

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley
Extraordinary Times
a magazine to help us through COVID-19

Issue 56

April 25th 2021

Stephen Lawrence Day, 22nd April

Extracts from an article by Bevan Powell, the Methodist Connexional Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity officer, to mark Stephen Lawrence Day:

As the son of parents from the Windrush era, my experience has fuelled an acute awareness of the struggle for race equality within the UK. Throughout my working career I have actively challenged racism within our society. First within the Metropolitan Police, then as a local Labour Councillor and now as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor to the Methodist Church in Britain.

Given the backdrop to my career, I am astonished, dismayed and saddened that the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) report has wrongly stated that 'one of the key justifications for the Macpherson report finding of institutional racism was the under reporting of racist crime'. On the contrary, the definition of Institutional Racism centred on the fact that the Metropolitan Police completely mismanaged the investigation into Stephen's murder and as a result, tragically the Lawrence family are still awaiting justice. The CRED report both undermines and denies the experience of racism of black and minority ethnic people in the UK, it also reduces experiences of racism to 'a fatalistic mentality'.

The death of George Floyd inspired international protest and underlined the importance of our Church strategy in tackling racism and all forms of discrimination. The CRED report must not be allowed to impede the Methodist Church's programme of work defined through its strategy for 'Justice, Dignity and Solidarity', which I believe to be a watershed moment for the Church.

The Methodist Church has defined racism as a sin, contrary to the the Gospel. As Methodists we are called to challenge injustice, let's continue to do so.

(You can read the whole article at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/the-methodist-blog/stephen-lawrence-day/>)

A prayer for Stephen Lawrence Day from Bevan Powell,

God of all love and justice, we thank you today for Stephen Lawrence and for all those who have faithfully acted to bring about positive change in his memory. We thank you for Doreen and Neville Lawrence and for their tireless efforts to bring about justice for their son, Stephen.

We confess to you that we have not done enough as Christian people, to fight for the kind of justice you would want;

We have not loved each other as you have commanded.

We have not managed to make the difference you would want to see

We have not been actively anti-racist in the way that is true to our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ;

We pray that you support Stephen's family this day and every day.

May we also do our part in creating a society in which every child can flourish and reach their full potential. Amen.

What's On

Sunday 25th 9:30am in the church spoken service with Lorraine Valler

10:30am online worship with Lorraine Valler

Sunday 2nd 9:30am in the church spoken service with Linda Little

10:30am online worship with Linda Little

Find all online services on [St Paul's Facebook page](#) and [website home page](#)

For Kids and young people

Sundays 12noon Zoom sessions for King's Kids and King's Teens. If you haven't had your invitation please contact Carol or email ask.stpauls@gmail.com

Fridays 7pm Young Peoples' Singing Group

In your prayers

Please pray for Jim Tomsett whose wife Margaret died last week

Continue to pray for all you know who need our prayers.

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

COVID-19 second wave in India prayer request

On 16th April the Global Relationships team received this request for Prayer from the General Secretary of the Church of South India,

"Greetings from the CSI Synod Secretariat. Hope this letter finds you well with the Grace of God!

The Church of South India completes a challenging year of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2021, the whole year has been tough for the country - medically, economically, in terms of human crisis.

We have just started to rebuild after the COVID-19 first wave / lockdown restrictions and now India is in the clutches of COVID - 19 second wave and also the affected rate in India has been rapidly growing day by day. On 14th April, India saw the biggest single-day jump of 200,739 new cases, pushing the cumulative tally to 14,074,564., according to Union Health Ministry Data.

The Bishops, Pastors, Missionaries, Congregation Members and our fellow brethren in the community are also affected by this second wave. As we battled in the first phase, we have to combat the second wave as the situation goes worsening day by day.

In this situation we have to pray to each other for our God's protection / healing from this pandemic. We are grateful to our global partners for their prayer and support extended during COVID-19 first wave. We request you to uphold our Nation as well as the Church into your Prayers."

C. Fernandas Rathina Raja, General Secretary, Church of South India

A sad farewell

Judith Croft, a long-time member of St Paul's, has moved away from Crawley to North London. For many years Judith has been one of our regular pianists on Sundays. We thank her for contributing to our worship in this way and also for her support to St Paul's choir in rehearsals and as accompanist on many occasions. Judith will be missed by many of us and we wish her well as her adventure of a new life in a new place begins.

Climate Justice: the new paradigm

To mark Earth Day 2021 The Revd Simon Topping, a presbyter in the Gloucestershire Circuit calls for a new way of thinking about climate justice.

The world needs a paradigm shift, a new way of seeing the world – and we know it. One of the great eye-opening revelations of the Covid pandemic is that the old paradigm – greed will save the day – has become something of a joke, even by those who used to stand by this mantra.

The old paradigm was built upon the view that by releasing the acquisitive energy of the individual from the restrictions of taxes and regulations, including regulations that protect the natural environment, all would benefit in the end. If we allow the individual to pursue their own narrow interest the wider interests of all, including the natural world, would be promoted through the magical workings of the market's "invisible hand".

This world view doesn't work in a pandemic - or as a response to the environmental crisis we face. Rather, we have rediscovered that it is only by prioritising the common good (global vaccination in the case of the pandemic) that our individual wellbeing is safeguarded. "Nobody is safe until everyone is safe" was the strapline of a recent letter signed by 60 world leaders which called for a global treaty to prepare effectively for the next pandemic. In pursuit of environmental and climate justice this strapline needs to be expanded to read: "nobody is safe until all living things and the natural world are safe".

As Christians we have rich biblical resources which help us to promote this new (or rediscovered) paradigm. On many occasions Jesus reminds us that the pursuit of our own individual interests alone leads to the diminishment of life. Those who seek to save their own life, like the rich fool who builds bigger barns, will not find the security and abundance they crave, whereas those whose lives are marked by gratitude, generosity and concern for the wellbeing of others, will find life in all its fullness.

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity also offers us a window into this new way of understanding our relationship with others and the world around us. The Trinity is a divine community of diversity and oneness, a community animated by loving mutuality, co-operation, inter-dependence, equality and the pursuit of the good of each part of the whole. It provides us with a vision of how a new world might operate once the old paradigm of self-interest, excessive consumption and aggressive competition has been cast off. And it points to a new way for humanity to relate to the natural world around us, whereby in seeking the wellbeing of God's creation we find wellbeing for ourselves.



Bluebells in Glover's Wood, Charlwood 22.04.21 (JEJ)

Christian Aid Week 2021

Dear Friends,

Last year we aimed to raise £1000 for Christian Aid. We nearly made it at £885! This year we have created a special St Paul's e-envelope. If you'd like to donate please click this link

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/stpaulschurchcrawley>

We are still aiming for £1000 this year and so far our total is £135 (£168.75 with Gift Aid). Let's support Christian Aid as they stand together with those who battle coronavirus, fight for climate justice and support those struggling to survive without basics such as clean water. Like them, let's walk further, dig deeper and be more determined in our desire to bring change to the poorest communities in the world. Thank you! *Ruth Lewis*

Crawley Open House - Hundred for the Homeless

Take part in our 'Hundred For The Homeless' challenge

During the month of May walk, cycle, run, swim or row 100 miles, or do 100 of anything you choose!

Plant 100 shrubs, knit 100 items, make 100 pots of jam, write 100 letters, sing 100 songs it's entirely up to you!

We are aiming to raise a grand total of £10,000 – will you take the Hundred for the Homeless Challenge?

Get involved with family, workmates, friends or by yourself, and have fun whilst raising funds for your local homeless shelter.

Click on <https://www.crawleyopenhouse.co.uk/hundred> to register your interest, and we will email you a joining pack with more information and a scoresheet for you to track your progress through the month.

CRAWLEY OPEN HOUSE



HUNDRED
FOR THE
HOMELESS

And finally – some thoughts about trees

"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn" Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago.

The second best time is now." Chinese proverb

"People who will not sustain trees will soon live in a world that will not sustain people." Bryce Nelson

"Ancient trees are precious. There is little else on Earth that plays host to such a rich community of life within a single living organism."

Sir David Attenborough

Contacts

(During April) Rev Clive McKie 01737 770197 clivewmckie@tiscali.co.uk

(From 2nd May) Rev Melvyn Cooke 01293 973847 melvyncooke@me.com

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

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

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