



# Welcome to the 'virtual' Stoneleigh Methodist Church

## Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### 10:30am: Morning Worship – Christian Aid Week

## Prayers

**Please pray** for Emma and for others within the Church and beyond; for the continued health of our key workers, and all of the National Health Service on whom we depend so much now, and at all times.

Please pray also for those of our Church family who are unwell or finding their mobility limited, and consider whether they might welcome a call from friends. And pray for the family and friends of Corrinne Payne who died recently.

*"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea," Psalms 46:1-2*

## Notices

**Weekly News/Service sheet.** During the present restrictions we cannot meet or worship at Church, but we will continue to produce a weekly News/Service sheet each Sunday which will be emailed or delivered to every member. Thanks to all those who make this possible.

**Christian Aid Week** is this coming week, 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May. There will be no street or house to house collections this year but, as with so many other things, Christian Aid has moved on-line. One-off donations this year can be made at [caweek.org/payin](http://caweek.org/payin), where you can also set up a regular donation if you wish. *Robin*

**The Link** will be compiled during May, so if you've an entry you'd like included, the deadline for submissions is **today**, 10<sup>th</sup> May. Email to [link@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:link@stoneleighmethodist.church) or send direct to Helen or Vivienne.

**Annual Church Meeting.** As Emma would like a postponed ACM as soon as possible after we return to the Church Centre, would all groups that do reports let me have them by the end of May please. Thank you – *Denise*

**FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church**



Listen to a **prayer**: 0808 281 2514

Listen to **news**: 0808 281 2478

*Content is updated weekly on Thursday afternoon*

## Around the Trolley

A section of the NewsSheet for less formal news and information exchanges. All contributions gratefully received – it's your NewsSheet! Robin

**Epsom Community Recycling Centre** (the Longmead tip) will reopen in a very limited form this Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 7 days a week, 9:00-6:00pm. Black bag and garden waste only, and at the moment journeys to the tip are allowed only for waste that 'cannot be stored at home without causing risk of injury or harm to health' – still, it's a start. Robin



**Spotted on Jo's travels** around the locality. Seems Ruxley's Peace Stone was a timely arrival!



**Only in America!**

## Contact Details

**Postal Address:** 1 Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh, Epsom KT19 0RT

**Contact:** Jeananne (07729 028850) - [contact@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:contact@stoneleighmethodist.church)

**Minister:** 020 8393 2322, [emmacusack121019@yahoo.com](mailto:emmacusack121019@yahoo.com), or Skype is available by arrangement. The Minister's Rest Day is Friday.

**News/Service sheet.** During this time of forced 'social distancing', we at SMC are focussed on maintaining weekly contact with every one of our membership, plus others who may be interested, such as specific friends at Ruxley and Tuesday Fellowship.

The combined sheet is circulated to all members, either by email, or through your letter box if we possibly can; it will also be posted onto the Church website in the normal way. If you'd like to be added to our email circulation list, or know someone who might appreciate this, just let me know. Jeananne and I are doing our very best to ensure all members are kept 'in the loop' – Robin

*Other Churches offer Services etc through the Internet such as:*

- **Christ Church with St Philip** in Worcester Park. Paul and Steph alternate Sunday mornings at 10:00am on Facebook at [facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip)
- **All Souls in Langham Place** who are producing very polished mid-week and Sunday Services at [allsouls.org](http://allsouls.org) – these are complete with music, singing and subtitles.
- **The Methodist Church** is offering 'Dial-a Prayer' free of charge, updated every Thursday afternoon, on 0808 281 2514. There's also weekly news, again free, on 0808 281 2478.

**All items for future NewsSheets** – please email to [news@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:news@stoneleighmethodist.church) or phone 020 8393 2155.

# **Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 - Christian Aid Sunday**

## **Introduction:**

*Today is the beginning of Christian Aid Week and the service sheet has prepared and recommended by the charity.*

## **Gathering Prayer:**

God of all the earth, be present with us now, in each of our homes, as we connect together. Build us into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you through Jesus Christ, our risen redeemer and healer. Amen.

## **Prayer of confession and absolution:**

How many times have you washed your hands today? We approach our prayer of confession and absolution, mindful of the ritual significance of hand washing in the Bible.

Hand washing in Scripture is closely associated with innocence and cleansing from sin. (Exodus 30:17-21, Psalm 26:6, Job 9:30, Matthew 27:24, James 4:8 to mention a few.)

*You may wish to take your device to your sink as we pray this together, or bring a bowl of water, some soap and a towel to a safe distance before your computer. Or simply join in this prayer.*

**As we turn on the tap, we turn our hearts towards you, O God.**

**As we wet our hands renew our thoughts, so we might be transformed.**

**As we lather soap between fingers and over all our hands,**

**purge from us all that brings us harm and might harm others.**

**Remove the invisible guilt and shame that so often keeps us from you.**

**As we rinse our hands, we trust in your overflowing grace, making all things new.**

**Amen.**

## **Introduction to the reading Psalm 31.**

The Revised Common Lectionary for today selects seven verses from this psalm, but since the words of the psalmist express many of the emotions that we might be experiencing during this difficult time, we will take the time to read all 24 verses.

## **Pause to reflect and pray**

Were there any verses or phrases that jumped out from the passage? Any phrases that you find helpful in these difficult days?

## **Introduction to the Gospel reading - John 14:1-14:**

This is an extract from the long farewell that Jesus gave over the last supper, shortly after he washed the feet of the disciples with his own hands. Even though we are now in the Fifth Sunday of Easter, these words have a poignancy and power for us to absorb and process this Christian Aid Week Sunday.

## **Song StF 20 - Be still, for the presence of the Lord**

- 1 Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here;  
Come bow before Him now with reverence and fear.  
In Him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground;  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.
  
- 2 Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;  
He burns with holy fire, with splendour He is crowned.  
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.
  
- 3 Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place;  
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister His grace.  
No work too hard for Him, in faith receive from Him;  
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

*David J Evans (b1957) © 1986 Thankyou Music CCL 19650*

(Silence)

### **Sermon**

Look at your hands. Have a good look.

However your hands look to you they are most certainly clean in these days of regular hand washing to prevent spreading the coronavirus.

Our hands really are the most remarkable and useful tools, involved in so much of what we do and how we do things, even in these days of social distancing.

The psalmist writes of committing his spirit into God's hands, and at times of being in God's hands. He also describes his desire to be delivered from the hands of his oppressors and from a hidden invisible net that threatens to entangle him.

Our hands have become even more significant in these days of physical distance. We might long to hold the hand of a person we can no longer touch. We pray for the hands of medics to bring healing and comfort. We are grateful for hands stacking shelves and delivering groceries and post. And we are extra wary of everything our hands touch that comes from outside our own home.

This Christian Aid Week we also think of how our hands can be far from idle. Though not handing out envelopes or hosting Big Brekkies or the many things we usually busy ourselves with this week, our hands can still reach out virtually to our neighbours around the world. Neighbours in refugee camps and cramped living conditions, neighbours without adequate hand-washing facilities, neighbours who face the devastating impact of coronavirus with even less of the medical resources we have struggled to access here.

We reach out by clasping our hands together in prayer for our neighbours and holding our hands open before God as we declare our needs and concerns for their wellbeing and our own.

We also reach out by participating in this digital Christian Aid Week, through making our online donations and sharing the stories from Christian Aid partners, working on the ground to be the hands and feet of love in action.

*If you wish, you can make a donation online to help vulnerable communities on the Christian aid website at [caweek.org/payin](https://caweek.org/payin).*

***Let us pray together using our open hands.***

### **Prayer of lament and intercession**

God our refuge, we come to you with open hands, some of us with hearts full of questions, some of us bruised by bereavement, some of us fearful of what the future holds, all of us stunned by the events of this year. Draw close to us now in each of our homes as we place our honest questions and hopes into your open, resurrected, yet scarred hands.

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With the honesty of the psalmist, the wrestling questions of Job, and the lament of the prophets, we bring to you our questions or our silence.

*(Hold your index finger and, in silence, ask the question that most burdens your heart or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the cry of our hearts, Lord, silent and aloud, for bereaved neighbours, near and far. Comfort those pained by being absent, and hold close those who are hurting alone.

*(Hold your ring finger and pray for comfort for those you know who are bereaved or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In this season of Easter, renew us with resurrection hope that while weeping lingers in this night, joy will come with the morning.

*(Hold your middle finger and in the silence tell God what you are most looking forward to in the future or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

On this Christian Aid Week Sunday, we pray for and with communities across the world who are most vulnerable to coronavirus.

We pray for people living in refugee camps and city slums, with limited sanitation facilities, who are unable to wash their hands regularly, and have little opportunity to isolate from others.

We pray for Christian Aid partners working to provide soap and buckets, communicating clear, accurate information, raising the voices of the most vulnerable and ensuring they are kept as safe as possible.



Children gather in a crowded refugee camp in Bangladesh.

*(Hold your thumb as you pray for the most vulnerable, those closest to God's heart, or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those of us who are self-isolating, which can sometimes feel like we aren't doing anything, remind us that we are all doing our part and saving lives by staying at home.

*(Hold your little finger and ask God for what you need, or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together.)*

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for much wisdom and resources for those in local and national authority for all frontline and key workers here in Britain, Ireland and across the world.

*(Put your hands together and pray for the many frontline workers and volunteers, and for Christian Aid partners working to help others across the world, or simply sit in silence before God. Hold the silence together)*

We have clapped to honour them; we clap our hands now in praise of your glorious creation and with the hope that the first shoots of another possible world are coming into view.

God in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

*The Lord's prayer*

### ***Closing Prayer and Blessing***

**May the presence of the Creator refresh you, may the comfort of the Son renew you, may the inspiration of the Spirit restore you to be love in action, even from a distance, in our neighbourhoods, near and far, this day and for evermore. Amen.**