



Welcome to the 'virtual' Stoneleigh Methodist Church

Sunday 7th June 2020

10:30am: Morning Worship – with Judy and Paulette

Prayers

Please pray for Emma, Judy and Paulette, 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.

"In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry" . . . Ephesians 4:26

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.*

Corrinne Payne. On behalf of my family and myself I would like to thank the Church Family for all the prayers, the lovely cards, messages, kind words and beautiful flowers I received over the last few weeks. I have felt comforted and supported- thank you so much. *Debbie*

The Link for June/July 2020 is now available – I'm not sure if any other local Churches are still offering printed magazines, so enjoy it while you can. If you normally pick your copy up from Church, then both Jeananne and I have a few spares - contact either of us and we'll sort you out. The website version is now also available. *Robin*

Minister's Letter. Dear friends,

On that day the announcement to Jerusalem will be; "Cheer up, Zion! Don't be afraid! For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs." (*Zephaniah 3:16-17 – New Living Translation*)

I want to say thanks to Robin and Jeananne for ensuring that, during the period of lockdown, we have continued to receive the weekly newsletter.

An aspect of the newsletter takes me back to my late teens as I may have shared that the only church organisation I joined was the youth fellowship and one of the many tributes I pay to the organisation is ensuring that members learnt a memory verse from the bible each week.

Friday being our meeting day, the opening devotion concluded with each person sharing their memory verse and all members who came late would share theirs at the close of the meeting.

Why am I sharing this? It's because immediately I receive the newsletter, I look first to see what Robin's verse of scripture is for that Sunday and I find it refreshing so thank you - Robin!

We were woken up to a surprised gesture from Miles early one morning in the week. He knocked so loud on our door, well before 8:30am, and we thought something was wrong as he beckoned us to come down to the dining room.

He entered first, we followed and, to our amazement, he said, "it is the beginning of half term and usually we would have been heading off on holiday to check into a Premier Inn. If we cannot make the journey, let us have it here."

He had been up early and brought everything he could think of from the kitchen into the dining room to set the scene of our first morning on holiday.

It brought to mind the scripture reading from the prophet Zephaniah as he thought he would cheer us up.

This is not the only reason to choose this scripture as I believe we all long for the day when lockdown will be completely eased; and we can come together again as families, friends and neighbours. We yearn to hear the Lord say to us "Don't be afraid! Cheer up - I am living among you."

The virus has indeed brought challenges and change into our normal style of living, however we are strengthened through the love of God and each other.

May the third stanza of hymn 639 from Singing the Faith, written by Mary Peters (1813-1856), be words of prayer, comfort and hope to us all.

*We expect a bright tomorrow; all will be well.
Faith can sing through days of sorrow, all, all is well
On our Father's love relying,
Jesus every need supplying
Then in living or in dying
All must be well.*

May the Peace of the Lord be with you - Emma

Around the Trolley

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

New Baby! I just wanted to let you know that Louisa had baby Poppy on Tuesday. She was 2 weeks early but both are doing well. Despite the chaos of lockdown, Ali was able to stay with them the whole time. Hope all is well with you and yours. Love Norma

New local Car Wash spotted by Jo on her travels (actually two separate pictures that seemed to go so right together!)



On-line Meeting. On Monday evening we have an online meeting, 8:00 till 9:00pm. It is so lovely to see peoples' faces, and to find out what's going on in our little world. If you'd like to join us, please email me at vivienne@ridgworld.com Vivienne

Oh, to be elsewhere! Pat and I are very much missing visiting our house in West Cork, Ireland and the peace and serenity of living there. One picture shows some of our garden and the view. The others are a couple of our favourite coastal areas where we like to walk. They are about a 15minute drive from the house. Hopefully we will be able to return soon. *Colin*



The Beacon lighthouse at Baltimore, and the beach at Warren Strand



I think the garden stops at the hedge! Robin

Contact Details

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Minister: 020 8393 2322, 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 Services etc through the Internet are:

- **The Ruxley/Stoneleigh Thursday Morning prayer** happens via Zoom and it's open to all. Please send an email to publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk by Tuesday for an ID and password to join in, and a copy of the liturgy too.
- **Christ Church with St Philip** in Worcester Park. Paul and Steph alternate Sunday mornings at 10:00am on Facebook at facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip
- **All Souls in Langham Place** who are producing very polished mid-week and Sunday Services at 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 – to news@stoneleighmethodist.church or phone 020 8393 2155.

Sunday, 7th June 2020

Trinity Sunday Service prepared by Judy Quaife and Paulette Withycombe from Ruxley Church Sunday 7th June 2020 – follow on-line at <https://youtu.be/apBPlv-z9Zo>

Three in one



Welcome

You might like to light a candle to be still before God

Opening prayer

Sovereign Lord, our Creator, your kingly name is revered throughout the whole earth;
Your glory is celebrated across the heavens; infants gurgle it, children sing it out loud;
You create a place of safety from your opponents, silencing the rebellious and vindictive.
You have set the moon and stars in their own orbits, holding them in place.

You have given us mortal a place barely lower than your own, and crowned us with glory and honour.

Sovereign Lord, our Creator, your kingly name is revered throughout the whole earth.

From Psalm 8, With a New Voice by Stuart Thomas

FATHER, WE LOVE YOU,

We worship and adore You,
Glorify Your name in all the earth.
Glorify Your name,
Glorify Your name,
Glorify Your name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love You ... (etc.)

Spirit, we love You ... (etc.)

Annabelle and the numbers 1 and 3

Annabelle is fed up. She's missing going to school and spending time with her friends. She doesn't think Mum and Dad are as good as her teachers at explaining things so we're looking at maths. She learns that while $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ in normal maths lessons, in God's world 1 (Father) $+1$ (Jesus) $+1$ (Holy Spirit) $=1$ (God).

The Bible teaches us that there is only one God yet He shows himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three different people, with different characteristics, as though one person wasn't big enough to hold all God's goodness. And this is what we celebrate on Trinity Sunday, which is today.

Reading – Matthew 28, 16-20

Talk - Paulette

May I speak in the name of the living God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

In the last week or so we're beginning to see the restrictions lifted, and if you're not having to isolate at home, you may have started to explore a bit further afield than just within walking distance of where you live. We did that recently, and although the trees and horses are lovely to see, there aren't that many hills with a view in Horton Country Park and what we both really wanted was to see the view of the top of a hill.

I really love looking at a big open view and that feeling, like you're on top of the world, and if you just looked hard enough you could see for ever and ever. I was on my first ever mountain, in Austria, and I wanted to take a picture of it, to capture that moment, but when I got out my camera I couldn't get it all in. Look at that blue sky with all the fluffy clouds - OK, which bit do I point the camera at? How about that mountain, with its beautiful lofty peak and those little houses down in the valley at the bottom? I can get the valley in, but not in the same picture as the lofty peak. OK, well, I'll take several pictures and then tell people what it was like when I get home. But how can you really do it justice when you try to describe it? How do you describe the indescribable?

In our reading today Jesus' friends go up a mountain to meet him in Galilee and when they do, they worship him. Supposing we were able to send in a BBC reporter at this amazing moment? They might ask, Who is this Jesus, and what's he like? Perhaps Jesus' friends might use words we'd use to describe the mountain view - majestic, powerful, beautiful. And what about God? And God's love for us, can you tell us about that? We might try and get it all in - wide, boundless, going on and on for ever! And what about the coming of the Holy Spirit? What's the Holy Spirit like? That's trickier, it was like tongues of fire, winds of flame, wonderful, freeing. How do you even begin? We're back to trying to describe the indescribable.

Many people over many years thought about this, and you may have heard God described in three ways: God as Father, God as Jesus, and God as Holy Spirit, and they've also thought about how they could make it a bit easier to understand. Take this Jaffa cake for instance, and thank you, I will. Mmm, very nice.

Putting aside the whole debate about whether it's a cake or a biscuit, you can see that it's definitely in three parts, a bit like the $1+1+1 = 1$ that Judy mentioned earlier. There's the cakey bit on the bottom, the orangey bit in the middle, and my favourite bit, the chocolate on the top. One biscuit (yes I'm in the biscuit camp, despite the name), but three parts. All three components work together to make one, tasty Jaffa cake. But you won't get far distilling 2,000 years of learning and debate into a comparison with a biscuit, even one that might be a cake.

Jesus says, 'Go! Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. Over the years, God's people to relate to him in different ways, because our experience of God is just that, it's a relationship. Your mum is your mum, and she's also someone's daughter, and maybe a niece or a sister, but she's still your mum. God is still God, whether we are marvelling at his creation from the top of the mountain, or thinking about how much he loves us when Jesus was born as one of us to live among us, or feeling the wind blow about us energising and renewing us, like the disciples recognised the Holy Spirit on that first Day of Pentecost.

When we sing 'Holy, Holy, Holy, God in three persons, blessed Trinity', we are acknowledging all the activity and love and creativity that we see in God, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. But we can't see it all at once, it's like trying to photograph the view: you can see wonderful, amazing bits of it and try and explain them, but it's only when you experience that love, that fellowship, and that sense of mystery and wonder, that you begin to realise that God is bigger than any of or all of it, and we can't actually describe the indescribable. But that shouldn't stop us trying.

'Go!' says Jesus. 'Go to all nations!' The Good News that God loves us is not just for those first disciples on the mountainside, it's for us too, whether you have been a Christian for years and years, or whether you are curious, whether you are out in the world caring for others or delivering the mail, or whether you have been keeping others safe by shielding at home. It's a promise of love for all of us. And, says the reading, some doubted. It's OK to doubt. It can be the elastic space where faith has room to explore, to grow, to find new places and experiences. Sometimes this is a bit scary - they don't call it being out of your comfort zone for nothing.

I don't know how you feel about going out at the moment. It may be that you can't wait to see friends and family again. It may mean doing some of the things that you were happy to stop doing for a while. It may be exciting, it may be deeply scary. Often the best way to explore new places is to go with a guide, and Jesus has already thought of that. I am with you always, he says, till the end of the age. So whether you're climbing a hill to look at the view, or finding out what it is to grow as a Christian and explore your faith; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, will go with you, and be with you always. Amen.

Prayer of commitment to Jesus

Lord Jesus Christ,

I come to You as Saviour, asking You to forgive me for all the wrong things I have thought, said and done in my life.

I choose to turn away from everything that I know is wrong.



I believe that You died on the cross for me, so that I can be forgiven and set free.



Thank you that You offer me the gift of eternal life. I now receive that gift.



Please come and fill me with Your Holy Spirit and make it possible for me to walk by faith with You, my Lord and my God.



Thank you, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee:

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who were, and are, and ever more shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Reginald Heber (1783-1826) StF 11

Intercessions

Heavenly Lord, on this Trinity Sunday we come before you to offer our thanksgiving and pray for the needs of others.

There is a response at the end of each section:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Hear our prayer.

You are God the Creator, generously giving us all things to enjoy.

We thank you for the warmth of the sun, the joy of deepening summertime and for the beauty of your world that has sustained us through the months of lockdown. We keep a

moment of quiet to think of a place that is special to us, where we feel safe and happy, and as we hold this space in our mind, we give thanks to God for this gift.

We pray for those who feel isolated, or who have no spaces in which to walk and play, and those places which are spoiled by pollution or greed.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Hear our prayer.

You are Christ the Saviour of the world, born as one of us to set us free.

Lord Jesus, although the setting may be different, we thank you that we are able to share fellowship and prayer here today, as you did so often with your friends. We give you thanks for your love for us, and for our friends and family. We remember those who look after us, our parents, family, and friends, and we ask that you look after those who are separated from loved ones, particularly grandparents.

We pray for those who are suffering because of Covid-19, for those who have lost their job, who are poorly or in hospital, those who are lonely or sad, and for those who are missing someone who has died.

We think of someone in particular need of our prayers now, and hold them before God in a moment of quiet.

In this time of grief and uncertainty caused by the Covid 19 pandemic we are reminded of the important things in life: of our love for one another and of our God for his people.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Hear our prayer.

You are the Spirit of truth and love, willing to dwell in us and with us.

We give thanks for all those who are working so hard to improve lives across the world: our NHS frontline and support staff, emergency services, charity workers and those who have taken the opportunity to sew scrubs and masks, cook extra meals and ensure that people have someone to talk to. We pray for teachers and students working to the end of this term, whether at home or in school buildings, finding new ways of teaching and learning. May they find your love and presence in their work and play. Give patience to those awaiting exam results in these uncertain times and may they be open to your calling and guidance.

We pray for those places in the world that desperately need your love and your guidance, that all may benefit from the fruits of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness.

We think of a place that desperately needs these gifts, perhaps something you have seen in the news this week, and pray for the Spirit's life-giving presence.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Hear our prayer.

You are one God, holy and blessed, and invite all people to be part of one family.

Let us together say that family prayer that Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever.

Amen.

Blessing

2 Corinthians 13, 11-end

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.