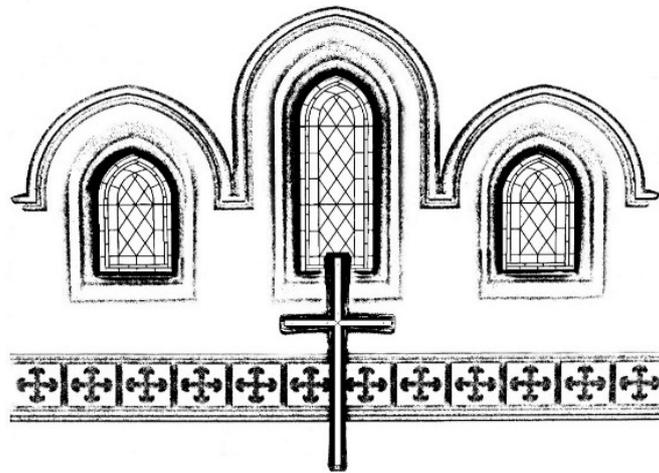


Newsletter from the....



MIDHURST METHODIST CHURCH

+++++

April/May 2020

+++++

SUNDAY SERVICES

10.00am – MORNING WORSHIP

For morning service with **HOLY COMMUNION**
Please see Church Diary printed inside this Newsletter

Requests for **BAPTISMS** and **WEDDINGS** should be
made to the Minister

The calling of

MIDHURST METHODIST CHURCH

is to

love God

and to

love our neighbours

* * * * *

We are committed to:

Spreading the good news of Jesus Christ
As expressed in God's word from the Bible

The worship of God at the centre of our lives

Demonstrating God's love for everyone

Helping people grow in the Christian faith

Challenging injustices

Blessing the local community

From the editors...

This edition of your newsletter has ended up nothing like it started. Coronavirus has intervened. As the situation has evolved and the official guidance has altered, so has the newsletter. We are a busy Church, but suddenly we have had our wings clipped by the worst health crisis for a century. In this edition we have tried to reflect what *was* going to be happening within the Church Family over Easter and beyond, and what is left of our ideas and arrangements since the crisis hit. Even though we cannot meet as a Church corporate for the foreseeable future, we are still a Church in spirit.

When we are able, we hope to be able to publish Sunday services and meditations on our website www.midhurstmethodist.com and [information on our Facebook page:](#)

Midhurst-Methodist-Church-390730361066030/

Any future events mentioned in this newsletter are of course subject to the COVID19 situation at the time.

If you are in doubt about anything, or need assistance at any time, please be in touch with your pastoral visitor or any of the stewards. (Alison G 01730814596, Angela C 01730810645, Sian M 01730814490, Tim W)

*We are not people of fear; We are people of courage
We are not people who protect our own safety;
We are people who protect our neighbours' safety
We are not people of greed; We are people of generosity
We are your people, God
Living and loving
Wherever we are
Whatever it costs
For as long as it takes
Wherever you call us*

(Rev Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference)

Church open for prayer

While we are able, a small band of volunteers will ensure that the Church is open for prayer on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12 noon. If you wish to chat or pray, please come along, but please be mindful of the 2-metre recommended social distancing.

Of course, the Parish Church is also open during the day for prayer.

I heard the voice of Jesus say :
‘I am this dark world's Light ;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright.’
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun ;
and in that light of life I'll walk,
till travelling days are done.

Creator God,

We are sorry when we have taken your world for granted, and we invite you to come and bring transformation. Protect and bring hope to those who are suffering; mobilise leaders all over our planet to bring long-term solutions; and show us, Lord, how we can play our part.

Your Kingdom Come. Your Will be Done.

Amen

from our Minister

Lent and the Corona Virus pandemic progress together and Easter is only a few weeks away – even nearer by the time you read this. What follows is a collection of references, and thoughts which arrived in my inbox within a day or two of each other around the 17-19 March. I felt they brought together aspects of Lent, the Corona Virus and Easter.

Joel chapter 1 focusses on the results of a plague of locusts:

What the cutting locust left,
the swarming locust has eaten
What the swarming locust left,
the hopping locust has eaten,
and what the hopping locust left,
the destroying locust has eaten.

The fields are devastated,
the ground mourns;

As I read, I thought not so much of fields as supermarket shelves.

But we react to something unprecedented in much the same way as people always have:

Hear this, O elders,
give ear, all inhabitants of the land!
Has such a thing happened in your days,
or in the days of your ancestors?
³Tell your children of it,
and let your children tell their children,
and their children another generation.

We are living in uncharted territory but human aspects of what is going on are all too common. As Gemma Simmonds puts it in *The Way of Ignatius*:

The circle of consumption easily cuts us off from a sense of connectedness, meaning and social accountability. [The prophets] speak in God's name to a society that has forgotten how to feel and

live in solidarity, making an idol of the market and a deity of the profit margin.

Rather than 'stuff', what really contributes to human flourishing is a belief in something greater than ourselves and having life goals embedded in our long-term values.

In these days of empty shelves and isolation, anxiety and the threat of disease we become even more aware that even our human relationships and community values cannot protect us from disappointment, loss, lack of meaning, the breakdown of relationships, sickness and death which are the deeper threats to our happiness and the causes and fruits of human fragility.

As Jesus put it, those who are truly happy, truly blessed – those who really know the peace (shalom) of God which passes all understanding are those who know that their deepest need is for God.

'Blessed [happy] are those who know their need of God.' (Matthew 5:3 in some translations)

The good news is that Easter is not cancelled even if services cannot happen in the usual way. The good news is that he is 'Emmanuel' – God with us and the tomb is still empty.

**If you're looking for hope and longing for joy,
it's closer than you think.**

Through Jesus' resurrection, we've been given a living hope that anchors our souls even in the most difficult seasons.

*I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with **confident hope** through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

(Romans 15:13)

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, alleluia!

David



Methodist
relief and
development

ALL WE CAN

In the Lent devotional booklet from All We Can called “Radically Changing the Story” we read some of Jesus’ stories (parables). The message in them is subversive and upset the Jewish Leaders. It is also challenging for us today as we think about poverty and injustice in the world. There are stories from Christian activists who are prepared to go to great lengths to highlight the climate change and pollution which is damaging God’s creation and causing suffering and poverty in the world.

The booklet also includes personal stories from members of the Cherkos community of rural farmers in Ethiopia and highlights the devastation this has had on their lives, reducing them to poverty. Erratic weather patterns have meant that they are unable to grow enough food to feed their families. They have no income so have to rely on government aid and loans. Some men go to urban areas to try to find work; children are taken out of education at a young age to earn money to feed themselves; boys try to get farm work a long way from home and girls go to urban areas to find jobs as servants where, with little education, they remain in domestic servitude. All this means that families are split.

All We Can’s partners are making a radical change in the life of the Cherkos community. They provide training, tools and special vegetable seeds as well as seed potatoes which will grow in that particular soil and climate. People are now beginning to grow enough food for themselves and can sell the excess to provide an income.

Our donations to All We Can this year are helping the Cherkos people in this project.

Due to the current restrictions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus our Easter services are like this...



Easter 2020

Lent Course - cancelled from 17th March

Palm Sunday - 5th April - cancelled

Holy Week Meditations – 6th, 7th and 8th April -cancelled

Maundy Thursday – 9th April – Agape Communion -cancelled

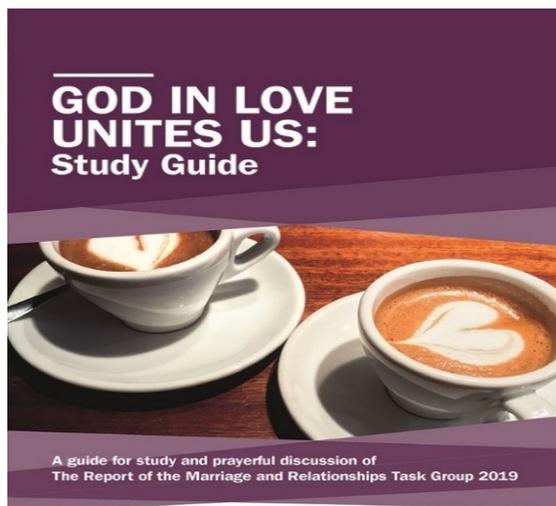
Good Friday – 10th April at 9.30am - cancelled... the **Walk of Witness** at 10:20am - cancelled

Easter Saturday – 11th April– decorate the Church with flowers - cancelled

Easter Day Celebration & Holy Communion – 12th April - cancelled

Ascension Day – 21st May at 6.30pm – Holy Communion in the garden (Rev David Muskett) – unlikely, but please pray that by then we will be in a better position and this can go ahead.

There are sure to be resources from the Methodist HQ and our minister for worshipping in your own homes, and where possible we will distribute these.



The **Methodist Church**

“God in Love Unites Us”

Seventeen members and friends stayed after worship on 23rd February to take part in a discussion on the Conference report “God in Love Unites Us”. This report, a study guide, and several booklets giving opposing views on the main topics in the Report, have been circulated at Church over the past few months.

The discussion, which was chaired by Rev David Coote, was held in response to the ‘God in Love Unites Us’ task force request to study and discuss prayerfully, across the whole Methodist Church, the report before it is presented to Methodist Conference later this year. The report itself recognises that there are within the church contradictory views on issues of sexuality and relationships: that there are differing ways of using Bible passages relating to the issue. At the meeting a short DVD was used which showed how the task force was constituted of people with differing views and how they set about the task. They came to the conclusions now shared with us in the report, including the possibility of local churches, with the agreement of the Church Councils, conducting same-sex marriages.

The discussion group considered the report and the conclusions that would lead to changes in the Church’s Standing Orders. These changes were generally thought to be acceptable by those present. It was recognised that other views may be held by members and friends within the church and should be respected.

We do not, of course, know what decision Conference will take. It is possible that it will be accepted with amendments or rejected entirely.

The meeting felt the clause 011A of the Report, which proposes an amendment to Standing Orders, should omit the words in bold (see

below*) because they seem to contradict the words which come before them and create confusion by having two understandings of marriage:

***10/9. The Conference amends Standing Orders as follows:**

011A Marriage. (1) The Methodist Church believes that marriage ~~is a gift of God and that it is God's intention that a marriage should be~~ *is given by God to be a particular channel of God's grace, and that it is in accord with God's purposes when a marriage is a life-long union in body, mind and spirit of ~~one man and one woman~~ two people who freely enter it.*

[In the Report as published on paper, but not as published online, the following words are added]:

Within the Methodist Church this is understood in two ways: that marriage can only be between a man and a woman; that marriage can be between any two people. The Methodist Church affirms both understandings and makes provision in its Standing Orders for them.

Our discussion group concluded that these two statements are not consistent, and we will carry forward to the Circuit, and thence to District and the Conference, the feeling that Conference needs to decide which statement they support.

On the previous page in 10/7 G3 the statement proposed in 'Guidance on the Understanding of Marriage' appears to be more in line with the report's conclusions:

'G3 The Methodist Church believes that marriage is an exclusive relationship, freely entered into with a life-long intention of uniting two people in body, heart, mind and soul in ways that are appropriate to each partner. In it, God's Spirit enables both partners to know the security of love and care, bringing to each other comfort and companionship, enrichment and encouragement, tenderness and trust. Through such marriage children may be nurtured, family life strengthened, and human society enriched.'

Further limited conversation took place regarding the report's recommendations on cohabitation and divorce and how the Church

should respond to these. The meeting generally recognised the importance of not ignoring these now widely-practised features of our society, in the worship and pastoral life of the church.

Towards the conclusion of the meeting a letter written for the meeting by two Church members not present was read and is included in this article as it was thought to represent the 'mood' of the meeting.

"We are in general very supportive of the Methodist church allowing same-sex marriage to be conducted within the church's framework and would be happy to have these services conducted in Midhurst Methodist Church. It must be a good opportunity for the church to support anyone who wants to show their commitment to a loving Christian relationship with another person. The church family needs to include all who want to follow Jesus. Church tradition has changed many times over the years and scripture has been read in many ways but ultimately the message has always been the same - we must love one another and our neighbour.

Given that Conference in 2006 and 2014 has already decided that there is no reason why any member ordained or lay may not enter into a same-sex civil partnership or civil marriage, it seems only right to give these couples the opportunity to marry in church. We feel the Methodist church should be all-inclusive, allowing all to mark their committed and loving relationship.

The ideas of prayers for people at a time of divorce seems a little strange in that the church would be marking a negative event. However, if handled with sensitivity, it may be very healing for some people and a way of looking for a new way forward.

The blessing of co-habiting couples also brings up many dilemmas, mainly the acceptance of sex before marriage, but in a society that finds church and its traditional morals out of step with a large part of the younger generation, that accepts co-habitation and bringing up children outside marriage as the norm, are we to reject these people from inclusion from the church family? Jesus spoke and prayed for many who were outcasts by the church, including tax collectors and prostitutes. It may be our children, grandchildren, friends, carers and

neighbours that live outside the church's idea of the traditional family unit, however everyone is equal before God, so we hope this can be recognised by the Methodist Church."

As you read this you may not feel this represents your view and of course you are entitled to disagree. We aim to be a loving and inclusive church that truly believes that 'God in love unites us.' Our minister, Rev David Muskett or Rev David Coote will willingly chat with you if you have been troubled by any of the issues in this report.

After Conference has made its decisions on the subjects raised in the Report, and depending what those decisions are, we will come together formally as a Church Meeting officially to consider the implications for Midhurst Methodist Church and make our own decisions accordingly.

Further copies of the Report and Study Guide and several booklets from interested parties are in the vestry.

There is also a prayer guide at: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/marriage-and-relationships-2019/god-in-love-unites-us-prayer-guide/>

A prayer

*Merciful God, help us to speak in love what is in our minds,
and to hear in love what is said by others;*

to feel in love what is in our hearts,

and to sense in love what is in the hearts of others;

to confer in love to discern your truth,

and to be open in love to your guiding Spirit.

Through our disagreements guide us;

in our agreements direct us.

Together may we share the mind of Christ,

in whose name we pray. Amen.

After our Church Family discussion of 23rd February, on the Conference report “God in Love Unites Us”, and in the interests of balanced debate, the editors invited one of those who declined to attend, to put his point of view in writing....

NO! NO!! NO!!!



The Bible has been the inspiration and guide for all Christians over the centuries.

The interpretation of Scripture has developed over time and between cultures and Christian Denominations. A recent example is the introduction of women priests.

However, if we truly want to follow **God’s** way, we must obey **His Commandments**.

The 7th Commandment says ‘Do not use **My Name** for evil purposes’. All sexual activity outside marriage of a man and a woman, such as fornication and adultery, is prohibited. Furthermore, there are **THREE** specific references to the prohibition of same-sex relationships in the **OLD TESTAMENT** and in **ROMANS 1, 1 CORINTHIANS** and **JUDE**. Go to your Bible and read, consider and digest the verses.

Eg, Leviticus 18: 22 ‘No man is to have sexual relations with another man; God hates that’ and Romans 13:13-14 ‘let us conduct ourselves properly as people who live in the light of day - no orgies or drunkenness, no immorality or indecency, no fighting or jealousy, but take up the weapons of the Lord Jesus Christ and stop paying attention to your sinful nature and satisfying your desires’. **What can be more explicit and unambiguous than that!**

Acts of sexual intimacy are only proper between a man and a woman within wedlock.

The Human Rights of same-sex couples seeking marriage has been resolved under civil laws (which has resulted in a rainbow of controversy).

Therefore, it seems to say the least, highly inappropriate and utterly incomprehensible that any Christian Church community would consider allowing a ceremony in church to marry or bless same-sex couples.

So called liberal theologians in the West are trying to align with secular views and the number of Christian worshipers is declining, whereas in the Middle East and Africa, where they are more steadfast in observing God's Commandments, numbers of practicing Christians are **increasing**. Are these secular leanings part of our problem?

In matters of theology we might best listen to Pope Francis who is reported to have commented that the Church should welcome and love all gay people. However, all sexual acts outside marriage are wrong and that marriage is defined as union between a man and a woman.

If we are truly striving to walk along God's path, we should reject same-sex marriage in our Churches.

Finally, now you've got your Bible handy read Isaiah 55: 8.

'My thoughts, says the Lord, are not like yours and my ways are different from yours '

JS

TO CONSIDER

Every time you love,
every time you include someone who's lonely,
every time you encourage someone who's defeated,
every time you challenge somebody who's wandering off the path,
every time you serve the under-resourced
– it is a sign that the kingdom is once more
breaking into the world.

John Ortberg

*You're
Invited!*

to our



Our 116th Church Anniversary is on Sunday 17th May and we are delighted that Les and Alison Judd have accepted an invitation to join us. Les will be preaching at our Anniversary service. We got to know Les better when he joined the Circuit Staff for a period and, of course Alison too, in between her many trips abroad as President of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

After morning worship, we will sit down to our traditional Church Anniversary Lunch. A list of names will be in the church in due course. **(Of course, all these arrangements are dependent in the COVID19 situation at the time.)**



Worship Planning

The Worship Planning dates for April and May are:

1st April - CANCELLED

28th April (for 3rd May) *if conditions allow*

The group meets at 2.30pm in the 76 Room. Please come along and help David prepare for his service with us.

Prayer Focus

With all the turmoil and uncertainty currently surrounding us, it is important to remember that we are coming to the end of the most important Christian celebration - that of Lent culminating in Easter. Let us list the special days of Holy Week, which starts with Palm Sunday, on 5th April. This marks the entry into Jerusalem, with crowds shouting their praises. As we know the mood of the crowd changed all too quickly. On Thursday 9th April we celebrate Maundy Thursday, when Christ shared His last meal with the disciples, where He told them of his impending death. The dreadful events of Good Friday are eclipsed by the wonder of Easter Sunday, when Christ rose from the grave, opening the way to eternal life for all who believed. In the current situation, when it is not possible to hold normal worship services, let us make it an opportunity to pray, read the Bible and follow the Lent course produced by All We Can. Apart from that we can watch and join in with the many services that will be broadcast over the period.

Pray for all Christians who find themselves in similar circumstances, that they may find new truths at this time.

During the two months covered by this Prayer Focus, the situation regarding the COVID 19 Virus will change many times and it will be necessary to change our prayers accordingly. What this outbreak has shown so far is that the more our society evolves, the more reliant we are on each other. Thus, we need to pray for all members of our society.

We should pray for all those suffering from the virus, and for the families of those who have died.

Pray for all those who are responsible in any way for the care and recovery of the sick. Pray for all those whose treatment has been delayed because of this new epidemic.

Pray for the elderly and those with other medical complaints, who are feeling very vulnerable at this time; for those who are living in isolation, feeling very lonely, and worried about the future.

Pray for all those who are involved in providing us with our food and drink whether as producers or retailers, that we should be more responsible in our buying, reassured that there is enough for all and that we only need to buy for our immediate requirements.

Pray for all those involved in supplying our gas, electricity, water, for those in the communications industry and transport. Pray that all may continue to maintain the vital ingredients on which we all depend.

Pray for our families, friends, and neighbours, that we will all look out for each other, lending a helping hand whenever possible. Pray that by our resilience we may be an example to others in these difficult times. Pray that despite the clamour that daily surrounds us we may still hear and heed the still, small comforting voice of calm.

DS



LENT COURSE

Jesus opens the scriptures to Cleophas and his companion on the road to Emmaus.... “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27)

Our Lent Course, entitled ‘Opening the Scriptures’, ran from 3rd March, until we were forced to discontinue on 17th March by the COVID19 crisis.



On 29th February a couple of us attended the service for the induction of our former Circuit Superintendent, Rev Andrew De Ville, as the new Chairman of the Southampton District, replacing Rev Dr Andrew Wood who has become 'Head of Ministries'. It was an inspirational service, and the huge church at Chandlers Ford was packed. On the following day we were at Petersfield Methodist Church to say farewell to Andrew as our Circuit Superintendent after 8 years and for the induction of his replacement, our minister, Rev David Muskett. The Circuit later receive a note of thanks from Andrew & Helen, which is quoted below:

"2nd March 2020

To Our Friends throughout the East Solent and Downs Circuit,

We would like to thank you all for the card, flowers and very generous cheque you gave us on Sunday at the Circuit Service of Celebration.

The card which so many of you had signed is a real blessing and we can only imagine the amount of work that went in to gathering it together! To have something like this to take with us will always remind us of the generous and kind folk in this Circuit.

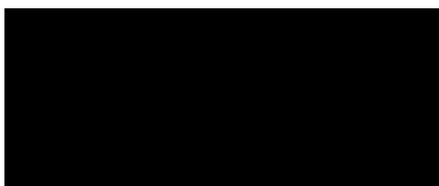
We have really enjoyed sharing with you all – and will continue to watch the life of the Circuit with real interest and only from along the coast!! We know there will be opportunities to worship and meet up again over the coming years through the District and we are already looking forward to that!

May God richly bless you all and the ministry you share in.

With our love,

Andrew and Helen"

Andrew was very supportive of us here in Midhurst throughout his time in the Circuit, both as a Church and personally. We wish him well in his new role, and both Andrew and Helen when they eventually move to their new manse.



One of the benefits (???) of the recent bad weather was that I happened to hear the phrase 'Gift Aid' on TV so I sat down to listen. A church treasurer had been found guilty of fraud on a large scale. As well as being treasurer he was responsible for actioning Gift Aid. He had exaggerated the figures and then transferred the money received into his own account. Now, don't panic! In Midhurst the task is divided. Rodney is treasurer but I, as Gift Aid Secretary, am responsible for claiming Gift Aid. This is all well and good but it made me think. What are **our** responsibilities as individuals?

If you have signed a form, which I hold and is available to the Inland Revenue if requested, and then donate through the envelope scheme, standing order, or ticking the box on charity envelopes you are consenting to the charity (the Church is most cases) claiming a refund of tax paid.

If you move address we need to know. If you stop paying income tax (that doesn't mean you need to stop your envelope or standing order) we need to know in order that we stop claiming Gift Aid.

So:

- Do you (and that means YOU not your husband, wife, or partner) pay income tax and, if so, are you happy for the church to claim Gift Aid?
- Do you pay enough to cover the refund worth 25% of your annual donation?
- Have you recently moved house?
- Am I needing an up-to-date form?

If any of the above apply to you please speak to me as soon as possible.

Finally, a Big **Thank You**. It really makes a difference – approximately 10% of our annual income!

JF



Foodbank Update

Foodbanks all over the UK are responding to the national Covid19 emergency and the Midhurst Foodbank is no exception.

Yesterday, we had a greatly increased number of requests for emergency food aid and, as we are not now open for face-to-face visits from clients, this food was delivered in Midhurst and the surrounding villages by our team of volunteers.

The delivery of lunchboxes given to families for children in receipt of free school meals has been brought forward by a week, due to the early closure of our schools and will now be on Wednesday 25th March. This is a huge logistical operation and obviously made more difficult by having to keep 2 metres apart etc.

What we are finding is that for every problem there is a solution!

Things will be very challenging for the coming months so please donate food and toiletries by putting items into the baskets at Tesco, Budgens and Boots or you can put them in our church collection box in the foyer when the Church is open for prayer between 10 and 12 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

If you are unable to do that, I am happy to receive monetary donations by cheque. Please make cheques out to: 'Chichester District Foodbank' and put them through the letterbox at Midhurst Methodist Church or bring them if you are coming to the church during the opening times above. Please mark your envelope 'Foodbank' and if you specifically want the money to come to the Midhurst Branch, state this in a brief note inside.

If you are able to volunteer in any way, please contact me on 01730814490.

Finally, please pray for the volunteers, at our local Foodbank and all the others who will be working so hard at this time, as well as all those who need to use this service due to their personal situation.

Tucked away in a quiet corner of the financial pages of my newspaper I recently found the following article:

'YYYY (Insurance) Co profits for 2019 jump...as people die younger than expected.

Financial services giant YYYY posted a jump in operating profits for 2019, partly because pension payments are falling because poorer people are dying earlier than expected. The FTSE 100 firm said operating profits for the year to December increased by 12 per cent to £2.1bn. The company added that it received a boost of £155m from people not living as long as they were expected to.

Mr XXX, chief executive..., told BBC Radio 4 the boost came “because of the rate of change” in life expectancy.

He added: “People are going on about the coronavirus, but actually the bigger problem we are having at a societal level is that lots of poorer people are not living as long as we expect. Life expectancy in some of the poorer areas is 58; the life expectancy in the richer areas is 85, and that’s a difference which has evolved over the last 20 years.”

...’ (names have been anonymised)

It wasn’t 1st April – this seems to be a genuine report. Why do we, in one of the wealthiest economies on earth, think this is OK? The Chief Exec doesn’t think so! He was just stating the facts as he sees them. It made me gasp.

Subsequently, the editor published only one letter in response; perhaps that’s all he had. The writer reacted in a similar manner, but went on to suspect a more sinister, Malthusian scenario. I don’t think this outcome is the result of a deliberate policy of our governors, just a lack of care about the consequences of their actions.

It stands to reason that life expectancy cannot go on improving forever, but we seem to be going backwards. We are talking about the differences within the same country. This is the ultimate postcode lottery – statistically, your chances are better or worse according to where you live.

Whatever the background, something isn’t working properly in our society. ‘Devil take the hindmost’ is not good enough. AG



Women's World Day of Prayer 2020

As ever, this year's event, held at the Midhurst Parish Church, was uplifting and challenging.

The theme was "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk" - the story of a man who had been ill for 38 years. Jesus asks him if he wants to be made well and with those words, heals him. Jesus acts with compassion, love, understanding and care. He does not judge the man for his excuses. He gives him a chance.

The women of Zimbabwe told us of their lives and struggles and three girls from Midhurst Rother College took part, dressed in the colours of the Zimbabwean flag - White, Red and Yellow. It was much appreciated by us all.

The congregation was told that Jesus continues to empower us through the transformation which God offers - to rise, take up our mat, whatever that may be for us, and walk.

On cards provided we were asked to write down our commitments to support our communities with actions of love, peace and reconciliation.

This could not have been more appropriate for our current situation. The hymns were uplifting and the singing was enjoyed by all; we even sang one song to an African tune which was quite challenging!

A word about the World Day of Prayer - a women-led, global, ecumenical movement:

As well as uniting us in thought and prayer on one day every year, funds raised support a huge number of projects around the world. Our own "All We Can" received £2,000 in 2018 to help 1,027 disadvantaged people in Cameroon to develop small businesses.

Let us continue to support this movement which enables us to learn about the vastly different lives of others and we look forward to 2021 when the event will be arranged by the Christian Women of Vanuatu the theme being 'Build on a strong foundation'.

Sian



WILL IT BE LENT FOREVER?

It is beginning to feel like perpetual Lent. Many of us gave up eating chocolate and sugar a long time ago. We stopped eating foods containing palm oil and soya because the rain forests are being cut down in order to grow them. We try to eat less red meat because the herds of cattle and sheep are emitting so much gas. We try very hard to give up buying plastic and foods wrapped in plastic.

Where possible we buy clothes made of natural fibres because they can be recycled and because synthetic fibres are made from crude oil. Even T-shirts with 5% synthetic fibre cannot be recycled.

Did you know that it takes 2,700 litres of water to make one T-shirt? And non-organic cotton uses 6% of global pesticides and 16% of insecticides!

We have been told that we wash our clothes too often and that wears them out more quickly.

So, what are we supposed to do?

Well, we could use the charity shops more, which would recycle our clothes in one way. We have all got things that we haven't worn for two years so we can't say that we need them. Midhurst has five charity shops and they are very good compared with other towns. In fact, Midhurst is famous for them.

Perhaps we should just count our blessings and not complain, after all, we have got plenty of water!

AC

(Statistics from the "i" newspaper 27th February)

Thank You!

.....

to Jessica, who has made the new curtains for the Hall. It was a big job to undertake. We also say thanks to AC and GS who have helped along the way. If you have not yet seen the new curtains, please have a look in the Hall when you can.



On Friday 8th May the country celebrates 75 years since VE Day (Victory in Europe). We will hear then some of the exploits of our armed forces and of the liberation of the German concentration camps, but the war was fought and won on many fronts and those left at home are sometimes forgotten.

In September 1939, when war was declared, Olive was eleven years old and living with her parents in Brighton. Here are just a few of her memories of the war years.

First memory.....

"I was coming home from school at lunch time with friends one day when there was a sudden explosion right behind us. We turned to look back and saw the public house we had just passed flattened in a cloud of black smoke. I found myself pushed into the corner shop for shelter (from the anti-aircraft guns) and waited for the All Clear Siren before running home."

Where did the family shelter during air raids?

"We had a Morrison Shelter in the sitting room! A huge cast iron table (about 6'x4') with strong mesh sides. It got very hot with the three of us, and the cat, all trying to sleep. We could hear the planes overhead and knew the sound of ours and of the German ones. Very different. During one early morning raid we heard a huge bang and dashed to the shelter only to discover the ceiling had fallen down on top of it and the poppies, which my father (a WW1 disabled veteran) was going out to sell the next day, covered with plaster. All three of us set to and cleaned them as best we could. They all sold the next day as planned."

Were you ever evacuated?

"Yes. With my small case, gas mask and label with my name and school attached to my lapel, we boarded the train at Brighton and set off. On the way we were given tomato soup and some of us were asked to wash up afterwards. (The water turned a funny colour and I haven't

had tomato soup since!) I was boarded with an elderly couple in Yorkshire along with a Jewish girl from Leeds. They were very kind but eventually I pleaded to get home, bombs or not."

You must have left school before the war ended.....

"Yes - I left school at 14 and got a job in the Co-operative office as a ledger clerk, eventually being assistant manager. The bombs were still dropping so sometimes we crouched under our large mahogany desks."

Everything was rationed - food, clothes, textiles even furniture.

"Food was very scarce so nothing was wasted. Food was still rationed when I got married in 1950 and so were clothes, sheets, blankets and even dusters. We had to save our coupons if we needed anything. I remember a small lingerie shop who bought surplus parachute material and made underwear etc. a lovely white silk and not on coupons."

What about leisure time?

"No walking on the beach it was mined and closed with barbed wire. Even the pier was closed in case the enemy tried to land. My Mum was helping the WVS (Women's Voluntary Service) so we both started knitting for the troops. The wool was scratchy and oily – very rough on the hands. We knitted balaclava helmets, gloves, short-fingered mittens and socks on four needles and, of course the colours were khaki, navy and air force blue. -When I was 17, I was old enough to take my turn at fire watching but peace was declared before I was needed. After that I was teased that the Germans saw me coming and bolted!"

These are just some of the memories which came back to Olive when we started talking about it so if you have parents or grandparents who lived through those years, ask for their memories of that time. It is history now but it might make it more real to those who came/come after.

Thank you, Olive.



Latest Information from Sanctuary in Chichester

“Case Study – Asylum-Seeking Families

We recently found that some asylum-seeking families had arrived in our area in great need. We responded immediately and over the last three months have turned things around for them.

When we first met the families, we found that they had various serious needs, including urgent medical problems. The trauma and distress they expressed was shocking to witness. The families were also unable to navigate their new environment and local systems due to their lack of English. These highly vulnerable people were struggling with every aspect of life.

In response to their situation and in collaboration with WSCC, CDC, the Rural Refugee Network, Little Bundles, local schools, the Rotary Clothes Bank and the Chichester Food Bank, we firstly:

- Ensured all the families are registered with their GPs and had medical problems addressed.
- Ensured the families had food and toiletries.
- Got the families warm clothes, coats and shoes.
- Got toys for the young children.
- Supported individuals through times of deep distress.
- Got the children into school, with uniforms, shoes, and free school meals.
- Got bus travel – although the donated tickets and vouchers are about to run out; these are vital for reaching cheaper supermarkets in Chichester.
- Took individuals to hospital appointments.

Now that the most urgent needs are taken care of, we are:

- Transporting the families to our drop-in centres for support.
- Starting formal language lessons.
- Arranging regular visits from, and outings with, our DBS-checked volunteers-
- Trying to get dental treatment – this is urgent but is proving to be very difficult due to the lack of availability of NHS dentists.
- Giving general day-to-day support with reading letters, reporting accommodation problems, listening, collecting children from school trips and being the families’ point of contact for any issues.

- Investigating possibilities for talking and trauma therapies with interpreters.
- Advocating to the Home Office and housing providers that they improve their support for asylum-seeking families. This has been successful and changes have already been made.

If we had not given this support to the families they would be in a very serious situation and in deep distress; we feel extremely lucky to have been able to help them. This is why Sanctuary in Chichester exists, and *wow* is it worthwhile when you see people's lives and outlooks transform!

We have learned a lot over the last few months. We have had to recruit a lot of new volunteers to meet the needs of the asylum-seeking families. Recruiting volunteers and all the support we have given the families has taken up a huge amount of our resources in terms of time and money. This was not planned or fundraised for so our finances have taken an unexpected and significant hit and we are having to seek additional funding urgently. We are also working on a strategy for making our organisation more resilient.

One very encouraging thing we've learned is how well local organisations can work together, and how responsive they all are. Thank you to the groups mentioned above, Stagecoach Buses, local GP surgeries, parish councils, social prescribers, and The Red Cross in Portsmouth for all their support and collaboration.

Thanks also to all our donors, volunteers and supporters, without whom our work with these families would not have been possible."

SiC contacts:

email: sanctuaryinchichester@gmail.com

website: <https://sanctuaryinchichester.org>

Donations:

please make Cheques payable to "Sanctuary in Chichester"

and send to:

Sanctuary in Chichester, PO Box 794, CHICHESTER, PO19 9UL

News from the Circuit

CIRCUIT STRUCTURES

Stage 1 of the restructuring of lay and ordained ministry in the Circuit was announced at the September Circuit Meeting. Rev David Muskett, Rev Claire Simpson and Deacon Janet Heys have all taken up new responsibilities. At Haslemere, the possibility of a local URC Minister having Pastoral Oversight has been postponed but Rev John Illsley, a recently-retired Superintendent from Bury in Lancashire now living in the Circuit, has agreed to take this on from 1st January 2020 to 31st August 2024. Celia Withers started as the Local Lay Pastor for Bridgemary, Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent on 1 March 2020.

Rev Elize Goddess has been appointed to Drayton, Havant and Wymering Churches from 1 September 2020. She and her husband are joining us from South Africa. Pastoral Oversight at Emsworth is now shared by Revd. Bill Stilwell and Deacon Laura Evans.

The S.O.F.T. Team

The S.O.F.T Team needs new members! They meet on an ad hoc basis and seek to help local churches to look at aspects of their mission where there are or might be opportunities for people to share their faith with others. They also provide resources or pointers to resources to help build confidence in sharing faith. If you'd be interested in joining this team please contact our minister, David Muskett.

Guidance on the Coronavirus is available on the Methodist Church website:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/the-methodist-churchcoronavirus-guidance/>

Please consult this regularly as it changes frequently.

Lent and Easter Word-search

P	I	L	A	T	E	S	X	C	L	G	F	I	W	C	U
V	X	O	Z	F	R	A	J	A	A	C	V	L	B	R	S
L	E	N	T	D	G	B	M	L	S	T	K	J	T	U	P
J	A	F	B	K	D	B	S	V	T	P	S	E	V	C	A
S	G	D	T	N	F	A	E	A	S	T	E	R	M	I	L
G	Z	W	K	O	L	T	G	R	U	Y	K	U	N	F	M
E	J	C	Q	I	G	H	D	Y	P	L	E	S	A	I	S
T	P	A	S	S	O	V	E	R	P	Q	U	A	Z	X	W
H	M	I	U	N	F	W	K	S	E	F	C	L	A	I	J
S	F	A	D	E	Q	H	J	G	R	D	H	E	R	O	D
E	S	P	H	C	K	U	D	E	B	W	A	M	E	N	X
M	T	H	U	S	D	G	N	J	S	L	R	O	T	L	E
E	B	A	R	A	B	B	A	S	T	U	I	P	H	M	A
N	R	S	S	F	V	D	T	U	X	W	S	Z	Y	P	Y
E	F	H	R	E	S	U	R	R	E	C	T	I	O	N	G

WORDS YOU ARE LOOKING FOR—AND THEIR MEANINGS

People

JESUS—The central figure of Christianity.

JUDAS—One of the 12 disciples (Jesus' followers), Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 silver coins.

CAIAPHAS—High Priest of the Jews at the time of Jesus' arrest.

PILATE—The Roman Governor at the time of Jesus' arrest.

BARABBAS—A thief who was set free from prison by Pilate at Passover.

HEROD—This Herod (not the same one that wanted to kill baby Jesus) presided with Pilate over the trial of Jesus.

Places

NAZARETH—Jesus' home place (Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus the Nazarene).

JERUSALEM—The city Jesus entered in glory a few days before His death and where He was crucified.

GETHSEMENE—The garden where Jesus prayed the night before His death and where He was arrested.

CALVARY—The hill where the Crucifixion took place (also known as Golgotha or Place of the skull).

Events

PALMS—Jesus was greeted by people waving palms leaves in celebration when He entered Jerusalem days before His death.

PASSOVER—Jesus and His disciples (followers) had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish feast of Passover.

LAST SUPPER—The Passover meal was Jesus' last meal with his disciples.

EUCHARIST—At the meal Jesus blessed bread and wine and said they represented His Body and Blood.

CRUCIFIXION—On Good Friday Jesus was crucified with two thieves on crosses on Calvary.

SABBATH—This is the Jewish day of prayer and rest. People cannot be buried on the Sabbath so Jesus was laid in a temporary tomb when he was taken down from the cross.

RESURRECTION—When Mary (Jesus' mother) and her friends went to the temporary tomb on the morning after the Sabbath they were told by an angel that Jesus had risen from the dead.

ASCENSION—40 days after the resurrection Jesus went back up to His Father in heaven.

LENT—This is the period of 40 days before Easter when Christians try to live quietly and simply, remembering that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert fasting and praying before He died.

EASTER—The day Christians celebrate Jesus rising from the dead.

AMEN—The word Christians use at the end of their prayers, meaning "So be it" (from Hebrew).

Easter Crafts for All Ages



Midh
Cancelled
due to
coronavirus
restrictions
Craft activities, tea & cake - FREE!



PACT Spring Lecture 'Leadership for Tomorrow' in Parliament and the Church



Nola Leach

Chief Executive of CARE

(Christian Action Research and Education)

CARE has done fantastic work over 40 years. It has been at the coal face helping Parliament make ethical decisions about family, justice and life issues.

Cancelled due to
coronavirus
restrictions



CARE
FOR GOD'S
WORLD



www.pactofthetwochurchestogether.com



Fundraising News

Your regular update on our charitable fundraising efforts

The Bric-a-Brac Sale on 15th February was amazing! We had a record number of visitors through the door, and we made £781 which is a new benchmark for white elephants. Sian ran out of bacon and bread, which has never happened before at one of our sales. It was great to see so many people enjoying themselves.

All that seems a lifetime ago now – things have changed so much in such a short time. As we march deep into the COVID 19 crisis, I have to tell you more about what isn't happening than what is...



Angela has cancelled the Christian Aid Coffee Morning, which was to have been on 9th May.

The Easter Envelope Collection for All We Can is usually connected with our Easter Day service, which has now been cancelled.

The Spring Fair scheduled for 30th May will not now go ahead.

Thank you for your on-going support

AG



&



Barbara and David will be holding a charity Garden Party at 9 Cavalier Close in aid of Water Aid and Action for Children on **June 20th from 12 noon – 4pm**. Details to follow.

Diary

Dates

April

if restrictions on movement still apply:

Wed 1st	2.30pm	Worship Planning	cancelled
Thurs 2nd	10-11.30	Mischief Makers	cancelled
	7.30pm	Leadership Team Mtg	cancelled
	7.30pm	Lent Course	cancelled
Sun 5th	10.00am	Morning Service	cancelled
Mon 6th			
Wed 8th	9.30am	Holy Week Meditations	cancelled
Thurs 9th	6.30pm	Agape Service & Communion	cancelled
Fri 10th	9.30am	Good Friday Service	cancelled
	10.20am	Walk of Witness	cancelled
Sat 11th	9.30am	Decorate Church	cancelled
Sun 12th	10.00am	Easter Service & Communion	cancelled
Sat 18th	2.30pm	Easter Crafts	cancelled
Sun 19th	10.00am	Morning Service	cancelled
Thurs 23rd	10.00am	Mischief Makers	cancelled
	10am-		
Sat 25th	3.00pm	MRC Community Day	cancelled
Sun 26th	10.00am	Morning Service	cancelled
Tues 28th	2.30pm	Worship Planning	76 Room
Thurs 30th	10.00am	Mischief Makers	cancelled

May

If the restrictions on social contacts have been lifted:

Sun 3rd	10.00am	Holy Communion	Rev D Muskett
Thurs 7th	10.00am	Mischief Makers	Church Hall
Sat 9th	10.00am	Christian Aid Coffee Morning	Cancelled
Sun 10th	10.00am	Morning Service	Mrs W Corney
Thurs 14th	10.00am	Mischief Makers	Church Hall
Thurs 14th	7.30pm	Leadership Team Mtg	A Griffiths
Sun 17th	10.00am	Anniversary Service	Rev L Judd
	12.30pm	Anniversary Lunch	Church Hall
Thurs 21st	10.00am	Mischief Makers	Church Hall
Thurs 21st	6.30pm	Ascension Day Service	Church Garden

Sun 24th	10.00am	Morning Service	Rev Dr J Illsley
		Copydate for June/July Newsletter	
Fri 29th	2.00pm	Set Up Spring Fair	cancelled
Sat 30th	10.00am	Spring Fair	cancelled
Sun 31st	10.00am	Morning Service	Mr D Arnott

Midhurst Methodist Church

North Street
Midhurst
GU29 9DU

 01730 816206

www.midhurstmethodist.com



www.facebook.com/midhurstmethodist

MINISTER:

Rev David Muskett

Tel: 01428 642921

Email: david.muskett41@btinternet.com

Minister's day off – Friday

Steward:

Alison Griffiths

Church Treasurer:

Rodney Bond

Hall Bookings:

Angela Clarke