

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-19
Issue 17 **July 12th 2020**

From the minister...

I hope and pray that you are all keeping well and staying safe. I've returned this week from a fortnight's holiday, though it was very much a "stay-cation" because it fell just before lockdown restrictions were lifted, so I couldn't go away anywhere! Ironically, I could have gone away this week instead if I'd only known that lockdown restrictions were going to be lifted – but crucially, in these unprecedented times, no one truly knows what is going to happen next.

I did wonder, once Boris announced that churches would be allowed to reopen from July 4th onwards, whether there would be a flurry of activity and a desire to get back together for Sunday worship as soon as possible. But everyone seems to be responding a lot more cautiously, and there is a real sense of not wanting to rush anything. The other thing that I am picking up is that our churches want to behave in as inclusive a way as possible; so that, if we did reopen on a Sunday, people would not feel excluded if they are in a vulnerable category, or are still isolating.

So watch this space, as they say! We will keep you posted on every development, and rest assured that we will not be encouraging you to return to our church building until all the necessary criteria have been met, risk assessments undertaken, and we are able to confidently declare that you would be in a safe and secure environment.

Thank you for your patience, and for your many positive and encouraging messages, letters and cards. Stay safe, stand firm in your faith, keep praying and we will get through this!

God bless, *Ralph*

A prayer...

Lord lead us forward, we pray

Not in the direction we might choose,

Nor at the speed that we might favour

But in the manner through which you would have us accomplish

The plan and purpose for our churches

The fellowships of believers whom you love

For whom you gave your life.

We are the Body of Christ

And though separated by distance

We remain united by your Spirit

Keep us strong through this famine

In this fallow time may we restore our faith and our vision

That we may return to fellowship with rejoicing

When the appointed time comes.

In Jesus name we pray

AMEN

What's On This Week

Sunday 12th

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

Tuesday 14th

During the afternoon sometime Live message from Rev Ralph in St Paul's

Wednesday 15th

2pm Wednesday worship with Rev Ralph

All will be linked on St Paul's Facebook page and website

Prayers at 6 & 8

As the church remains closed for a while and we miss out on fellowship with each other on Sundays, say a prayer for those you miss seeing and talking with. Remember those who live alone and used to look forward to going to church to meet with other people. Pray for people who don't have the means of joining in our online worship. Turn prayers into action with a phone call or send a card with a personal message.

Please pray for

Renee and Palau in Canberra, Australia whose 36 year-old son sadly died during this last week, and for his brother, Nimalan

Geoff being cared for at home by his wife Jean and the family

Continue praying for anyone we know who has needs known to ourselves.

Send your prayer requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com

Permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list.

The Methodist Church encourages post-pandemic reform

These two articles looking at the possibilities for a better future are published on The Methodist Church website – just follow the links.

Why we need a new vision for an economy where everyone can flourish

Paul Morrison, a Policy Adviser on poverty, responds to the Chancellor's Plan for Jobs announcement made earlier this week and explains why we need a new vision to create an economy where everyone can flourish.

https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/the-methodist-blog/why-we-need-a-new-vision-for-an-economy-where-everyone-can-flourish/?utm_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11667039_The%20Methodist%20News&dm_i=BVI,6Y2CF,3A7QOJ,RXY1B,1

Faith leaders call for a green Recovery

Faith leaders have called for an environment-focused economic recovery. The statement has been signed by our President, the Revd Richard Teal and Vice-President, Carolyn Lawrence. https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/faith-leaders-call-for-a-green-recovery/?utm_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11667039_The%20Methodist%20News&dm_i=BVI,6Y2CF,3A7QOJ,RXY1B,1

https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/faith-leaders-call-for-a-green-recovery/?utm_source=Methodist%20Church%20House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11667039_The%20Methodist%20News&dm_i=BVI,6Y2CF,3A7QOJ,RXY1B,1

Barry's Isolation Diary week 14 – getting closer to normal

So my shielding is slowly unwinding. As of Monday, Sheila and I no longer had to social distance from one another at home. As a result last night, Tuesday, I returned to our shared bedroom for the first time since March 24th. The delay of one night was because Tuesday is bedding wash day at the Jones's so it was worth waiting for clean sheets. It also means we have returned to sharing the upstairs bathroom again, so we will have to see what effect that has on our marriage! (see Extraordinary times issue 11).

Another benefit of the relaxations is that Sheila has at last had her hair cut, so feels more able to face the world!

This week I have had two outings, (smiley face emoji)! On Tuesday I had a trip to Guy's Hospital in London for my six monthly PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scan. It was due in March but on the advice of my oncologist I postponed it as it would have been at the height of the pandemic in London. Normally I go to UCH and travel up using the train and the tube, but I didn't fancy using public transport so I decided to use the car. I booked a parking space in the NCP car park right by Guy's (literally around the corner) and Googled the route. It advised that the fastest route was also the longest using the M23, M25 and A2 up to Greenwich.

What I hadn't noticed was that it involved crossing the Thames twice, firstly northwards through the Blackwall Tunnel and then almost immediately southwards via the Rotherhithe Tunnel. I also had to pay the congestion charge which on this leg of my journey turned out to be for less than half a mile of road just before the car park. The whole journey took about an hour and three quarters and was fairly stress free which couldn't be said for the return via Brixton and Norwood which was shorter but took longer and was horrendous.

On Wednesday I had my regular four-weekly trip to Guildford for my injection which was not without incident, as for only the second time in nearly five years, the injection didn't go smoothly and blocked the needle (it is a suspension and so is very thick). As a result, the nurse had to have three goes before it worked so my a*** feels like a pincushion.

Keep safe and God Bless, *Barry*

Action For Children Sunday

In other times we would have been recognising the valuable work of *Action for Children* with a service and cash collection on Sunday 12th July and by holding a fundraising Open Garden at my house. Along with Saturday Coffee Stops in April and October and more fundraising at Christmas, in 2019 we were able to send £1,110 to Action for Children. While we are unable to hold the usual events, we still need to support this essential work, so can I ask you please to make your donation this year either by telephone to 0300 123 2112 or through the AfC website <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>. Many thanks for your support in the past and going into the future. *Sheila*

Good news for the Lewis-Brown family

Christopher Lewis-Brown and his fiancée, Becca, had planned their wedding for July 11th in Goring on Thames, near Reading. Because of the pandemic restrictions, some weeks ago they rearranged the date of the celebration to July 17th 2021, with the proviso that they would get married on July 11th if they could. The rules changed just in time! So this Saturday they will have had a small family wedding, with Jonny as best man and Becca's sisters as bridesmaids, followed by a picnic.

Congratulations to Christopher and Becca on their marriage and to Ruth, David and Jonny on welcoming a new member to the family.



Congratulations to Joyce and Peter Jordan who celebrated their 55th Wedding Anniversary on 10th July

You can help raise funds for St Paul's with thousands of retailers when you're shopping online. It's easy and there's no cost to yourself. Sign up at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stpaulsmethodistchurchcrawley/>



Thanks to Hilary for sending in these bloopers from other church's notices:

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Contacts

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Prayer requests & newsletter items ask.stpauls@gmail.com

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

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