pray your blessing on all who wash feet,

Who bring healing,

Who sit with the dying

Who bring comfort in confusion

Who bring peace to the afraid

In this we see the love of Jesus

Who is our strength and hope,

In whose name we pray

Amen

*The Rev Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference*





There will be no house to house collections in Christian Aid Week, which, for many years, has been held in May. Last year £8 million was raised, so how can this gap be filled? It would help if each one of us made a donation. The easiest way is to do it one-line - go to [www.christianaid.org.uk/](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/) You can donate by phone 020 7523 2269, or you could ask you Church Treasurer to assemble donations and send them all together.

There will be live streaming of daily worship (10th – 16th May) and a quiz. - accessed from from the above web site.

### MAKE LUNCH BREAKFAST

This local ecumenical project to provide a meal for school children who, during term time, qualify for free school lunches is on hold for the moment but will look to resume activities when the restrictions are lifted.

### NAILSEA METHODIST CHURCH GAVE UP PLASTIC FOR LENT



Under the banner 'It's time to get drastic about plastic' members of the church proposed a plastic fast for the six weeks of Lent. Each week there was a new challenge for church members to look at their plastic footprint and take action to reduce their plastic

consumption. The first week's challenge concerned plastic water bottles.

Members were asked to avoid buying water in plastic bottles throughout Lent. Instead they refilled old plastic bottles from the tap, use metal canteens or bought water in glass bottles which can be recycled more efficiently.

'We have a large number of people in the church with a real concern about the environment. The church has been accredited as an Eco-Friendly Congregation and a lot of steps have been taken to try and put our own house in order. Our solar panels are making a very significant contribution to reducing our carbon footprint. But we are increasingly concerned about the impact of plastic on our environment,' explained Mark Mallett, one of the organisers of the church campaign.

'Our plastic fast for Lent I reminded us about our responsibility for God's creation and the inheritance we pass on to future generations. We want our campaign to have a real impact which will continue long after Lent has finished. It's time to get drastic about plastic!'

## **PRAYERS**

### An intercessory prayer

*You call us to speak to you in prayer— even when the places we would usually go to are not available.  
Help us to know your Spirit's presence wherever we pray.*



*Today we especially pray for those who are living in fear – give them your strength.*

*For those who have not yet realised the urgency of the situation – protect them, and all of us from harm.*

*Today I especially want to pray for .....*

*In the name of Jesus. Amen*

God of all hope we call on you today.

We pray for those who are living in fear:

Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other's reactions to them.

May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty.

For those needing to make decisions in order to care for others

For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend.

Grant us your wisdom.

Holy God, we remember that you have promised that

Nothing will separate us from your love – demonstrated to us in Jesus Christ.

Help us turn our eyes, hearts and minds to you.

*Loving God,*

*If we are ill, strengthen us.*

*If we are tired, fortify our spirits.*

*If we are anxious, help us to consider the lillies 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.

*The Rev Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference*

Give us Compassion

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, In these difficult days when we face restrictions on our lives here in the UK:

Thank You for the freedoms we have always enjoyed to worship You and to proclaim the gospel.

Give us compassion for all who regularly face oppression and persecution for the name of Jesus Christ.

And continue, we pray, to build and protect Your church; In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



**PORTISHEAD**

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*Website* [www.portisheadmethodistchurch.co.uk](http://www.portisheadmethodistchurch.co.uk)

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

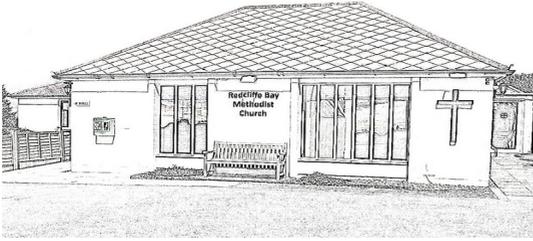
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

YOUTH EVENT

WESLEY TODDLERS

*We will be back !*

*Have you visited our new web site? Easy to view on mobile phones.*



# REDCLIFFE BAY

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

## NEWS OF THE FAMILY

We were sorry to learn that Bryan Pepler died on 18th April. We think and pray for his family at this sad time.

Viv Kew who attended Wednesday Focus, sang with Portishead Choral Society and was formerly organist at the URC has been troubled by memory problems of late. She is being looked after in a care home in Weston-Super-Mare.

## BAYCON BUTTY CLUB

We hope it will not be long before we can resume this meeting on the first Thursday of the month, 10.00 – 11.30 am

## WEDNESDAY FOCUS

Plans for the next series of meetings, hopefully starting in September, are well advanced. We look forward to gathering again.

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



In November the Church will celebrate it's 90th Anniversary. We are pleased that the District Chairman, Rev Dr Jonathan Pye has agreed to conduct the service.

## POSTSCRIPTS

An elderly husband and wife visit their doctor when they begin forgetting little things. Their doctor tells them that many people find it useful to write themselves little notes. When they get home, the wife says, "Dear, will you please go to the kitchen and get me a dish of ice cream? And maybe write that down so you won't forget?" "Nonsense," says the husband, "I can remember a dish of ice cream." "Well," says the wife, "I'd also like some strawberries and whipped cream on it." "My memory's not all that bad," says the husband. "No problem - a dish of ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream. I don't need to write it down." He goes into the kitchen; his wife hears pots and pans banging around. The husband finally emerges from the kitchen and presents his wife with a plate of bacon and eggs. She looks at the plate and asks, "Hey, where's the toast I asked for?"



A young man decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet shop and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet.

After some discussion, he finally bought a talking centipede, which came in a little white box to use for his house. He took the box back home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him.

So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today? We will have a good time." But there was no answer from his new pet. This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?"

But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation. Then he decided to invite the centipede one last time.

This time he put his face up against the centipede's house and shouted, "Hey, in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about God?"

This time, a little voice came out of the box, "I heard you the first damn time! I'm putting my shoes on!"

*Authors unknown*

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*by **SUNDAY 17th May***