

Together as One

Newsletter of the Methodist Churches in Hungerford, Lambourn, Newbury and Thatcham during Coronavirus Pandemic

Verse for the week

“Jesus was coming close to Jerusalem. He was already near the bottom of the Mount of Olives. The whole group of followers was happy. They were very excited and praised God. They thanked God for all the powerful things they had seen. They said “Welcome! God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord.” Peace in heaven and glory to God.” (John 19:37-38 ERV)

One Year On

Where has the past year gone? I think most people expected the first lockdown to be the only one. Many of you were told to shield and stay at home. Full stop. I know some who shielded and continue to shield, have found it challenging whilst others have enjoyed themselves, discovering new talents, gardening, or feeling no pressure to attend anything or go anywhere. We're all getting through the pandemic in different ways. I know I panicked and worried about how I was going to cope with being at home for 12 weeks. I love being out and about. What was I going to do? I soon found out as we tried to put in place support for all who needed it. Since then we've had two more lockdowns, with a brief respite in the summer months and a whole year of adhering to “Hands, Face, Space”. Sadly there have been more than 126,000 deaths in the UK and the number continues to rise. Thankfully millions of people have recovered from Covid. The Covid vaccination programme is in full swing with many people about to have their second dose. What can we take from this past year? Perhaps it's the incredible way communities have come together to assist those who need help? Maybe, it's the loneliness you've felt at not being able to attend worship or see friends. Perhaps you've discovered you really can get to grips with technology! How do you feel about this past year?

Today is Palm Sunday. If we were physically in our church buildings we'd be waving our palm crosses as we think about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. As our bible verse reminds us “The whole group of followers was happy.” How things change over the next few days. As I grow older I find the events of Holy Week more moving, more thought provoking and find myself asking more questions. However, of this I'm sure, on the third day after what we call Good Friday, Jesus Christ rose from the dead to bring hope to our world and to be a Saviour to all who accept him into their lives.



As a friend wrote to me this week, “Wouldn't it be good if the end of Covid was as certain as the coming of Easter?”

Today I hope you will join me in rejoicing and singing “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

With my love and prayers

Karen

You say ... God says...

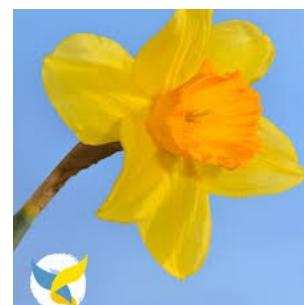
It's OK not to feel OK, to feel low in mood at this time and it can be helpful to be reminded of some useful scripture texts.



You say	God Says	Bible Verses
I can't figure it out.	I will direct your steps	Proverbs 3:5-6
I'm too tired.	I will give you rest.	Matthew 11: 28-30
It's impossible.	All things are possible.	Luke 18:27
Nobody loves me.	I love you.	John 3:16
I can't forgive myself	I forgive you.	Romans 8:1
It's not worth it.	It will be worth it.	Romans 8:28
I'm not smart enough.	I will give you wisdom.	I Corinthians 1:30
I'm not able.	I am able.	II Corinthians 9:8
I can't go on.	My grace is sufficient.	II Corinthians 12:9
I can't do it.	You can do all things.	Philippians 4:13
I can't manage.	I will supply all your needs	Philippians 4:19
I'm afraid.	I have not given you fear.	II Timothy 1:7

Prayer from the National Day of Reflection

Dear God,
Be with us as we think about all that has changed this year,
And help us to trust that you are always with us.
Be close to us as we remember those who have died,
And help us to trust they are at peace with you.
Show us how to reach out to others with kindness and care,
So that hope shines out in every heart and home. **Amen**



FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to the President and Vice-President: 0808 281 2695

Listen to news: 0808 281 2478



Easter Garden

We're used to seeing an Easter garden in church. How about having a go at making your own this year? You could use a baking tray, line it with greaseproof paper, put moss and other small garden flowers in it along with stones or slate to make a tomb. Twigs/straws/cocktail sticks could be made into the three crosses. Alternatively you could make an Easter garden collage using paper/card and cut-outs of flowers from magazines, fabric, wool—whatever you have around your home.

And finally

A friend of mine brought home a lucky green stone from Ireland, but a geologist friend told him it wasn't a real stone.

It was a sham rock.