

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-19

Climate Justice: a fair balance

In the fifth in this series of articles, the Revd Simon Topping, a presbyter working in the Gloucestershire Circuit, argues that our relationship with land, sea and air (and fellow human beings) is unbalanced and that the call for rebalancing in favour of sustainability that can be found in the Bible offers a guide for climate justice.

Paul encourages the Christian community in Corinth to give generously in order to support their fellow Christian community in Jerusalem who were struggling because of the impact of recent crop failure and famine in the local region. Paul says he is looking for a "fair balance" (2 Cor 8:13) between these two communities in light of the fact that the Corinthian community was experiencing relative abundance at that point in time and the Jerusalem community was suffering from hardship and a scarcity of resources. He seems to suggest that the favour could be returned in the future if the Jerusalem community were later to experience abundance and the Corinthian community scarcity.

This call for rebalancing in favour of sustainability is a theme that appears elsewhere in the Bible and speaks to our present call for climate and environmental justice. In particular the Jubilee and Sabbath laws demand a regular cycle of rebalancing. For human society, this rebalancing is to take place every fifty years: debts are to be cancelled, property and land is to be restored to the original owners and slaves are to recover their freedom. There is a balancing out between those who have more than they need and those who have less than they need, in order to achieve a truly flourishing and sustainable society.

And these same principles of balance are also applied to humanity's relationship with the natural world around them through the Sabbath laws and the fallow year. For six years humanity is able to use the land to produce the crops necessary for healthy living. Over these six years the goodness of the land is gradually depleted, the nutrients are extracted, its fertility is exhausted. But then comes the fallow year in which the goodness of the soil can be recovered, its nutrients restored. The time of extraction is balanced by a time of replenishment. The same is true of the day of Sabbath rest when the six days of human and animal labour is balanced by one day of restoration. Biblical justice involves this principle of rebalancing.

But our present relationship with the land, sea and air (and fellow human beings) is unbalanced, and therefore unjust. Our present economic model extracts, depletes and exploits without opportunities for recovery and restoration. St Paul challenges us to seek a “fair balance” in a way that will allow the natural world to replenish its exhausted resources, and ensure a sustainable sharing of those resources amongst all who share this planet with us.

What's On

- Sunday 13th** **9:30am in the church** spoken service with Rob Burridge
10:30am online worship with Rob Burridge
- Sunday 20th** **9:30am in the church** Communion service with Rev Clive McKie
10:30am online worship with Rev Clive McKie
- Sunday 27th** **9:30am in the church** spoken service with Mr John Starling
10:30am online worship with Mr John Starling

IMPORTANT

Sunday 20th **10am** A short General Church Meeting, dealing only with essential business, will be held in the sanctuary after the 9:30am Communion service. Everyone welcome, but only members of the Methodist Church may vote.

Find all online services on [St Paul's Facebook page](#) and [website home page](#)

For Kids and young people

Fridays 6-7pm Kids and Young People *Friday Funday*

Fridays 7pm Young Peoples' Singing Group

In your prayers

Continue to pray for Lyn and Richard and for all others you know who need prayers at this time.

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

Friday Funday

For the past few weeks our children and young people have been getting together from 6-7pm on Fridays for half an hour of Bible teaching and related activities followed by half an hour of play and socialising. It's going very well. The kids are enjoying being back together again and they have decided to call this time *Friday Funday*. Thanks are due to Laura Tazob who has got this up and running. Laura says she is pleased with how it's going but she needs a few more leaders and helpers joining in. If you feel called to come and help on a Friday evening, regularly or occasionally, please email ask.stpauls@gmail.com. If you're not sure what being a leader means, you could just drop in any Friday evening and see what's going on. Please pray for *Friday Funday*, its leaders and all our young people.

Circuit staffing news

As announced previously, Revd Gillian Baalham will be moving from the North Bedfordshire Circuit to join our circuit staff from 1st September this year. She will have pastoral charge of Horley and Redhill churches.

Also in September Elisabeth Brooks, a Probationer Minister, will be coming into our Circuit. She will be primarily based at Reigate Methodist Church but will also spend one day a week at Trinity church in East Grinstead.

Another new addition to the Circuit Staff will be Deacon Jenny Parnell who will be coming to us from Wharfedale and Aire Circuit. Jenny was ordained in 2019, has 4 adult children and will be living in the St Paul's manse with her husband, Mervyn. We expect her to arrive at the end of September or early October.

Dates and times of welcome services for all these new staff members will be announced later.

Ralph's farewell

As you are aware, Rev Ralph will be moving on to pastures new in August. Ralph will be having an 'open' afternoon/evening between 5 - 9pm on Saturday 24th July at Trinity Church, East Grinstead to which everyone from the Trinity and St Paul's congregations is warmly invited. Save the date!

As is customary, we are inviting people to contribute to Ralph's leaving gift. This can be done in the following ways:-

- Make a payment directly into Trinity's bank account - referenced as 'Ralph leaving gift'. Please email ask.stpauls@gmail.com for the bank details.
- Put your contribution into the collection plate, labelled 'Ralph leaving gift', after the 9:30am service at St Paul's on a Sunday
- Post your contribution, labelled as 'Ralph leaving gift', to:
Trinity Methodist Church,
Lingfield Road,
East Grinstead,
West Sussex RH19 2HA

If you are paying by cheque, make it payable to Trinity Methodist Church and please make your contribution by Sunday 20 June 2021.

New deacons to be ordained

On Saturday 19 June an ordination service for four newly qualified Deacons is to be held at Trinity church, East Grinstead. This would normally be held during Conference but was unable to go ahead last year. Rev Melvyn asks for our prayers for these new deacons as they embark on their ministry.

14-18 June is Loneliness Awareness Week

Despite the easing of lockdown measures over recent weeks, there remains significant concern about the future health and wellbeing of many individuals of all ages for whom loneliness and social isolation is a daily reality.



Christians Together Against Loneliness is a group of Christian organisations working to combat loneliness. They seek to inspire, equip and mobilise churches and the individuals in them to alleviate the loneliness in their local communities. We all have a part to play. See more on the excellent website <https://www.ctal.uk/>

MHA Sunday 13th June



MHA Sunday is an opportunity to give thanks and celebrate the specialist care and support offered by MHA, enabling people in later life to live well across Britain. In a normal year we would have had a special collection at St Paul's to support their work. If you would like to donate this year, you can do so at <https://donate.mha.org.uk/mhasunday/>

No fuss ice cream

Home-made ice cream is a real treat in the summer but, for lazy cooks like me, the traditional recipes call for too much effort with repeated churning to avoid ice crystals forming. This recipe, using condensed milk, avoids all that and is really simple. The basic recipe can be varied by stirring in crushed fruits such as raspberries or strawberries, cocoa powder and chocolate chips or, one of my favourites, chopped stem ginger and some honey. You can reduce the fat content by replacing half the cream with low-fat Greek yogurt. Try and enjoy! *Joyce*

Basic ingredients

200g (or half a tin) condensed milk

600ml whipping cream

2 tsp vanilla paste or essence

Method

Beat the cream until quite stiff

Add condensed milk and vanilla and beat again

At this stage add any extra ingredients

Pour into a freezer safe container and cover

Freeze until solid (3-4 hours or overnight)



Contacts

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

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

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