

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

Extraordinary Times *a magazine to help us through COVID-19*

Issue 1

March 22nd 2020



Hi everyone

These are strange days indeed, and challenging times for everyone in churches of all denominations, as we cope without our practice of meeting together in fellowship every Sunday. As the weeks go on, we will discover just how much that fellowship means to us – it's good in a way that we have this test, so that we can realise how easy it is normally for us to take church for granted. It's almost like we've given up church for Lent!

Everyone stay safe and stand firm. In the words of the old wartime slogan, "Keep calm and carry on".

Ralph Ward

*Lord Jesus we pray,
That just as much as you faced isolation in the desert for
forty days,
So we may use this time of isolation from our brothers and
sister in church to reflect upon how much they mean to us.
May we use the time to grow closer to you and walk closely
with you.
For you, Jesus, are with us every step of the way;
when friends are many and close by,
And when we feel alone.
You are the good shepherd; thank you that you do not leave
us on the hillside.
Your love and your presence are constant and everlasting.
Amen.*

Yes, we can worship together!

Rev Ralph will be leading services in front of the cameras, in an empty Trinity church, each Sunday at 10:45am so that St Paul's and Trinity can join together in worship.

- You will need to go to <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityMethodistEG/>
- If you have a Facebook account you will be straight in
- If you don't have a Facebook account, select 'Not now' to the request to register and you will go to the Trinity page
- If you are tuning in on the Sunday morning the live stream should appear straight away
- All the services will stay available to watch later, in which case select **Videos** from the list on the left of the main page and choose the video you want

Mixed news of Friary Lunches

The good bit I thought you would like to know that Sara performed brilliantly as the new leader of the Friary Lunch team last Sunday. The Friary phoned at 9 o'clock to say that they couldn't let us use their hall to serve lunch, due to Coronavirus issues. However, Sara managed to organise friends to make and serve drinks from their camper van in the Friary car park before the main meal was served from another large van. Another of her team arrived shortly afterwards with a hot pudding. There was a really good atmosphere among those receiving the wonderful meal.

Unfortunately, the Friary can only offer sandwiches to their visitors this week and will then be closed for at least 2 months. I will keep you informed! *Jill*

Pastoral visits are even more important now

Those of us who use email, the internet and social media such as Facebook, can easily keep up to date with the latest news and with our friends, but quite a few of our most elderly members at St Paul's have no such access. If you know someone that applies to, please keep in touch with them by phone. Apart from keeping everyone informed, a chat could do much to help combat isolation and loneliness. If you are particularly concerned about someone please let us know by email to enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk
The Methodist Church's latest advice says: *'In these extraordinary times, pastoral support is incredibly important and it's likely it may increase but we would advise that you contact people by phone in the first instance to check they are still happy for you to go in person. If you're visiting a care home or hospital take your guidance from them.'*

Prayers at 6 & 8

Thanks to Lindelee for this idea to keep us all praying together:

We might not be able to go to church and worship together, but how about at 6am and/or 8pm, we all pray together? Each set an alarm for one or both of these times and quietly pray at home.

Some people have already said they've set an alarm to remind them to join in. At this difficult time for everyone, Lindelee asks us to pray for protection of the world's economy and for people's mental and physical health. Please send in your ideas for us to pray for together (see below).

Carry on praying

For Uvonne, Linda, Jill, Janet, Daniel, Jean and Geoff, Maureen and others with needs known to ourselves.

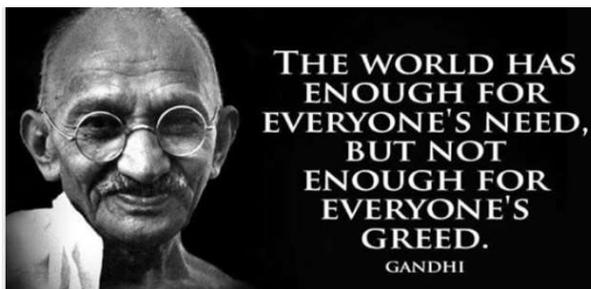
Wanted - your prayer requests and ideas

Please send your prayer suggestions for the *Prayers at 6 & 8*, your own prayer requests and your ideas for ways to pray at this time, to enquiries@crawlleymethodistchurch.org.uk for inclusion next week. Don't forget: *Methodist Church Guidelines state that permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list. Please ensure that you have such permission.*

Good news from Lorraine

Local preacher Lorraine Valler, who always says that St Paul's is her second home church and was on our prayer list for several weeks, has written to say:

I am pleased to report that I had my op on 24th February. I am home and recovering very well, better than I expected, actually! There will still be a few weeks before I am fully fit to drive and go back to work, but all things considered, the Lord has answered my prayers as He always does and I will soon be ready to get back to normal and whatever else the Lord may have in store for me! Thanks for your prayers, it means a lot. My love to all at Crawley, Every blessing, Lorraine x



**Please remember
to shop
responsibly**

Getting out and about

Good news for everyone, especially those of us self-isolating, is that the



National Trust, whilst closing visitor centres, cafés and other buildings, are keeping gardens and parks open to everyone for free. Locally, Standen and Sheffield Park will be open 10am to 5pm daily. Nymans is closed this weekend and will then be open daily from 12-4pm. Wakehurst has free

parking and entry to the gardens from 10am to 6pm. Last entry is half an hour before closing in all cases. It's probably a good idea to check websites before going as things could change as time goes along. For keen birders wanting to keep up with the Spring arrivals, RSPB reserves, such as Pulborough Brooks, will also be open, with visitor centres and cafés closed. Again, probably best to check websites. Tilgate Park is open except for the Nature Centre.



Extraordinary Times will be published weekly 'for the duration'. Please send any news, prayer suggestions and requests and contributions of positive, up-beat bits and pieces to enquiries@crawlleymethodistchurch.org.uk by 10am on Thursdays.

Finally, do enjoy these wonderful photos <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/gallery/2020/mar/19/catch-a-wave-the-2020-nikon-surf-photography-awards-in-pictures>