

# St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

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

**Issue 3**

**April 5th 2020**

*From the minister...*

I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe. Week two of the lockdown, and it does seem that most people are taking the regulations and guidelines very seriously. The road outside my home in East Grinstead is usually solid with traffic all day, but now the vehicles are much more sparse. Isn't it amazing how the nation seems to have come together so well in a united effort to help one another out and fight this virus in a responsible and determined manner? Ironic considering that so recently Britain was sharply divided over the whole Brexit thing, which now seems largely forgotten.

And quite right too, you might say. Nothing unites a nation better than a joint struggle against a common enemy. We have all had our priorities changed in recent days. The crisis has brought out the best in so many people, as they volunteer to help in whatever way they can. And our admiration and support for the NHS has never been more evident. Let us continue to pray for everyone who is placing their own safety at risk by caring for victims of this virus. Let us continue to pray for the members of our church fellowship and take a special interest in those who are vulnerable or elderly, or self-isolating.

If you receive this letter by email, could I ask you to consider anyone you know who would appreciate a copy but doesn't have access to the internet. Print a copy, put it in an envelope with a stamp and post it to them. Don't be tempted to go to their home and push it through the letterbox; it's safer to post it. Be proactive – this is a time for all of us to consider one another.

Keep your prayer requests coming, and I will feature them in our online services on the church Facebook page. These now take place on Sundays at 10.45am, and also at 2pm on a Wednesday afternoon. I'm also planning a service for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, watch Facebook for further details. Take care everyone, stand firm in Jesus. *Ralph*

*A prayer...*

*Lord, when we are no longer the masters of our own destiny*

*When we lose some of our personal freedoms*

*When fear and anxiety take us in their grip...*

*May we trust in You completely*

*For you are the Good Shepherd*

*You hold each one of us in your hand*

*And You will never let us go*

*We pray for those suffering from this virus*

*We pray for those who mourn the loss of loved ones*

*Deliver us from this time of trial*

*And may we fear nothing*

*Because You yourself are with us*

*In Jesus' name. Amen*

## **What's On This Week**

**Daily except Sunday and Wednesday** *Ralph's Song of the Day* will be on St Paul's Facebook page, usually sometime in the afternoon

### **Sunday**

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

**10:45am Live worship** with Rev Ralph linked from St Paul's Facebook page, or watch later at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAYxoqWmbeGjTnYBLpEo65Q/>

### **Wednesday**

**2pm Live half-hour worship** with Rev Ralph on St Paul's Facebook

**Maundy Thursday and Good Friday** Ralph is planning services - times will be sent out when known

## **Funeral arrangements for Jean Franklin**

After a very long wait, the funeral service for Jean Franklin will be held at 10:15am on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April at the Crematorium.

Sadly of course, no one from church will be able to attend due to the Coronavirus outbreak and limited attendance at the Crematorium.

However, the plan is that once this crisis has run its course, we will organise a proper service of thanksgiving for Jean at the church.

Please pray for Vince, Jean's son, and remember Jean if you are able, at 10.15 on the 15th.

## **Prayers at 6 & 8**

**During this week** please pray for those of our fellowship who are now under a complete 12-week lockdown. Pray for workers doing essential work for us in the NHS, Ambulance, Fire and Police services, refuse collectors and workers in food shops and pharmacies. Pray for the safety of us all and for an end to this situation.

## **Carry on praying**

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

**Please send** your prayer suggestions, prayer requests and ideas for ways to pray, to [enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk) 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.*

## **Barry's Isolation Diary week 1**

So that's it then. I am confined to home for the next 12 weeks (June 20th to save you working it out). Sheila, I suspect is dreading it.

I thought that I had escaped being classified as vulnerable but no, a four page letter of instructions (?commands) dropped on the mat and here I am holed up at home, barred from even the pleasure of a short walk each day. I have worked out that even with our relatively large garden it requires 22 circuits to achieve a distance of one mile.

The limitations in the house are much like those when a family member thinks they have the virus, the only advantage is that Sheila is still allowed out. Fortunately, we have had practice at these constraints back in 2015-16 - separate bedrooms, bathrooms and physical separation of 3 metres, but then it was only for 2 weeks at a time.

I have been occupying myself with a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle, but I suspect even that will pall over the next few weeks. We have been introduced to the House Party app by the family. Wednesday night we took part in an online pub type quiz with over 100 teams, including both daughters' families, playing concurrently. Many of the questions were clearly intended for a younger generation than our team of just Sheila and me - the best that can be said is that we didn't come last

We are coming to grips with the curious dance required to maintain a separation of 2 metres at all times but we do occasionally forget. Going up and downstairs is very much a case of 'After you', 'No, after you'.

Sheila has been taking a solo walk each afternoon whilst I have been in the shed riding on our ancient exercise bike. This has confirmed that I really don't like this form of exercise which is just soo... boring.

Who knows, I may become a keen gardener, or even a vaguely competent one, over the next few months; something I haven't achieved in the last 50 years. Of course, there are many tasks which I have been putting off for years like tidying my office and the garage etc, but, with 11 more weeks to fill, I'll get round to them next week, or have I heard that somewhere before.....

Well, one week of not leaving the house almost completed so that's all for now. Please keep safe and well and God bless us all at this troubling time for our world. *Barry*

## **Methodist Conference 2020**

The Methodist Council has agreed that the Conference cannot meet as planned in Telford in June and will look at ways for the Conference to meet in an alternative form.



## Karen's Rainbow

*Dear Extraordinary Times,  
Thank you to Autumn and Fuschia for  
their rainbow drawings. This was my  
project for the week - a crocheted  
rainbow for my window (and the  
Extraordinary Times). Karen*

Thank you, Karen – this is impressive!  
(Ed.)

Picture used with permission

## You're not **STUCK** at home, you're **SAFE** at home



Advice tweeted by Terry Waite, who spent 1763 days as a hostage in appalling conditions. He added:

- \*Keep your own dignity - get out of your PJs!
- \*Form a structure for the day
- \*Be grateful for what you have - shelter, home, possessions
- \*Read and be creative

## Baptism at a time of social distancing



***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 by 10am on Thursdays to [enquiries@crawlmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@crawlmethodistchurch.org.uk)

© St Paul's Methodist Church [www.crawlmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.crawlmethodistchurch.org.uk)  
Crawley Methodist Church is Registered Charity No. 1127744