

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-19
Issue 7 **May 3rd 2020**

From your Minister

I hope everyone is staying safe and keeping well. As lockdown continues, we look for light at the end of the tunnel, but the journey towards re-opening our churches could be a long one. However, church is open for business; and I would urge you to stay in touch with people from our fellowship, via email, phone or things like Facetime and Skype.

Let's all consider in our prayers people that we would normally see in our church services. The more we spend time in prayer, the more the Spirit prompts us to respond to situations that we would otherwise know nothing about.

Our live streamed services continue each Sunday at 10.45am on the Trinity Facebook page. Thank you to the many people who have joined us for these live events. You will have observed that we've experienced a few technical glitches, but we believe that it's worth the risk in order to meet up live across our churches, rather than just record something which you wouldn't be able to join in real time. It's great that we can experience fellowship together, even if not physically, for that hour. If you are unable to join us on a Sunday morning, recordings of the services are posted immediately after they have gone out live, so you can catch up at your convenience.

The same goes for my live stream services from my home on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm. These will simply consist of bible study and prayer from now on, as I don't have the capacity to display song words or link to other participants. However, I thought it might be good to encourage you to submit via email your favourite Bible verse, and why it means so much to you. I will share some of these on Wednesday afternoons, enabling more people to participate. Please also keep your prayer requests coming, which I will feature both on Wednesdays and Sundays.

My daily songs have resumed this week, with separate offerings on the church Facebook page (mainly Christian) and on my own Facebook page (mainly secular). Do send me a friend request to see the content on my page.

If you're one of those who has found it helpful to watch our services on the Trinity YouTube channel, sadly we have had to stop this because, despite having the appropriate licensing, YouTube were constantly challenging us about using copyright material. I am on the lookout for anyone who would like to do our weekly Bible reading from their home as part of the Sunday morning service. If you would like to get involved please email me to volunteer. You will need a laptop, tablet or smartphone, an account with Skype or Zoom (and an idea of how to use it), plus reasonably fast broadband.

Everyone stay safe and stand firm in the Lord. Freedom is coming – oh yes, I know!

God bless, *Ralph*

A prayer...

Lord Jesus, We celebrate the commitment and effort of our key workers

For doctors and nurses in the frontline, pharmacists and care workers

For refuse collectors, delivery drivers, supermarket workers and maintenance engineers

For all those who have volunteered to help in any way

Praise you Lord that in these times of challenge we often see the best of humanity at work

And we know that, in these acts of self-sacrifice and kindness, your name is glorified all the more because every good instinct and thought we possess comes from you

We remember those who have given their lives to save others

Just as you gave your life for all of us to bring hope and deliverance through the cross.

Amen

What's On This Week

Sunday 4th May

10am *Taketime Live* join in a meditation in real time, or later by pasting <https://mixlr.com/taketime/> into your Web browser

10:45am live worship with Rev Ralph

Wednesday 7th May

2pm Live half-hour worship with Rev Ralph

Links to the services will be on St Paul's Facebook page and website and also sent by email so that everyone who has internet can participate.

Wesley's Chapel offers morning prayers live every day at 10am and a service at 12:45pm on Wednesdays at <https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/>

Sad news

We have heard that Irene Ludbrook, who will be remembered by older members of St Paul's, passed away on Saturday 25th April aged 94. She had been living in care homes for the last ten years, most recently at Aniska Lodge, Warninglid. Irene was a hard worker at St Paul's. Amongst the many tasks she took on, she regularly took all the tea towels home to wash, long before we had Loaves and Fishes. Although it was so long since we saw her amongst us, we thank God for her life of service to him and to St Paul's.

Prayers at 6 & 8

During this week as we hear that the lockdown will be continuing for some time to come, please pray for people who are losing confidence in their ability to cope with the restrictions and frustrations. Pray for those losing heart, feeling unbearably lonely, worried about loss of income, stressed by children being home all the time. Ask God for strength to hold on and believe that this will pass.

A thank you from Judy

Thanks to everyone who prayed for me when I was experiencing very painful back spasms after a fall. I am happy to say that those spasms have gone and I rang my doctor telling him I no longer needed morphine. I'm now well on the way to complete recovery! I'm enjoying Ralph's Sunday services. *Judy*

Please pray for

The family of Irene Ludbrook as they mourn her loss. Continue praying for Emma, Ron, Bamini and her daughters, Uvonne, Linda, Daniel, Jean and Geoff, Maureen and others with needs known to ourselves.

Send your prayer requests to enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

Methodist Church Guidelines state that permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list. Please ensure that you have such permission.

Barry's Isolation Diary week 4 – Motivation or Lack of it

I was talking to a friend this week who was saying how difficult they were finding it to motivate themselves to do all those jobs they had been saving up for just such a period of "free time" like this. I have to say that I agree.

I am sure we all entered lockdown with long mental lists of all those things we could now do without the distraction of "normal life" intruding. In my case these were fairly modest. Not for me the aim of learning a new language or reading some of those classic books we are supposed to have read. In this situation a good easy read lifts my spirits much more.

However, included in my list were tidying the garden after we had some trees felled during the winter, sorting out my "office" and the loft, much of which has not been touched since we moved here in 2001, and as a personal goal, improving my very poor keyboard playing. To this I have added working out how to stop the squirrels getting into the eaves and the chimney pot!

I have over the last few weeks of glorious weather managed to tidy up around three of the five tree stumps, but now it's raining! Actually getting rid of the rubbish created was put on hold when the "tip" was closed and in any case Sheila would have had to take it there. I could have it ready to be taken when the tip reopens, but that doesn't come with the same sense of satisfaction. I also know the pile would be still be there long after the tip reopens and would require to be re-sorted just to make sure I wasn't disposing of something that might come in handy....

I have set up my keyboard in "my end" of the conservatory, as previously it was in the bedroom I am now occupying. However, what with the current jigsaw to complete (see last week's diary), online chats with friends and family, a couple of virtual meetings and my daily "ride" on the exercise bike, now much improved by watching TV whilst pedalling, I am not sure where the time has gone which I should have had available to spend practising.

Ah well, I still have another 7 weeks to go of my personal lockdown so perhaps I will manage to achieve some of my goals, although currently I don't hold out too much hope

I do hope you are doing better than me!

Keep well and God Bless, *Barry*

Some nice things to do

Animal lovers will enjoy the goings-on at Chester Zoo, who are sharing their animals' lives in lockdown <https://www.facebook.com/chesterzoo1/>

For arty types – the Piggerheim Gallery - not just for guinea pigs
<https://www.facebook.com/QuickTurtles/photos/pcb.702172600602569/702172257269270/?type=3&theater>

If you find a freebie we might enjoy, please send it in to enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

Christian Aid Week, 10-16 May, is different this year

Usually, this is the time I start asking you to think about donating plants to our *Big Plant Sale* at the May Coffee Stop. Last year we sent Christian Aid over £1200. We don't want to let this wonderful charity down just because we can't raise money in the usual way. Instead I've has set up a St Paul's Christian Aid appeal page on *Just Giving*. It's really easy to make your donation and, if you are a UK tax payer, you can Gift Aid your contribution. Use this link or find it on St Paul's Facebook page and website.



<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/st-pauls-methodist-church-crawley>
Please help us reach our target of £1.000. If you don't have internet, perhaps you could ask a trusted friend or relative to make your donation on your behalf. Thank you for your continued support, *Ruth*

Is your lockdown going well?

Are there things you are enjoying and appreciating about it? Are you bored or have you found time to start a new interest or resurrect an old project? Are you finding getting your shopping easy? If you're working from home, how is that going? Are you able to have more 'me time'? Are you having more Jesus time and prayer time? It's good to share so please send your stories to enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

Or is it really difficult?



If you're finding it all too much just now, you are not alone. With the lockdown continuing for some time to come, many people are feeling the same. Perhaps we don't talk about it for fear of upsetting our families, or we don't want to appear weak. But it's OK to share. It might be a big relief to someone else to be able to share with you. So, make that phone call or send an email. And make time to talk to Jesus! Ralph and Irene are always available - their contact details are below. Do let us know if you would like to be on our prayer list.

Contacts

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Prayer requests & newsletter items enquiries@crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

St Paul's website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

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