



Heaton Moor United Church

The United Reformed Church and The Methodist Church
working together in partnership



Church Services

Sunday 11th October 10.45 Heaton Moor United Church

Graham Adams

Duty 1 : Mark Duty 2: Arnold

Zoom Services and Meetings

Sunday 11th October Circuit Service 3.00pm service

The zoom log is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87212246881?pwd=VXpyMzRYV21UZ1ZoYlkc2R4dmV1QT09>

Meeting ID: 872 1224 6881

Passcode: 974333

Wednesday 14th October Coffee and Prayer 11.00am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/95327541668?pwd=ekU2QWgzZjVKWtBFTjZsb0tERVQrdz09>

Meeting ID: 953 2754 1668

Passcode: 794265

Wednesday 21st October More than a Good Book 10.00am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86886449976?pwd=ekU2QWgzZjVKWtBFTjZsb0tERVQrdz09>

Meeting ID: 868 8644 9976

Passcode: 714757

Joining by telephone

Step 1)

Dial any of the following numbers. If one doesn't work try another and another until you are able to connect:

0330 088 5830

0131 460 1196

0203 481 5237

0203 481 5240

0208 080 6591

0208 080 6592

Step 2)

Follow the prompts you hear on the phone.

You may be prompted to enter 3 different things:

1 -- Meeting ID followed by hash #

2 -- Password followed by hash #

3 -- Participants ID -- You will not have one of these, don't worry, all you need to do is enter "Hash" #

You should then be entered into the service.

Dear Heaton Moor United Church,

The peace which passes all our understanding will guard our hearts and minds in the knowledge of Christ Jesus.

Hope you are all doing well and are staying safe. Thank you for all your support with the worship services happening at our Church building.

Thank you for all support and offerings towards FRESH to share with the children and their families at our local school, which we appreciate it a lot.

I am happy to introduce Jonnie Hill, the new ordinand who will be on a placement at our church during this academic year. We welcome Jonnie and look forward to sharing his ministerial gifts with us. Herewith I am sending you a brief introduction about him in his own words.

Herewith I am sending you the reflection for this week and the worship resources for your kind perusal and meditation.

May God's grace and peace go with you in all your endeavours of life.

Thanking you,

Regards,

Raj

9th October 2020



My name is Jonnie Hill and I am a URC minister-in-training in my fourth and final year at Northern College. I am delighted to be offered the opportunity to work with Heaton Moor United Church as part of my major placement in the South Manchester and Cheshire Missional Partnership.

Originally, I hail from the Republic of Ireland but moved to the UK in the early noughties for university. My professional background is in the NHS where for almost ten years, I worked in corporate communications as a communications manager. Though after a bit of a change in direction some years back I undertook an MSc in Counselling Psychology, and since qualification I practised as a therapist working both for charities and privately. I am married to Adam who is a URC minister and we live in Levenshulme.

My sending church is Chorlton Central Church which is a Baptist/URC LEP. Having not grown up in the URC (or the Methodist Church for that matter), I am still discovering the range of ways we 'do church'. I am very much looking forward to my time with Heaton Moor United Church and seeing the ways in which God is at work in the life of the Church.

MESSAGE FROM THE TEMPORARY EDITOR;

This is my last newsletter before Sharon's return next week and it's another bumper one!

As community groups have slowly been re-opening I have been speaking with some of them this week to see what their experiences have been with the challenges that COVID brings. I have spoken with both organisers and attendees and received a mixed bag of responses. I know many of you, like me, are incredibly frustrated with all the things we are unable to do as a Church community but we are constantly monitoring the guidelines and when it is safe and appropriate to do so we will be organising opportunities for us to get together.

During COVID some of us have received help from our neighbours and The Coop have once again launched their Neighbour of the Year award. If you have a neighbour that has been offering practical help, looked out for you on a daily basis, are sociable and friendly and show that they truly respect and care for their neighbours then why not enter them for this award? To enter go to <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NOTY2020/> if you don't have computer access then feel free to contact me and I will enter them on your behalf.

As always if you have any thoughts or comments or I can be of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me

JoAnne

Community Worker

community@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

07340 269 354



We will be celebrating the Harvest on 18th October. The theme will be the same as usual giving Thanks for the Harvest and giving to those in this country and overseas who do not have enough food. However PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANY GIFTS OF FOOD to the service. Instead there are various ways that you can contribute if you wish. There will be envelopes for monetary gifts to the foodbanks which we normally support and for Christian Aid for you to pick up on Sunday 11th and 18th. We invite you to take the envelope home with you, put some cash in or a cheque in the envelope and bring it back the following week to place in a basket at the entrance to the Church. Alternatively, you could post a cheque to the Church (addressed to S Heginbotham) Please make cheques payable to Heaton Moor United Church and write "Harvest Gift" on the back. You could transfer your gift via BACS transfer to Co-op Bank Sort Code 08-92-99 Account 65561034. Reference Harvest Gift. You may prefer to donate food directly via collection in your local supermarket or to regard your gift to the schools collection as your Harvest gift. We will dedicate all these gifts – seen and unseen – at the Harvest service.

Many thanks Deborah.

SHOEBOXES FOR ROMANIA **LAST CALL.**

If anyone is preparing a box .please have it ready by **11th OCTOBER .**

I can pick it up if necessary.

Anyone who's been knitting hats/scarves please let me have them.

Plus the usual toiletries. crayons and toys. Etc.

Donations will also be very acceptable. Cheques payable to Teams4u

Thank you.

Betty



Since the beginning of lockdown, an estimated six million people in the UK have fallen behind on one or more household bills, with poorest households hit the hardest. For example...

Leonie had been doing shift work through an agency for several years, but her work ended when lockdown began. She is now behind on her rent, water bills and council tax. Every day, she receives letters asking for repayment.

Leanne is living in fear of eviction, as the part time work she was doing to make ends meet stopped during lockdown and she wasn't able to pay her rent or bills.

This is an urgent problem that demands a solution. That's why Church Action on Poverty has teamed up with the Methodist, Baptist, United Reformed Churches and Church of Scotland to ask the Chancellor to create a Jubilee Fund, to pay off and cancel unavoidable Covid debt for households in the UK.

[Email your MP now and ask them to #ResetTheDebt](#)

You can help. Write to your MP today, and ask them to write to the Chancellor.

We need to:

- Raise these concerns about Covid-19 household debt and its impact on the poorest families.
- Find out how the government intends to address this urgent problem.

We need to make sure everyone has a stable platform from which to face the future. Add your voice to call on the UK Government to #ResetTheDebt.

Please let JoAnne or Linda know if you would like to attend Church in October. So far no one has had to be turned away ! We will try and fit as many in as we can to ensure all can attend who wish to.



#hmuc – are you on Instagram?

Follow us on our new
Instagram account
heaton_moor_united_church

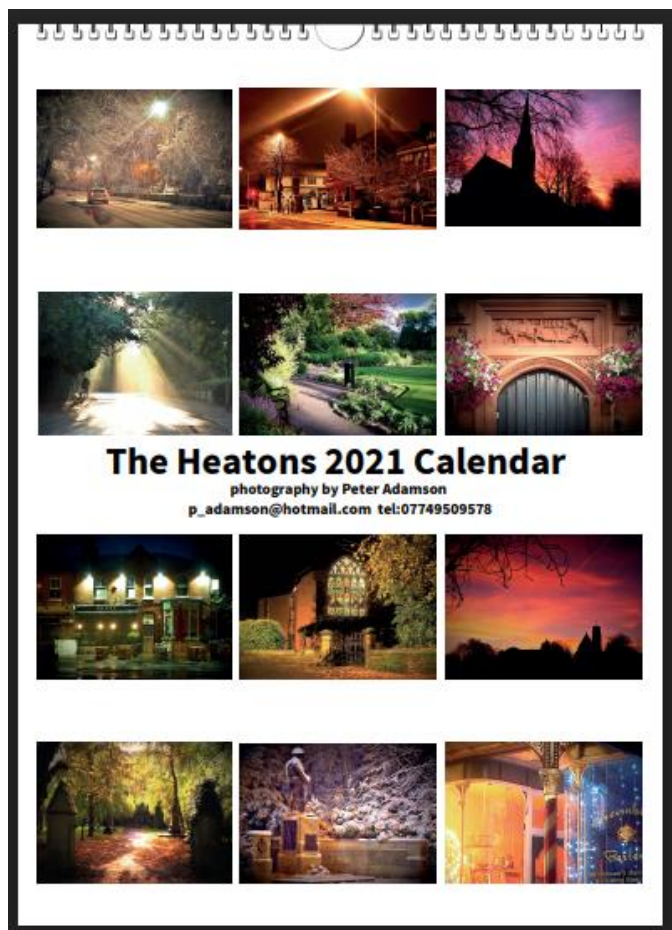


Thank You to all who have contributed to our FRESH Collection to date. There's still time to drop your donations off on the 10th October at Heaton Mersey Methodist Church or on the 17th October at Heaton Moor United Church. Alternatively you can contact the office who will arrange to pick up from you. Whilst we appreciate all types of donations we are low on;

- rice
- chickpeas
- tinned coconut milk
- tinned vegetables
- tinned meat.



To Ann Wallis who is celebrating a birthday this week



Have you seen The Heatons 2021 Calendar as advertised on Facebook?

The calendar costs £10 and all the images are from The Heatons.

If you'd like a copy contact Sharon in the office – orders through Sharon will generate a donation to Church charities.

Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers Gathering

In recent weeks, we have all been shocked and saddened by images of the fire at the Moria refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos, the continuing tensions in Calais, The English Channel and Dover and the blocking of the Sea Watch Rescue Ship in the Mediterranean between Libya, Italy and Malta.

We are therefore inviting you to a Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers Gathering over Zoom so that we can all share our concerns over recent developments, discuss our experiences in supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK and explore what actions we might individually and collectively take to ameliorate the situation.

The Zoom Gathering will take place on Thursday 15 October between 11 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. and will be hosted by Ian Rutherford and David Hardman (Manchester and Stockport) and Bala Gnanapragasam (London). We are delighted that we will be joined from Rome by Fiona Kendall who is European and Legal Affairs Advisor with Mediterranean Hope www.mediterraneanhope.com

The Advocacy statement on situation of migrants and refugees in Europe published by the World Council of Churches on 22 September 2020 reminds us that Churches and international church-based organizations reaffirm their commitment to a compassionate response to people on the move. We call for adequate support both for people on the move and for their host communities. We appeal for an EU Pact on asylum and migration that respects relevant commitments under international law, the Global Compacts on Refugees and for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and the EU's core values of respect for human dignity and rights, and of effective solidarity among EU members.

The full statement, to which the World Methodist Council is a signatory, is [here](#).

To join the Zoom meeting on 15 October please let Ian Rutherford know on ianr7@hotmail.co.uk and he will send you the Zoom link.

We are looking forward to seeing you on 15 October and capturing everyone's contributions.

God bless

Ian, David and Bala

A coffee morning with a difference!

TOPSY TURVY COFFEE EVENINGS

Come and join us at our new monthly guided coffee evenings for fellowship & fun!
Last Wednesday of the month starting
28th October 2020 at 7pm via zoom

TO REGISTER INTEREST - JO-ANNE 07340 269 354
COMMUNITY@HEATONMOORUNITEDCHURCH.ORG.UK





Fresh is a community group of volunteers that would like to eliminate holiday hunger in school children. By providing food packages during school holidays to children on free school meals & families on low incomes.

HMUC & HMMC Churches



Working together
with FRESH to
support a local
school, support
their families.

We are planning to collect food over the next 5 weeks. This food is for children, so no spam !! Things like crisps, pasta, sauces, jam, peanut butter, cereal, cereal bars & anything else you think a young person would like to eat.

There will be a car boot to fill on the following Saturdays, each church is doing alternate weeks.

19 th Sept	10.30-12.00	HMUC
26 th Sept	10.30-12.00	HMMC
3 rd Oct	10.30-12.00	HMUC
10 th Oct	10.30-12.00	HMMC
17 th Oct	10.30-12.00	HMUC

Volunteers Welcome

**Please contact Sharon if you
can help.**

office@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk





Prayers from Linda



Thank you Lord.

Dear God, Thank you for helping us to make it through this difficult year. Thank you that you've carried us through the deep waters, and through the time of this pandemic. We know how much we need you, your grace, your strength, your power working through us on our toughest days. Help us to keep our focus first on you. Please forgive us for spending too much time on other things, for looking for answers elsewhere. Help us to relive on you again, Thank you that you came to give us peace, hope, and joy. Help us to remember that the gift of Christ our Lord is our greatest gift of all. Fill us with your joy love and peace. For you will never leave us. Thank you for your daily power in

our lives, help us to open are heart to you, your eyes are over always over us, and your ears are open to our prayers. Thank you that you surround us with your love and care. you are our shield, and we are safe in your care. Amen.

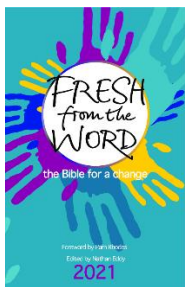
For our world Lord,

Lord, there are so many decisions that our world leaders have to make daily. Father God decisions that could make or break our world. Lord, help our P.M and other leaders in our world to make the right decisions. That will benefit all of us. Help us to prayer for peace and growth of this world. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

If anyone would like to share a Prayer with the church family, please call Linda on 07564839380 or E-mail lindawfling625@gmail.com.



No names required because God Knows.



Bible Reading notes-Fresh from the Word 2021 = £10 for the year

Themes: The Bible through the Seasons: The Underside of History-women of spirit and the word: On eagles' wings.

Face the unknown with the spirit of discipleship, sustained by--rooted on growing; walking as one; God on the inside.

The writers come from all traditions and from different countries and so give us new perspectives on the Scriptures.

The URC Prayer Handbook 2021---Conversations - £5

This comes in 2 sections: the first has prayers relating to the Lectionary readings for the year and the second has prayers for everyday and extraordinary situations for deep reflection and to respond to God' voice.

If you would like to order a copy of one or both of these. please contact

Anne Hunt on 442 2380 by November 8th

A prayer as I put on my mask:

**#PrayTogether
#StaySafeTogether**

Creator God,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
in the wearing of this cloth -
let it be "an outward sign
of an inward grace" -
a tangible and visible way of living
love for my neighbours,
as I love myself.

Christ, the Son,
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
in the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,
As the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully -
and full of care -
to all those I meet.
May this simple piece of cloth be
shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds,
be filled with your love.
In your Triune Name and
in that love,
I pray.

May it be so.
May it be so.

*Rev. Dr Richard Bott, moderator
of the United Church of Canada (adapted)*



**World Council
of Churches**



UNITED IN LOCKDOWN

SO LET US PRAY
SO LET US ACT
SO LET US DECLARE:

YOU ARE
NOT ALONE!

11TH – 17TH OCTOBER 2020
WWW.PRISONSWEEK.ORG
@PRISONSWEEK #PRISONSWEEK

PRISONSWEEK
A WEEK OF PRAYER

UNITED IN LOCKDOWN, united in prayer. For those of us still in lockdown – living with restricted freedom and heightened fear, suffering anxiety or anger, feeling helplessness and despair. Together let us pray, let us act and let us declare to one another – **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

Prisoners know all about lockdown in ways which are far starker than the 'stay at home' experience people have lived during the viral pandemic. However, beyond the walls of prison people of all ages have had to learn how to navigate uncertainty and many people feel fearful, bewildered and out of control. In past months there was a loss of freedom to be with loved ones, even when at the point of death. For some people there has been overwhelming pain and sadness. Some people have felt lonely and isolated whilst others have longed for space away from other people. All of this is experienced within the walls of prisons 365 days a year.

This Prisons Week as we pray for all those connected with the criminal justice system in any way, including all prison staff and families of prisoners as well as prisoners themselves, let us not talk of social distancing but rather of physical distancing. Let us pray for social connection and restored relationship and an openness to the generous love of God who longs to draw close to every individual person, treasured and known by name.

We pray that amid both places of brokenness and beauty there might be a discovery of inner freedom and peace which is rooted in the love, hope and peace of God revealed in Jesus Christ and present through the power of the Holy Spirit, never locked down.

– Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester, Church of England Bishop for Women's Prisons

"There are many things we take for granted and it is only when we lose it, we realise the value it had. Due to Covid-19 a lot of people are now experiencing the loss of work and, at the same time, the loss of liberty. These two factors are bad enough but combined they risk diminishing the self worth of the individuals concerned. A lot of people can now relate to where I have been. In the same way I can now relate to their fears and insecurity."

– Former prisoner, March 2020

SUNDAY: THE PRISONS WEEK PRAYER *Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day. Amen.*

MONDAY: PRAYING WITH PRISONERS – Spirit of grace and truth, we ask for your constant presence through the days, weeks, months and years of imprisonment. For your steady refusal to be shut out by cell walls, steel doors or reluctant and stubborn hearts. Break through the fear and isolation, shatter all pretence and deceit, guide our thoughts and actions, setting before us the example of Jesus the prisoner. Bring us face to face with the unlimited and sacrificial love of God for all his children, so that we can know we are not alone.

United in prayer, we bow our heads to say together, Our Father...

TUESDAY: PRAYING WITH THE VICTIMS OF CRIME – Comforter Spirit, ease the distress and suffering of those whose lives are locked down because of crimes committed against them. Move through others to bring reassurance that they are not alone, physically or in the depths of their souls. Unlock doors that reveal a path of healing through hurt and injustice to a more peaceful place, where trust and confidence can be gradually restored.

United in prayer, we bring our wounds as we say together, Our Father...

WEDNESDAY: PRAYING WITH FAMILIES – Spirit of life and light, walk with us through the confusion and pain of lives forever changed by crime and imprisonment. Give us the strength to bear feelings of anger and betrayal; and to cope with the unfamiliar and frightening. Show us how to bridge the gulf which keeps us apart, revive relationships and bring reconciliation. Take our fears away and give us peace, that we can know that we're not alone.

United in prayer, we bring our sadness and our hopes as we say together, Our Father ...

THURSDAY: PRAYING WITH COMMUNITIES – Spirit of God, who dwells within people and places, help us magnify your kindness and goodness to overcome ignorance, alienation and hostility, to be able to see each other as people created and connected in God's image. Humble us by your power that we might have the courage to come together, physically distanced but united in purpose, called by name to serve God and our neighbours. Pour your gifts upon us, so that we can fulfil your trust in us to do our part, that your kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven.

United in prayer, we bring ourselves and offer our lives as we say together, Our Father...

FRIDAY: PRAYING WITH THOSE WORKING IN PRISON – Spirit of refuge and renewal, be alongside all who are called to work in prisons. Give daily strength to serve courageously and faithfully through the continuing constraints of lockdown. Be present in the bringing of order, compassion, food, comfort, and humanity to all held in custody. Sustain and enable us in times of exhaustion and weariness through the sureness of your love and power.

United in prayer, watch over us as we say together, Our Father...

SATURDAY: PRAYING WITH THOSE WORKING IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM – Spirit of wisdom and mercy, lead those responsible for exercising justice in the way of truth; bring discernment, fair minded judgement and a willingness to confront injustice as they consider the lives of others. In every role and place of work through the whole criminal justice system, guide and empower people to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit.

United in prayer, we stand before you Jesus, our Judge, Redeemer and friend as we say together, Our Father...

"Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)

For more information, to make a donation or to order more of these prayer leaflets please visit our website at www.prisonsworld.org email us via info@prisonsworld.org or write to: **Prisons Week, c/o Free Churches Group, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH**

SPREAD Designed by spreadcreative.com

For over forty years Prisons Week has prepared prayer literature for the Christian community to use as they pray for the needs of all those affected by prisons: prisoners and victims, their families, their communities, those working and volunteering in prisons and the criminal justice system. Please pray each day during Prisons Week but also ask yourself whether there is one thing that you as an individual, or as a church, can do to help any of the people that you are praying for. Prisons Week is a registered charity No. 1020920

Printed by HMPPS at HMP Coldingley

PRISONS WEEK
A WEEK OF PRAYER

The Letter of Euodia and Syntyche to the Philippians

Reflecting on Philippians 4: 2-9

Dear Church@ Philippi,

Euodia and Syntyche, sisters in Jesus Christ write this letter

To all the people in Philippi,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As many of you will remember both of us were among those women along with Lydia who on a Sabbath day gathered by the river outside the gate at a place of prayer and listened to Paul and his teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:11-15). From then on, when we as women began sharing our testimonies and experiences of prayer, by the grace of God the Church at Philippi began to grow. We are grateful to Paul for his ministry and his missionary journeys, especially for God in Jesus' calling Paul to mission both to the Jews and the non-Jews equally, we praise God. We also thank Paul for recognising us, though women, as those who have struggled beside him in the work of the gospel (Phil 4: 3), and for also preaching and practicing that there is no longer, Jew, non-Jew, male, female for we are all one in Christ. We also thank Paul for taking time in writing a letter to our church from his imprisonment. We send our prayers, peace and thoughts to Paul at a time like this.

As we received this letter from Paul, we were saddened to note not only that both our names were called out in the public, but were also disheartened to realise how we were portrayed as quarrelsome women in the church. Paul would have written with a good intention of asking both of us 'to be of the same mind in the Lord,' (4:2) but ever since this letter from Paul came out everyone has started to enquire about the quarrel we had, and the reasons for such a quarrel. We as women get very little attention in the literature of ancient Christianity, and when we are mentioned for wrong reasons, in this context over a quarrel between us, you can imagine the kind of ostracization we women have been facing.

Ever since we have called out in the letter, we have been branded as 'two quarrelling women' and have been stereotyped as women are the ones who always quarrel, and unfortunately some even went on to say 'wherever there is a quarrel there is a woman.' We do recognise that we live in a patriarchal world, and women have always been subjected under men, and this calling out our names in the public sphere by Paul is unwarranted and unexpected. So, our call to the church at the Philippi and to all the readers across time and space is to not yield to patriarchy, subjecting women under male dominance and to stereotype women as those with whom quarrel is associated. There isn't anything funny about this matter. We as followers of Jesus Christ believe that people with all genders are created in the equal image of God, and any practice of patriarchy in the church and outside the church is a sin. We urge Paul, and the rest of the Christians to repent for practicing patriarchy, which is male dominance and arrogance, consciously and unconsciously, and strive towards building a just society by affirming in the equality of all genders.

We urge the church not to be too inquisitive to know the reasons for why Paul has written about us 'to have the same mind in the Lord.' This is not about any conflicts or quarrels

that we have, but it is an exhortation that Paul is making to the entire church through us to strive towards having a same mind in the Lord. Sameness is not about uniformity, but is about unity in diversity in the Lord.

We are thankful to Paul for not taking sides with any of us, and for not provoking each of us to fight between us. All that he calls us is 'to be of the same mind in the Lord.' He did not urge us 'to be of the same mind with one another,' for then we would have struggled to know which same mind. Paul has given us the clue to have the same mind in the Lord, which is to have the mind of Christ, which is to be inclusive, open, humble, accepting one another, receiving one another, serving one another and loving one another with out any conditions.

We call on the church to recognise partnership as a key feature in Christian discipleship. Paul did mention about Clement, about Timothy, about us as deacons, as co-workers with him, for partnerships of working together is a way forward for us as churches. Partnerships recognises the diversity of gifts among us, and when we work together offering our own gifts for the Kingdom of God, we can together make a difference. The plural of disciples is church, and partnerships of men and women, young and old, Jews and non-Jews, Greeks and Romans, when all of us work together, we can work with Jesus in bringing a change in our locality. So, keep working in partnerships for it provides a collective and communitarian witness to the gospel of Jesus relevant for our times.

When we are in partnerships, in unity with one another we can rejoice in the Lord, for to rejoice in the Lord is to celebrate partnerships, where others priorities become our priorities and where we can serve God by serving one another. Let our gentleness be known to everyone, for we as church will be known by our partnerships, by our being in the same mind in the Lord and in rejoicing in the Lord. Rejoicing in the Lord is not rejoicing in Ceasar. Again, we join with Paul in saying this, rejoice in the Lord always.

Make prayer a priority, for prayer is listening to God, waiting on God, retreating from all busyness of life and hearing to God speaking to us, for God is a speaking God, collaborating God willing to work with us.

And the peace of God which passes all understanding, for we cannot predict the ways and works of God, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, the hope of this world today and forever. Do not allow our lives to be guarded by any other securities other than the peace of God and strive to share that peace with everyone we meet.

Finally, as you will know the meaning of our names Euodia which means "Good journey" or "fragrance" and Syntyche means "Good luck" or "fortunate" reflect that in Christ our lives have been on a 'good journey' of fragrance, faith and fortune. May goodness and mercy follow you all the days of your life.

(This is a reflection imagining if Euodia and Syntyche write a reply letter in response to Philippians 4:2-9 to the same church)

Rev. Dr. Raj Bharat Patta
11th October 2020

Sunday 11 October 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we come into your presence with thanksgiving, to praise your holy name. We lift your name on high and proclaim your greatness. We give thanks to the Lord for He is good and His love endures for ever.

Hymn: 36 There's a quiet understanding

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqJ-JY3-nfU>

There's a quiet understanding
when we're gathered in the Spirit,
it's a promise that he gives us,
when we gather in his name.
There's a love we feel in Jesus,
there's a manna that he feeds us,
it's a promise that he gives us,
when we gather in his name.

And we know when we're together,
sharing love and understanding,
that our brothers and our sisters
feel the oneness that he brings.
Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jesus,
for the way you love and feed us,
for the many ways you lead us;
thank you, thank you, Lord;
thank you, thank you, Lord.

Tedd Smith (b. 1927)

Let us pray together

Father God, creator of the world and universe,
look down upon us as we gather in your
name. Although we may be worshipping in
different places we pray that we shall be

strengthened through your Word and the
unity we have in Jesus Christ. We are not
alone in our worship and add our praises to all
who meet in the name of Jesus today.
Creation speaks of your love and we are
blessed with many gifts. Sadly, we have
abused those gifts and have not always acted
in ways that are pleasing to you. Have mercy
upon us O' Lord, and show us how we can
make your world a better place in which to
live. May your blessing be with us today and
every day; for we ask this in Jesus' name.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament

Psalms 106 v 1-5

Today's New Testament Reading: Philippians

4 v1-9 "Rejoice in the Lord always....."

Time to Reflect

The reading from Philippians reminds me of a
chorus that was often sung as a 'round' –
"Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say
rejoice"(577 in Mission Praise) However, we
may ask "how can we rejoice in the Lord
always?" Life is not always a bed of roses and
we often face hardship and struggles. The
Covid-19 crisis has been a real challenge for
many people and rejoicing may have been the
last thing on people's minds.

But what is it that makes us rejoice? People
will have different answers but many will
mention material things, and recent
restrictions on shopping, going to the gym,
hairdressers or going on holiday; have been a
real bind for some.

Throughout the Bible, we are reminded that there is more to life than material blessings. Cynics may say “fine talk when you live in the affluent West” but during my visits to some of the poorest areas of Africa and Asia, I found that those who had little in material terms were still able to rejoice. They valued family and community and were thankful for the little they had.

Covid-19 has challenged us all and made us think about what is really important in life. It has brought us closer to family and friends and reminded us to be thankful, and look for blessings that are beyond the material world. Paul says that when we come before the Lord with thanksgiving we shall find His peace. There will be many today who do not have peace in their lives and we pray that one day, they will find the peace of the Lord that passes all understanding.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

God of love and compassion; we lay our broken world at your feet. Our world continues to be torn apart by war, fear and hate and people are oppressed by those who seek power for themselves with little thought for the needs of others.

We think for our towns and communities, many of which are fragmented and divided. Diversity can bring richness and strength to our communities, but can be used to promote fear and hatred. Show us how old pains and wounds can be used to bring new life and hope.

We think of those whose lives have been broken, through sorrow and grief, illness, and fractured relationships. Life may seem to have lost its purpose. May the gift of your healing grace bring a new sense of purpose and love.

On this Homeless and Prison Sunday we think of those who have found themselves homeless and destitute not knowing where to turn. We remember those who have

committed crimes, and are in prison or just been released. As we recognise the need for justice may we act with compassion and mercy, remembering how God deals with us.

We draw our prayers of intercession to a close by saying aloud or in our mind these words:

Almighty God, give us hearts of compassion so that we can bless those whom we meet. Help us to bring peace and comfort to those who are in distress. May your Spirit give us life and strength and show us how we can share God’s love, joy and peace and be true servants of Christ. Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to

<https://youtu.be/RYMjqc5l9G4> or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

A prayer of blessing

May your grace, love and peace, inspire and strengthen us now, and in the days to come. In Jesus’ name we ask this. Amen.

Original Materials by John Roughley

All

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Psalm 106 v 1-5

¹ Praise the LORD!

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

² Who can utter the mighty doings of
the LORD,

or declare all his praise?

³ Happy are those who observe justice,
who do righteousness at all times.

⁴ Remember me, O LORD, when you show
favour to your people;

help me when you deliver them;

⁵ that I may see the prosperity of your chosen
ones,

that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
that I may glory in your heritage.

Philippians 4 v1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.