



# Newsletter

## 18th October 2020



Birthday wishes are sent to Courtney who celebrates her birthday this week. We hope you enjoy your special day.

### Daily Bible Readings

- Mon 19th:** Psalm 63:1-8; Exodus 40:34-38; Revelation 18:1-10, 19-20
- Tues 20th:** Psalm 63:1-8; Numbers 12:1-9; Revelation 18:21-24
- Weds 21st:** Psalm 63:1-8; Numbers 13:1-2, 17-14:9; Matthew 17:22-27
- Thurs 22nd:** Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 31:14-22; Titus 1:5-16
- Fri 23rd:** Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 32:1-14, 18; Titus 2:7-8, 11-15
- Sat 24th:** Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 32:44-47; John 5:39-47

*Courtney is celebrating her 9th birthday on Monday 19th October, we wish you a very happy day.*

*We received the sad news that Jean Pickering passed away last week. Jean had been a Methodist local preacher for many years and had close associations with Shoebury, Great Wakering and Whittington Avenue for almost 40 years. We also heard this week that Andy Thomas is very ill in hospital.*

*Please keep Andy, Ruth C. and Phyl in your prayers.*



Thank you to all those who donated peas, pies and puds for Harvest. These will be gratefully received by the foodbank.



Just a reminder that the deadline for filling the Christmas shoeboxes is Sunday 8th November. If you're have difficulty getting out to buy the gifts you can fill a shoebox on online. For further details please visit their website: <https://shoeboxonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/>

# Simple Wholemeal Apple Cake

## Ingredients:

- 350g sharp eating apples such as cox (unprepared Weight)
- 225g self-raising wholemeal flour 8oz
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 115g butter 1 stick, firm but not fridge cold, cubed
- 115g light brown soft sugar
- 1 large egg beaten
- 110 ml milk
- 1 ½ tbsp demarera sugar



## Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Grease an 18cm/7in round deep cake tin and line the base with baking parchment.

Peel, core and dice the apples, set aside. Mix together the flour, salt, cinnamon and mixed spice in a large bowl; add the butter and rub in using your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse sand and no chunks of butter remain.

Stir in the sugar, then the apples. Mix in the egg followed by the milk. The mixture should be quite stiff but if it seems dry add a little more milk until it reaches a reluctant dropping consistency.

Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and level. Bake for about 1 hour, but start checking its done after 45 minutes; it should be firm and a skewer inserted into the centre should come out clean. Cover loosely with foil partway through baking if the top begins to darken too much.

Remove the cake from the oven and immediately sprinkle with demerara sugar. Leave to cool in the tin for half an hour or so then turn out onto a wire rack and leave to cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

## Film Titles Part Two Answers

1. The Fly
2. E.T
3. Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
4. A Star is Born
5. Honey I Shrunk The Kids
6. Lord of The Rings
7. Reach for the Sky
8. Genevieve
9. Street Car named Desire
10. Pillow Talk
11. Twelve Angry Men
12. Beaches
13. True Grit
14. The Man in the Iron Mask
15. The Battle of Britain
16. Planet of the Apes
17. Mutiny on the Bounty
18. Cleopatra
19. Tea With Mussolini
20. The Postman Always Rings Twice
21. Planes, Trains and Automobiles
22. Camelot
23. Lethal Weapon
24. Four Weddings and a Funeral
25. Apollo 13
26. Reservoir Dogs
27. Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July
28. On The Waterfront
29. Cape Fear
30. Breakfast at Tiffany's
31. Zulu
32. The Horse Whisperer
33. Free Willy
34. American Graffiti
35. Sleepless in Seattle
36. The Green Mile
37. My Fair Lady
38. The Lavender Hill Mob
39. Goodbye Mr Chips
40. The Birdman of Alcatraz

## **Why Wait for the new Normal!**

Hello from the Manse!

So, the Government this week announced a new three tier monitoring system of Covid-19, Medium, High and Very High. Thankfully this time it means no change to what churches do. We found out that the scientists that advise our Government wanted a "circuit breaker lockdown" of two weeks rather than take the gamble of maybe having a longer lockdown in the middle of winter. As a church we have many views about what is best, but our prayers still lie with those that govern and those scientists who try to find a cure. Through all this I'm left wondering this week that we seem to be in a never-ending cycle of waiting. Why should we wait for a new normal?

Don't get me wrong, I don't think we should carry on like we did before, getting on with our business in the way we did. I do believe that Hands, Face, Space works. More importantly we have an opportunity to remind people of what normal should be, kindness, compassion and looking after each other. That society actually became consumers in expecting others to do that work. The one big failure of the Methodist Church in recent years is the need to wrap us up in bureaucracy so that we show that we are doing all the right things without actually doing the right the things. So, I'm left wondering, how much better it would be if the new normal was to get back to basics. Each morning wake up, challenge ourselves to think of one person who needs help and then go out and do it! Little acts of kindness. Showing the Kingdom of Heavens values.

I'm reminded of the time when Jesus was walking to Jericho. A large crowd gathered and a blind man called Bartimaeus asked Jesus to help him see again. The crowd rebuked him it wasn't right for him to bother Jesus but not only did Jesus listen, not only did Jesus act and heal his sight, he rewarded the man with telling him that his faith had healed him. Telling him that he had been a big part of his healing, not just Jesus.

I wonder if as a society we could be part of our own healing and help society be more kind and caring to one another? Could normal be that? Jesus originally came because on our own we couldn't heal ourselves it was only with help that we could. The people on the road to Jericho got the protection of Jesus as the priority but Jesus, showed them that compassion and the faith of individuals is the important way in which to live their/our lives.

My prayer this week is that we follow blind Bartimaeus' example and be part of society healing, a normal.

God Bless

*Pete*

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

### **Opening Prayer**

To You we rise, in You we rest  
We stay at home, we go on quest,  
Still You are our abode (from H and P 39, v5 alt.)

**Hymn:** 608 All Praise to our redeeming Lord  
who joins us by His grace  
(for an organ version see:  
<https://youtu.be/VQQwzluyBaw>)

All praise to our redeeming Lord,  
who joins us by his grace,  
and bids us, each to each restored,  
together seek his face.

He bids us build each other up;  
and, gathered into one,  
to our high calling's glorious hope  
we hand in hand go on.

The gift which he on one bestows,  
we all delight to prove;  
the grace through every vessel flows,  
in purest streams of love.

E'en now we think and speak the same,  
and cordially agree;  
concentred all, through Jesu's name,  
in perfect harmony.

We all partake the joy of one,  
the common peace we feel,  
a peace to sensual minds unknown,  
a joy unspeakable.

And if our fellowship below  
in Jesus be so sweet,  
what heights of rapture shall we know

when round his throne we meet!

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

### **Prayer of Approach**

Heart-stirring God,  
You know each of us by name  
and day by day we discover your favour  
afresh.  
Your love is new every morning.  
Your Presence remains with us,  
whether we are called to travel or need to  
stay put.  
You are our rest-giver and the source of our  
peace.

We marvel that you choose to be gracious to  
us.

We are touched and humbled by the mercy  
You extend.

We ask You to stir our hearts and teach us  
Your ways so that we who belong to You may  
know more of You.

Show us Your glory.

Open our eyes to it, stretching in beauty over  
the face of the earth,  
shining in the face of Christ Jesus and smiling  
in the faces of every life lighted by Your Spirit,  
so that we and all Your people may give You  
glory and worship You in Spirit and in Truth.

**Amen** (prayer inspired by Exodus 33 vv. 12-23)

### **Prayer of Confession**

(You can begin this prayer with your hands held shut)

Giving and forgiving God, You are rich in  
mercy and generous to all.

Help us to see clearly the priorities, prejudices and anxieties in our lives.

Help us to face honestly the injustice, greed and exploitation of the society in which we live.

Forgive us when our concerns have been limited and we have behaved as if our lives and resources were ours to use as we wished.

Forgive us when we have failed to let Your big-heartedness open our hearts and hands.

(Open your hands)

Merciful God, give us the grace and courage to open our hearts and hands.

Shape our lives and use us for we belong to You.

**Amen**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Receive the riches of God's mercy and grace. Know beyond any doubt that You are loved and forgiven in Jesus

### **Today's Reading from the Old Testament**

Exodus 33 vv. 12-23

### **Today's Epistle Reading**

I Thessalonians 1 vv. 1-10

### **Today's Gospel Reading**

Matthew 22 vv. 15-22

### **Time to Reflect**

There have been times in the past months, in those moments between sleeping and waking, where I have 'come to' and then remembered 'yes, we are still here, in the middle of the pandemic'. Like everyone who thought they had 'a settled life', I find myself continually adjusting to new levels of uncertainty, and expectations which have changed so much. Often all we can know is that another day starts and we are still 'here, in the middle' and we do not know how or when this 'new normal' will end.

This is a strangely interim life, fluid and marked by waiting, stuck in what is

sometimes described as the 'messy middle'. It may have been like too for the early Christians Paul wrote to at Thessalonica. His letter offers testimony to the extraordinary dynamism of early Christianity. Probably written within twenty years of the Crucifixion it presents a recognisable picture of established church life. But these Christians are keenly conscious that they are living 'in the middle' between God's great act of rescue and their eternal hope. In the midst of persecution and bereavement they may well have felt stretched and disorientated. The Gospel passage gives us the feeling of 'coming in in the middle', as if we had walked into a room in the middle of a conversation or turned on a television or radio in the middle of a drama. Whether it was right to pay taxes to the Romans was a long-running debate on which many took entrenched positions. It is a clever and dangerous 'trick question' because a direct answer lays Jesus open to charges of collaboration or revolution.

Matthew shows us Jesus taking and holding the coin, perhaps turning it over in His hand, studying the image of the Emperor, reading the imperial titles with their grandiose claims. In the hands of Jesus, a new perspective emerges and tense political and ethical question is seen in a new light. The principle is the priority of God, the need to render God what is due. The question of 'what is owed' to Caesar is addressed to the questioners. What new perspectives on entrenched issues and problems might Jesus open for us when we turn them over and put them in His hands?

To those Thessalonians picking their way through the 'messy middle', Paul's words were surely hugely encouraging. He shares how he thanks God for them in his prayers. He observes how their genuine faith and change of priorities was apparent to him and all the churches. When we think about how we support each other as Christians, we often focus on giving kindly advice or practical help. Paul shows us that one of the most affirming and valuable things we can do is to point out

signs of God's presence in their lives. Paul is like a field officer, actively searching for and affirming signs that the Spirit is at work in these new churches. Moses told God that he didn't want to go on another step, didn't want to budge, unless assured of continuing God's presence (Exodus 33 vv. 15-16). With joy Paul discovers such signs of God's Presence bringing renewal and change in the lives of his fellow Christians and it brings him to his knees in thankful joy. May God open our eyes and hearts so we like Paul can start our own scavenger hunt for signs of God's presence and offer words of encouragement and affirmation, and prayers of thanks.

### **Take a time to sit quietly**

Think of Jesus giving attention to a tricky situation where you do not know how to speak or act for the best. Pray that as you put this into Jesus's hands you will receive a renewed perspective.

In the 'messy middle' what would it mean to embark on a scavenger hunt for signs of God's Presence? Give thanks for someone in whose life you see God at work. Is there a way you could encourage them by letting them know?

### **A time of prayer**

#### **Patient God**

Help us to remember that we can't find the words, You listen to our hearts and Your Spirit pleads for us in sighs too deep to be spoken.

Lover of Justice, we hold before You the peoples of the world. Establish equity and grant wisdom.

Strong God, we hold before You the church through the world and our own churches. Strengthen hearts and renew vision.

Merciful one, we hold before You those we know in need. Reach out with healing and restoration, encircle in comfort and care.

Listening God, refresh our sense of Your Presence and strengthen and guide us day by

day, until with all Your beloved people we see You face to face in Your Kingdom.

**Amen**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father .....*

**Hymn: Listen to StF 615 Let Love be real**  
<https://youtu.be/SkBaxZw5NxU> (Matt Beckingham) **or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind**

Let love be real, in giving and receiving,  
without the need to manage and to own;  
a haven free from posing and pretending,  
where every weakness may be safely known.  
Give me your hand, along the desert pathway,  
give me your love wherever we may go.

*As God loves us, so let us love each other:  
with no demands, just open hands and space  
to grow.*

Let love be real, not grasping or confining,  
that strange embrace that holds yet sets us free;  
that helps us face the risk of truly living,  
and makes us brave to be what we might be.  
Give me your strength when all my words are  
weakness;  
give me your love in spite of all you know.

Let love be real, with no manipulation,  
no secret wish to harness or control;  
let us accept each other's incompleteness,  
and share the joy of learning to be whole.  
Give me your hope through dreams and  
disappointments;  
give me your trust when all my failings show.

*Michael Forster (b. 1946)*

### **A prayer of blessing**

May God our Father inspire and strengthen us  
in our work of faith

May Christ Jesus our brother motivate and  
sustain us in our labour of love

May the Spirit our helper establish and build in us a steadfast hope.

That our living may be a reason for thanksgiving and bring Glory to God.

Amen.

Original Materials by [Miriam Stevenson](#)

All

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## **Exodus 33: 12-23**

### **Moses' Intercession**

Moses said to the LORD, 'See, you have said to me, "Bring up this people"; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found favour in my sight." Now if I have found favour in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favour in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.' He said, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' And he said to him, 'If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favour in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.'

The LORD said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name.' Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, "The LORD"; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But', he said, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.' And the LORD continued, 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.'

## **1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10**

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:  
Grace to you and peace.

### **The Thessalonians' Faith and Example**

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of people we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place where your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

## **Matthew 22:15-22**

### **The Question about Paying Taxes**

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?' But Jesus, aware of their malice, said,



'Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.' And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, 'Whose head is this, and whose title?' They answered, 'The emperor's.' Then he said to them, 'Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.