

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-19
Issue 15 **June 28th 2020**

A message from Deacon Irene...

It has been over a hundred days of Lockdown during this Global Pandemic where we have been advised to stay in our homes and within our own households and to go out only for essentials and exercise. Although we can now finally look forward to getting out and about more as restrictions are lifted, there is no doubt that things will not be the same as they were before.

It has been an enormously stressful time for all of us, for ministers as well as church members and I cannot even begin to imagine what the many other groups who also use our church buildings are going through, what they are thinking or planning for the days ahead.

As we prepare to reopen our churches, I'd like us to especially remember in our prayers those responsible for deciding the changes that need to be made and implementing the measures that need to be in place before we can meet together again for worship. We're told that there may not be any singing and that we will still need to practice social distancing, this will not be easy.

No one can say for sure what the future holds and we are all being asked to think about what the church needs to look like when we do open. We need to be careful because this virus has not gone away. We also need to be extra patient with each other because we need to navigate this complex terrain, together.

Psalm 89:1- 4, 15-18 (NIV)

1 I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

2 I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

3 You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,

4 "I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations."

15 Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, Lord.

16 They rejoice in your name all day long; they celebrate your righteousness.

17 For you are their glory and strength, and by your favour you exalt our horn.

18 Indeed, our shield belongs to the Lord, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

This coming week let us pray

- *for those who have suffered from loneliness and isolation*
- *for schoolchildren who have missed the social interaction that comes with school life*
- *for Racial Justice in this country and beyond*
- *for our ministers under a huge amount of pressure*
- *for those facing an uncertain future brought about by a change of circumstances*
- *for those who have lost loved ones*
- *for ourselves as we continue to persevere during this Lockdown*

Lord in your mercy

(Thanks to Deacon Irene for filling in for Ralph this week – Editor)

What's On This Week

Sunday 28th June

10am *Taketime Live* join in a meditation in real time, or later by pasting <https://mixlr.com/taketime/> into your Web browser

10:45am live worship with Rev Ralph

Note – no weekday offerings from Ralph this week as he is on leave.

Prayers at 6 & 8

As the lockdown continues to ease and we see reports from other countries of Covid-19 increasing again, please pray that people respond carefully and sensibly, obeying the safety guidance and considering the welfare of others. Pray that we and those we love stay safe and that this pandemic comes to an end.

Methodist Conference 2020

This year's Methodist Conference is meeting from 25th June to 2nd July. This year the sessions will be held online using Zoom meeting technology. To watch some of the proceedings go to <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-conference/conference-2020> where many of the sessions will be live streamed. Please pray for all participants and for God's guidance in the decisions they make.

Please pray for

Geoff who is now back home, for his wife Jean and the rest of his family as they care for him

Continue praying for anyone we know who has needs known to ourselves.

Send your prayer requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com

Permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list.

News of Rev Ralph

Rev Ralph Ward was initially appointed to the Redhill and East Grinstead circuit for 5 years which comes an end in August 2021. Now is the time for him to request either an extension to this term or to move on to serve elsewhere.

Ralph has decided that the time is right for him to move to pastures new, so will be leaving us in August 2021.

This is very sad for us as he has brought new life and vigour to our community at St Paul's. However, we have learnt much and grown in strength as a church under Ralph's spiritual leadership and we can trust in God to help us continue that growth with a new minister from September 2021.

As Senior Steward of St Paul's I thank Ralph on behalf of us all for all he has done in developing us and we wish him and Adele well as they look ahead to their future elsewhere.

The Circuit Invitation Committee will soon be working to find a new minister for Trinity and St Paul's and I will keep you all abreast of developments as they happen. *Joyce*

Barry's Isolation Diary week 12 – Cycling Re-discovered

I received my release letter on Tuesday, although "release" might be a little strong, perhaps "parole" or "release on licence" might be closer to the reality at least until 1st August. In the end it will come down, as it will for all of us, to what risks we are prepared to take and what limitations on our daily lives we are happy to accept.

When did you last ride a bike? Was it way back in your youth when ownership of a bike gave you the freedom to roam further from home without your parents?

As a variation in my "hectic and busy life" I have been going for a ride early in the morning instead of a walk. Now, my son-in-law, who regularly posts details of his rides around Surrey and Sussex even from before the lock down, doesn't consider my rides proper, because they are on an electric bike. When Sheila and I bought our motorhome in 2012 we also bought each other a new bicycle. This was about the time electric bikes were first being mentioned in the press and on television as the coming thing. Having tried cycling without assistance and found it just as hard as we all imagine it would be, I investigated and discovered that we could buy a conversion kit for our new bikes. This would give us a range of between 20 and 40 kilometres depending on what degree of assistance was set.

Once you have tried one, I guarantee you won't want to go back. No more wobbling along the road or path. As you start to peddle away the sensor on the chain wheel recognises that you are pedalling and the motor automatically kicks in, reducing significantly the work you have to do. Slopes just vanish and all but the steepest of hills can be tackled with relative ease.

It appears from the press and various reports that bikes are back in fashion and electric bikes make up a significant proportion of new sales. If we are all going to remain apprehensive of travelling on public transport then bikes may be the answer for travel around town in clement weather and electric bikes even more so for those of us whose youth is some time in the past....

Keep safe and God Bless, *Barry*

We have an Angel in Cedar Lodge!

A member of St Pauls, who recently moved into Cedar Lodge has helped no end of people - not only doing shopping for those unable to get out, but buying strawberries, ice creams and other goodies as well as befriending the lonely. There are a lot of us who have reached their 90's. I am fortunate in having my daughter Sue and son David to do shopping but our angel has also provided for us, firstly by making pancakes with lemons and sugar and inviting us to join her in eating them. Since Easter she has continued her good works and deserves to be recognised. *Judy*

Can you nominate an Angel?

There must be more angels who have been ministering to some of us during the last 3 months of lockdown. They all deserve recognition so please email their story to ask.stpauls@gmail.com. Their names will be withheld to protect their privacy.

One of the mysteries of living alone

*How can things vanish when you live on your own?
There's no one to take them if you're all alone.
Inanimate objects how can they fly?
Where do they go to? Where do they lie?
Why isn't my book just where I left it?
Where is that letter - I've only just read it!
There must be a reason why objects take walks.
They really can't vanish or soar like the hawks.
There's no one to blame when it's only just me,
I think I'll give up and just make some tea.*

Many thanks to Bobbie Gillett for sending this.

Here are the answers to Ray Bullen's Bible Books puzzle

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from John's boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That is a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the book in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, the books are all right there in plain view hidden from sight. Those able to find all of them will hear lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind that punctuation and spacers in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember there is no need for a mad exodus, there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in the paragraph waiting to be found.

Contacts

Rev Ralph is currently on leave

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Prayer requests & newsletter items ask.stpauls@gmail.com

St Paul's website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

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