



# The **Methodist** Church

## **Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit** **Monthly Newsletter**

*It is our intention, during the lock-down period, to try to issue a Circuit newsletter once a month rather than once a quarter. If you have any items, stories, words of inspiration, etc., that you would like see included please send them to me on [office.bcpc@btinternet.com](mailto:office.bcpc@btinternet.com). Thank you.*

Linda, Circuit Administrator

Issue 30

April 2020

### **Superintendent Minister's Letter**

**DETAILS OF YOUTUBE SERVICES PREPARED BY RICHARD ARE  
ON PAGE SIX OF THIS NEWSLETTER**

#### **Holy week and Easter 2020: 'Christian festivals under lockdown'**

As I write this message to you, we are coming towards the end of the 'lockdown' brought upon us by the Coronavirus pandemic. Most of us are beginning to get used to the idea that we are only allowed to leave our homes a couple of times a day for shopping, medical visits or for our daily 'exercise'. Some are in complete social isolation and are unable to leave home at all. When we do go outside, we have to exercise something called 'social distancing' which means we're not supposed to get any closer than 2 meters to another person.

What a strange world we have come to inhabit! Most of us are by nature quite gregarious, we like being with other people. Other people's company lift our spirits and make us feel happy to be alive. The thought that we might need to spend the next few weeks if not months on our own or getting on top of our families fills few of us with great joy!

As the virus continues to grow and we know of people who have been infected or even, as in one sad instance this week, people we have known have actually died, so the severity of this global health emergency hits home

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to us all. Our heartfelt prayers go out to all who are sick and unwell, all who mourn the loss of loved ones, all who work so tirelessly to look after us – Doctors, nurses, shopworkers, refuse collectors and many more.

How then are we Christians going to celebrate Holy week and Easter this year? These festivals are at the very heart of what it is to be a Christian. We are so used to being together with brothers and sisters in Christ during for example Maundy Thursday foot washing services, Good Friday reflections and marches of witness and those joyful Easter Day services with the beautifully decorated churches with the Lenten crosses decked in flowers. How much we enjoy shouting out those words of joy ‘Christ the Lord is risen, he is risen indeed’ and singing those hearty Easter hymns like ‘Thine be the glory, risen conquering son’!

We have been working hard as a circuit to make sure that we keep in touch with as many people as possible during this ‘lock down phase’ and to offer as much support as possible. This has included lots of telephone calls, WhatsApp messages and groups, emails and even YouTube services, and good old-fashioned letters with pen and ink! We hope that you have found all of this helpful.

We recognise that Easter is going to be hard this year but maybe the lockdown does have some positives. Traffic on our roads has fallen and pollution levels as well, meaning we can at last breathe fresh air and even see the stars in the sky at night! Being at home also gives us more time to read, to think and to pray. It offers us space to reflect upon our lives in the light of our Christian faith and consider our place in God’s world.

Holy week also reminds us of course, that in Jesus we find a God who knows what it is to feel alone and isolated. Remember how he was denied three times by Peter and even betrayed by Judas. He was left alone as he faced Herod and Pontius Pilate as he was spat upon, slandered, whipped and died a painful death on a Roman cross.

His final words, ‘Unto your hands O Lord, I commit my spirit’ (Luke 23:46) remind us that even death, even in the darkest moment of his life, Jesus

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knew that he was not alone. He knew that this was his Father's will and that his Father suffered with him. His Father gave him the strength to do what he knew was right.

As we go through lockdown Holy week, let us too be reminded that we are never alone and that it will be faith that will bring us through this difficult time. We do not know how long this pandemic will last, we do not know how many people will be infected or lose their lives. What we do know is that there will be life after all of this is over.

This reminds us of the greatest hope we have, the hope of the resurrection. Just as Jesus was raised from the tomb three days after his death, so we are reminded that all who have faith in him will be raised to life eternal. This is the joyful message we will continue to proclaim on Easter morning whether we are alone at home, whether we are livestreaming or watching Easter worship on YouTube or TV. Nothing can take away the joy that is Easter. Nothing can defeat the hope that is ours in Jesus Christ.

Christ the Lord is risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

*Richard*

**TAKE A LEAP FOR MISSION EVENT!**  
**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Little did we know that our Leap for Mission event was one of the last opportunities we would have to be able to meet together in large numbers for quite a while!

It was rather a cold and wet start to 29<sup>th</sup> February, but 10 o'clock came and people gradually arrived to find the hall laid out prettily for coffee with flowers on the tables. There was an attractive looking bric a brac stall and bookcases brimming with books to browse and buy.

Coffee/tea was served with yummy biscuits and the big orange buckets began to jingle with the money being donated for Methodist World Mission, Mission in Britain and Methodist Women in Britain funds.

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The sun began to peep through the clouds, and the buzz of “Hellos” and conversation filled the hall as people enjoyed catching up with old friends from across the circuit over a cup of coffee; checking out the bric a brac and chatting over the books.

Soon, the tempting smell of cooking began to drift through from the other hall which was all laid out for lunch, with more people to be found busy preparing the food; curry and rice, soup, dahl etc. creating a beautiful choice for a delicious lunch; and more money was filling the orange buckets – a lot of it gift-aided for the Mission funds. Food, glorious food!

Meanwhile the large hall was being transformed into the afternoon tea venue, with a piano ready on the stage for Martin and his Palm Court style trio to entertain us. The tables were laid with the posh vintage bone china tea-sets and the teapots were lined up on the tea-bar. Piles of home-made scones, cakes, jam and cream were on each table and gradually the people began to pour in. Such fun!!

Everyone sat down and enjoyed a lovely tea to a background of wonderful live music provided by the Palm Court style trio. Even more money was filling the orange buckets with people still being tempted with the unusual items of bric a brac and books.

About 5pm now, and people had spent all they could, after enjoying a really good day together. So many helped with the clearing away it was soon done!

EVERYTHING had been donated so there were NO EXPENSES!!!! so with gift aiding, a magnificent £1,170 was raised - £390 for each of the three funds! Absolutely amazing total! so THANK YOU all for your generous support of the Event - all the organisers and helpers as well as those who came and donated.

**A HUGE THANK YOU!!!!**

*Mrs Mary Sparkes*

*God of all hope we call on you today.  
We pray for those who are living in fear:  
Fear of illness, fear for loved ones,  
fear of other's reactions to them.  
May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.  
Amen*

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Living hope is a project which aims to provide good quality education for disadvantaged children in Baddomalhi, Pakistan



Dear Friends,

Living Hope is extremely grateful for your continued support and prayers. It's almost six years since Living Hope School was opened. During this last year, we have gone from strength to strength changing so many young lives. The students have finished their academic year and have started their new classes. At the start of their new school year, the students received new books and uniforms. They are excited about starting a new year of adventures of learning, growing and discovering their potentials.

We are grateful that the Morley Central Methodist Church chose Living Hope as their charity for the year. They Organized film evenings to raise money for our school. They show a variety of films attended by over 50 people regularly. Through their fundraising efforts, they raised a phenomenal amount totalling £1700. This money will go towards general up keeping of the school. We also received £500 from Churwell Methodist Church. A big thanks to Anerley Methodist Church and Batley Central Methodist who regularly raise money for the school along with many individuals who support this wonderful project through their regular giving.

This year's aim is to upgrade the school furniture to meet students developing needs and buy some gardening equipment. In six years the students have grown up a lot. Most of the tables and chairs are too small for them. With your support, we will continue to help many families to educate their children. With our school, we are instilling hope and confidence in young minds that will make a huge impact for many years to come!

Please continue to pray for the work of Living Hope and its community!

Thank you, God bless,

*Rev Imran*

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If you have missed any of the Circuit services on YouTube, details below, or available via the Circuit website

<https://bhcpmethodist.org.uk/>

The readings are taken from the Revised English Bible (REB)

**Palm Sunday message** <https://youtu.be/XYjjXpb3Y-0>



In preparation for the Easter Day service, below is a recipe for a traditional love feast cake adapted from the Middlesmoor Lovefeast Bread used in the Yorkshire Dales at the time of John Wesley

### **A traditional Love Feast Cake Recipe**

Adapted from the Middlesmoor Lovefeast Bread used in the Yorkshire Dales at the time of John Wesley

- 1lb (400g) plain flour
- 1oz (25g) baking powder
- 5oz (125g) butter
- 8oz (200g) sugar
- 2oz (50g) mixed peel
- 4oz (100g) sultanas
- 2 eggs
- About half a pint (280ml) of milk
- Mix the flour and baking powder together, rub in the butter, then add the sugar, sultanas and peel.
- Beat the eggs together with a little milk and add to the dry ingredients.
- Add the rest of the milk to make a soft consistency.
- Pour the mixture into two loaf tins or a large cake tin. Cook at 180°C (350°F) or gas mark 4 for at least 45 minutes for the loaf tins, or 1 hour for the large cake tin.

**Passion Sunday message** [https://youtu.be/Mi\\_cB32B6uU](https://youtu.be/Mi_cB32B6uU)

**Mothering Sunday message** <https://youtu.be/adIA4fr9IFU>

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