

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-
Issue 5 **April 19th 2020**

From the minister...

I hope you are all keeping well and staying safe. Last weekend really was an Easter like no other, wasn't it? We missed out on all our usual activities and fellowship, which felt very strange. The beautiful Spring weather has seen only limited amounts of people able to benefit, as they take their daily exercise in their local area. I've just been out for a walk "around the block" with my wife Adele, and we were amazed at how quiet the streets are. I don't know what it's normally like where you live, but we live next to a busy road in East Grinstead; and we're accustomed to a never-ending stream of traffic going past our door (or standing stationary during rush hour). We've never truly got used to the constant noise, if I'm honest,. But at the moment, thanks to the Coronavirus, the roads are largely bereft of traffic.

And it's marvellous, frankly. The sense of peace and quiet is overwhelming. For the first time since we came to live here, the loudest sound we can hear is that of the birds in the trees, and the breeze moving the trees. What an unexpected benefit in the midst of such challenging times.

Nature is quite clearly going to benefit from these times. Exhaust fumes have been largely eliminated, as has environmental pollution caused by industry. It's almost as if the land is resting; enjoying a brief fallow period whilst the domination of humanity is restricted. It's deeply ironic that this is happening all around the world at a time when climate change has become so high on our global agenda. My prayer is that we can learn lessons from this experience about our vulnerability as a species, and also as an eco-system. May we emerge on the other side of this current emergency wiser, more appreciative and more responsible, both to God, to our planet, and to one another. God bless, *Ralph*

A prayer...

Father God, we praise you for all that you have made.

Forgive us when we have not appreciated the beauty of the world around us

Forgive us that our own needs and desires have become the most important things in our lives.

May we seek you in our local surroundings

May we give you thanks for your creation

May we learn the true value of every good thing that you have provided for us

And may we stay strong and confident in the face of challenge.

Bring us safely through, that we might be joyfully reunited with one another

In Jesus name, Amen

What's On This Week

Sunday 19th April

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 and later also from our website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

Wesley's Chapel offers morning prayers live every day at 10am and a service at 12:45pm Wednesdays at <https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/>

No Wednesday afternoon worship or daily songs this week as Ralph is on leave.

Sad news

Everyone who knew Janet Ockwell, who was a member at St Paul's for many years, will be sorry to hear that she passed away at her care home in Horley on Wednesday evening of natural causes. Janet had been very poorly for some time. Her brother Ron, who lives in Switzerland, will keep us informed when funeral arrangements are known but, in the current situation, that will probably not be for some time. We expect that there will be a memorial service at a later date when it becomes possible. Please remember Ron in your prayers.

Prayers at 6 & 8

During this week please pray for all residents and staff in care homes, and also in domestic situations. Pray that they get the protective equipment they need to keep them safe. Continue praying for people 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.

Please pray for

Janet's brother Ron, mourning her loss from his home in Switzerland, Bamini and her daughters Sowmya and Kayaniya who on Thursday lost their husband and father Anandan to Covid-19 aged 59.

Continue praying for Emma who cannot get back home from visiting family in another country and for Judy, Uvonne, Linda, Jill, 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

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 3

It is traditional at Easter to have lamb for the Sunday roast. Indeed, our sons-in-law have been known to only agree to come for Easter Sunday lunch if Sheila cooks her "lamb and leek". This year Sheila opted to forgo the Lamb as it was only the two of us and she was worried what Sainsbury's might send in her first online shop. However, on Monday morning we awoke to find that clearly someone in our neighbourhood had a full leg of lamb for their Sunday roast as the bone was lying on the grass in the back garden courtesy of our local fox!

There have been many reports in the news of how animals have become more adventurous since Humans have not been venturing out, the goats from the Great Orm in Llandudno etc We have had a local family of foxes (several generations) ever since we have lived here, together with numerous squirrels and the local cats who use our garden as their hunting ground and for other things. We were, however, surprised one day last week to see a that the local wildlife had been joined by a Rat which boldly walked across our patio in broad daylight. I know it is said we are all living within a few feet of Rats, but in daylight!

I am sure we have all noticed how clear and intensely blue our skies are at present due to the absence of aircraft trails and the consequent thin layer of moisture obscuring the sun. Much like when the Icelandic volcano (any one remember its name let alone be able to spell or pronounce it?) closed down aviation for a few weeks. Of course, this lack of planes and much of the noise comes at a price. This week there was a report on the radio saying that Crawley could be the hardest hit town in the country due to our dependence on the airport for employment. Let's just hope they are wrong! Currently though just enjoy the wonderful clear blue skies and be surprised when we see a plane in the sky.

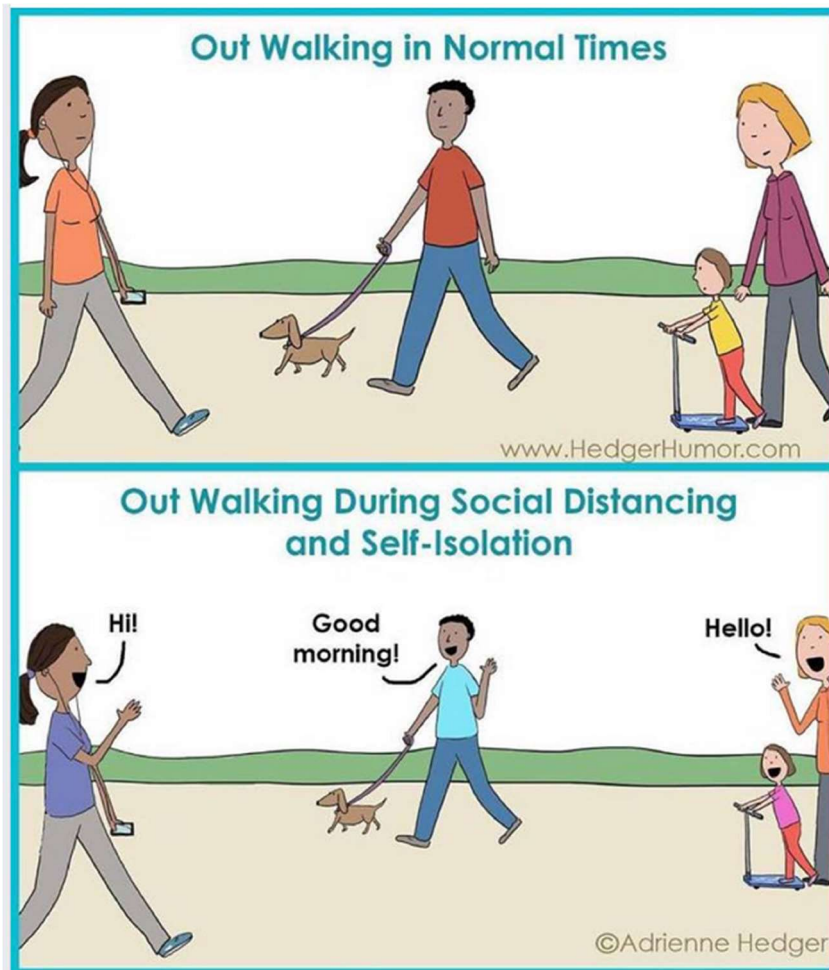
On Wednesday I enjoyed a day out in the car along deserted motorways to Guildford Hospital, for my monthly injection, and back through the glorious springtime countryside of Surrey. I must stress that this is an essential journey under the terms of my incarceration, as I was constantly reminded by the numerous illuminated signs along the motorway telling all drivers that only essential journeys should be undertaken. Much to Sheila, Victoria and Abigail's relief, I was not presented with my next two injections for them to administer, as part of a plan to reduce the numbers of people going to the hospital. As a result I get to look forward to another trip out in four weeks' time, but till then it's back to the four walls and the garden.

Keep well and God Bless, *Barry*



"To all those people who are finding it difficult at the moment, the sun will shine on you again, and the clouds will go away." said Captain Tom Moore who, at the time of writing, had raised over £18million for the NHS.

This is so true!



★**HAPPY**★
BIRTHDAY!

to **Nathan** who celebrates his birthday on the 24th April

Now we know the lockdown will last for at least another 3 weeks do keep in touch with each other. Our friendships are so precious, so make that phone call – don't wait for them to call you!



Rev Ralph is on leave until the 25th April but, if you need to talk to a minister, you can contact Deacon Irene by phone 01293 385124 or email deaconirene@gmail.com

Extraordinary Times is 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@crawlleymethodistchurch.org.uk

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