



# Welcome to the 'virtual' Stoneleigh Methodist Church

## Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### 10:30am: Morning Worship with the Rev Emma Cusack

### Prayers

Please pray for Emma, our Stewards; for others within the Church and beyond, and 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.

*"Lockdown days seem to go quite slowly; but the weeks seem to fly by" – EB*

### Notices

**Chris** came home from hospital on Wednesday (22<sup>nd</sup>) and is delighted to be home at long last. She is grateful for all the care, attention, and good wishes she has received. *Ruth.*

**It's a girl!** Just emailing with some news for you as Stacy and I have not had any chance to pop up to SMC recently what with the lockdown and everything. Our first child, a baby girl, arrived on the 12<sup>th</sup> July weighing 7lbs 9oz. We have decided to name her Jessica Joyce. She has been keeping us very busy with regular feeds and nappy changes, and fortunately I have some time off work to be at home with her and Stacy. Hope you guys are all keeping safe and well during what has been a very strange and difficult year. *Paul L. x*

### Contact Details

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**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.** 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*

**Christ Church with St Philip in Worcester Park.** *Paul and Steph alternate Sunday mornings live at 10:00am on Facebook at [facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip)*

**Surbiton Hill Methodist Church,** usually with the Rev Dr Stan Brown, 10:30am Sunday at [shmc.online.church](https://www.shmc.online.church).

**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.

**The Ruxley/Stoneleigh Thursday Morning prayer by Zoom and it's open to all.** Email to [publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk](mailto:publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk) by Tuesday for details and a copy of the liturgy too.

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

# 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

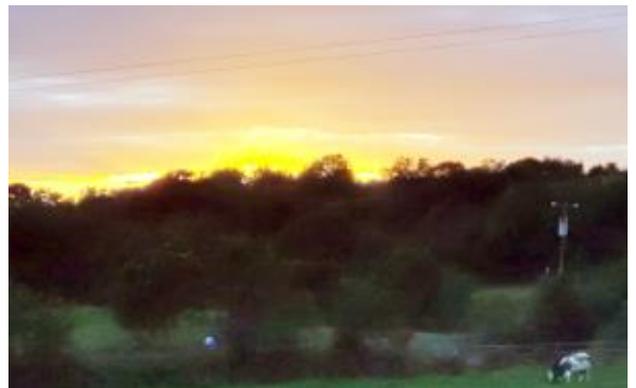
**Moving on in** – Thank you for all the cards, prayers and Well Wishes that I have received during the past few weeks. I am still searching for a few items but settling well. Love *Helen*.

**Glad to be back in Ireland again.** On the journey from the ferry we stopped for breakfast, but were obviously concerned about distancing, however we need not have worried as our usual venue was extremely well organised with proper spacing and Perspex shields between tables. Most people wore masks and were being very observant about distancing - so much better than the UK.

We were delighted to arrive back at our house after a four month absence, particularly as the grass had been cut for us and there had not been a power outage so no nasty shocks indoors either, as we had worried that the freezer might have defrosted.



To complete the feeling of peace, we experienced this beautiful sunset that evening.



Before we went to Ireland we had an Anniversary day out to Painshill Park, which was our first 'real' outing for four months. It felt rather like playing truant, but was a very enjoyable day, particularly as it didn't rain as had been forecast. The beautiful flowers were from Colin for our anniversary. . *Pat & Colin*

**And here's a friend** many of us may not have seen for a while, sent in by Jo. Good to see you Jill!





Like many events this year, New Wine United 2020 has been cancelled due to the pandemic. United Breaks Out takes its place, an online event free to everybody to join in and can be found online at [new-wine.org/breaksout](http://new-wine.org/breaksout). The following is an edited version of what is on that site at the moment:

## United Breaks Out

*Thursday 30 July - Monday 3 August*

Let the Church emerge, more powerful than ever, to lead us into a world where signs and wonders are our new normal.

Our main programme includes a mix of celebrations, worship, Bible teaching, talks, sofa sessions, live webinars and more. We'll cover key issues that matter today: grief, loss and lament; the power of the Holy Spirit; race; preparing for a new world; mental health and wellbeing; parenting; prayer; apologetics; and creation care.

Our Kids are becoming Space Cadets! There'll be songs, challenges, stories, teaching and gunge. And we're launching our brand new Augmented Reality App - with stories, games, prayer and worship to help kids encounter God in new ways.

For 11-18s, Luminosity will bring breakfast devotions and chat, challenges, evening celebrations, high-energy worship and seminars covering mental health and anxiety, evangelism, calling, leadership, social media and the world we could create.

In our online Resource Venue you'll find St Andrew's Bookshop and other shops including Christian Gift Co and Wee Sparrow, and opportunities to connect with Christian organisations including BRF, CAP, Open Doors and Hope for Justice. Using our interactive map you can also access charity experiences from Mercy Ships, MedAir, Compassion and MAF.

*Richard*





# Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – Service by the Rev Emma Cusack

## Call to Worship

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

## Opening Prayer

Lord our God, eternal and wonderful, wholly to be trusted: you give life to all; you help those who come to you and give hope to those who call on you. Set our hearts and minds at peace, that we may bring our prayers to you with confidence and joy through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Reading Luke 10:38-42

<sup>38</sup>As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup>She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup>But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" <sup>41</sup>"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup>but few things are needed—or indeed only one.[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

## Hymn StF55

- 1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessèd, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.
- 2 Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might —  
thy justice like mountains high soaring above  
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.
- 3 To all life thou givest, to both great and small;  
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;  
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
and wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.
- 4 Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;  
all praise we would render: O help us to see

'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.

5 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

*Walter Chalmers Smith (1824–1908)*

## **Reading: Colossians 1:15-28**

### **Prayer of Confession**

Loving God, Father of all have mercy on us  
Jesus Christ, Son of God have mercy on us  
Holy Spirit, Lord of life have mercy on us

### **A moment of silence**

### **Reflection - Theme: The Image of the Invisible**

Some ten years ago, I was engaged in a very deep theological conversation during one of my pastoral visits and I realised that the person was seeking **the way** to know God. He asked many questions which I tried my best to explain then he made a statement saying, "I have started reading the Qur'an only from last night and I feel it is the best book so far; you must read it more often as you read the bible" and he continued; "it speaks about God". I replied, yes, the bible also speaks about God; and then he asked, why is Jesus referred to as God? I replied with a few biblical quotations however the one he seem to come back to is what John says, "Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life; no one come to the father except through me. Jesus said that I and my Father are one. If you have seen me, you have seen the father.

The Colossians reading says, "He is the image of the invisible God" and Paul mentioned in 2 Corinthians 4:4 saying "The god (small letter 'g') of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God". It is indeed a great mystery to know and to understand that Christ is the image of God.

Biblical scholars have helped us to understand that during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus, Epaphras became converted and carried the gospel to Colossae but the small church, which was started by Epaphras became the target of heretical attack and when Epaphras visited Paul in Rome to inform him about the attack, God in his wisdom granted Paul the ability to write the Colossian letter.

When we study the epistle of Paul to the Colossians, we discover that Paul's purpose is to refute the Colossian heresy. He deals with it in a way of exalting Christ as the very image of God; he

refers to Christ as the creator; that he pre-existed and is the sustainer of all things; he is the head of the church, the first to be resurrected, the fullness of the deity in bodily form and the reconciler. These attributes are befitting to our Lord Jesus Christ because he indeed came into the world as an example and in the image of God. God gave him every power and authority to accomplish his mission on earth.

Paul makes mention in his writing from Colossians 1:21-22 that “once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight without blemish and free from accusation”.

This brings into fulfilment the passage from Luke’s gospel. In Christ there is no alienation; he is our ultimate sacrifice or ransom for all that alienates us from being one with him. His presence breaks down cultural and traditional barriers therefore where according to the Jewish custom, it would be unheard of for a woman to get closer to a man or a male; Jesus breaks that heavy yoke and makes the burden light. It was okay for him to minister to the Samaritan woman, to the Syro-Phoenician woman, to Mary Magdalene and to Mary and Martha.

In as much as Jesus respected Martha’s area of ministry in hospitality; it was also important to feed a soul that was spiritually hungry, who was Mary. In John’s gospel 12; it makes mention that Mary and Martha were sisters to Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead.

So, God who so loved the world; a world that includes male, female, children, people of all race, is not partial. Mary had seen something mysterious about him and his ministry was beyond compare. As the hymn writer would describe saying “how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer’s ears. It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds and drives away his fears.

Jesus said, only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her.

### **Challenge:**

Have you ever heard the voice of Jesus saying to you, one thing is needed, and you have you made the choice in which no one will be able to take it from you?

Or have you not yet heard the voice of invitation.

Jesus, saw in Mary, her whole devotion and how Mary chose to prioritise herself between housework and the word of God.

What Jesus said did not mean that he condemned those whose ministry is about hospitality; he was encouraging a moment of praise and whole-hearted commitment.

The good news is that these biblical examples strengthens us to believe that we have a Saviour in the likeness of our God. Amen

### **Prayer of Intercession**

Let us pray for all people everywhere according to their need. Let us pray:

For the Church of Christ throughout the world

For its unity in Christ

For the fulfilment of its mission

For all ministers of the gospel

For all Christian here ...

Strengthen your Church in the service of Christ, that we and all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love and reveal your glory in the world; Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen

### **Hymn StF 81**

1 Now thank we all our God,  
with hearts and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms  
has blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us;  
and keep us in his grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills  
in this world and the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and him who reigns  
with them in highest heaven,  
the one eternal God,  
whom earth and heaven adore,  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

*Martin Rinkart (1586–1649) translated by Catherine Winkworth  
(1827–1878)*

### **Closing Prayer**

The love of Father enfold us,  
The wisdom of the Son enlighten us  
The fire of the Spirit enflame us;

### **Blessing**

May the blessing of God Almighty,  
Father, Son and the Holy Spirit  
be with you now and for ever. Amen