

Dear Heaton Moor United Church,

Hope you are all doing well and are keeping safe during these strange and tough times.

Under the current lockdown, the guidance has been 'stay at home,' and glad to know that many of us have been following it responsibly. Glad to know that many in our congregation have been vaccinated.

Thanks to Graham Adams who shares his reflections on our Church YouTube channel this week. Thanks to Paul Brewerton for leading the Good Read sessions on zoom. Thank you for those of you who are joining on our circuit zoom services on Sunday.

Herewith I am sending you the reflection and the worship resources for this week. Thank you for all your feedback and encouragement.

We will join with the World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18-25 Jan) and are planning to organise "Unity Sunday" service for our Heaton Churches together on the 24th January 2021 at 6pm on Zoom, and may I invite you all to join in that service please.

Kindly uphold one another in prayer during these difficult times.

May God's grace and love be with you all.

Stay safe, Stay at home and Stay blessed.

With warm regards,

Raj

15th January 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-EDITOR

I'm glad to say I survived, thanks to coffee, my first week of home working and schooling!

Even though our building remains closed Church is still here, just in different forms. Here are some new things we can all do together but apart this week;

- Take part in Tune In to God: Fridays@5:17. See more information on page 2
- Watch the weekly reflection posted on Sunday morning on our YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyhynK2FIPDTbOuqBiO6D9A>
- This week take a Prayer Walk round your home, for ideas on what to Pray for see page 4
- On Thursday evening light a candle from 8pm until 9pm. See more information on page 3

The theme for the URC Children's and Youth work this year is Heroes and Villains - and if you follow us on social media you will have seen some of my posts about the story of David and Goliath. This is our story for the month of January and I will be sharing ideas for activities and reflections that will hopefully suit the young and old alike. Me and my little man had lots of fun working out how tall Goliath was, how much his armour weighed and making a sling shot as part of our digging deeper into the story activities.

If I can of any help during this lockdown please let me know; I'm happy to be a walking partner, personal shopper, delivery driver or anything else you may require!

If you have anything you would like included in the weekly notice's please let me know. As always if you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me.

JoAnne

community@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk


07340 269 354

www.heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

 Heaton Moor United Church

 heaton_moor_united_church

 YouTube^{GB} Heaton Moor United Church



CORONAVIRUS TIER 4

STAY AT HOME

gov.uk/coronavirus

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms
so will be spreading the virus without realising. We must all
take action to protect each other and our hospital capacity.



School Pantry

Towards the end of January / beginning of February we will be doing another collection for our School Pantry Project.

This project sees us visiting Mersey Vale School before each half term and providing much needed food for those families who need a little bit of help. The Pantry is open to all families who feel they need and to date we have had a fantastic response.

To the left is a list of items that we are currently short of. If you can help in any way that would be great.

If you would like further information please contact JoAnne on community@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk or 07340 269 354

Many of us will have been saddened to read in the news this week about the latest in the free school meals debacle. It is my understanding that Stockport Council will continue to provide payments directly to families that are eligible for free school meals. We are in constant contact with our local school Mersey Vale and will be offering help as requested. If you know of anybody who is struggling in these times please do speak with a member of the team.



Topsy Turvy Coffee Evening

27th January @ 19:00

This will be a craft evening over zoom. Please contact JoAnne if you would like to attend and to arrange supplies.



Tune In to God: Fridays@5:17

3Generate 365 is a year-round process of engagement with children and young people by The Methodist Church. As part of 3Generate 365 they are launching a weekly time of prayer at 5:17pm!

Never stop praying (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Each Friday at 5:17 children and young people are encouraged to spend some time listening and paying attention to God.

At Heaton Moor United Church we think everyone should take this time, if they can, to have a moment with God. If you have children and young

people in the house encourage them to join you. Alternatively spend this time with God and Pray for children and young people at this time.

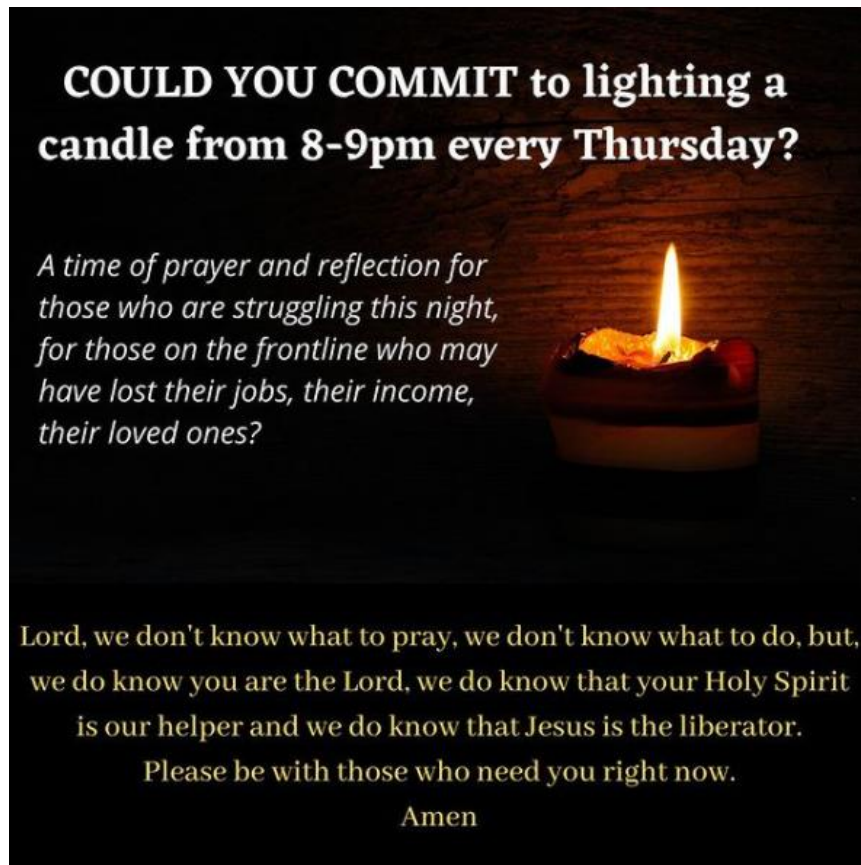
Included in this newsletter is door hangar –please pass onto a young person to colour or colour it yourself as reminder of Tune In to God: Fridays@5:17

Are you feeling Ennui?

I love the word ennui – sounds so much grown up than saying you're bored doesn't it! However, the word ennui is a very specific type of boredom. It generally refers to the feeling of jadedness that can result from living a life of too much ease.

During this third lockdown – perhaps you have ran out of household projects to complete, you've tried mastering a new skill with varying degrees of success and are zoomed out!

Perhaps our boredom bags, which will be available from next week, will be helpful? Each bag will contain 20 activities covering a range of topics but all will easily be able to be done within the home with resources you already have. If you are interested in receiving a boredom bag, or know of someone who might want to try one, please contact JoAnne (07340 269 354 or community@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk)



MOOR LOVE



We are taking part in this initiative started by muddy Church to spread the love throughout our community. Let's fill our area with love. Some of the ideas so far are:

- Fill your windows with hearts
- Hang hearts outdoors
- Draw chalk hearts on the pavements
- Share a heart with your neighbour

Look out on our social media pages this week and in next week's newsletter for more detailed ideas. If anybody has any suggestions on where we could put a community love board or if you have any ideas for sharing the love please JoAnne know.

Prayer Walk Around Your Home

HERE IS A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR PRAYER WALK THROUGH YOUR HOME:

Entryway: Ask the Lord to bless all that enter and leave your home. If you have people going out to work pray for them. In current times with the absence of visitors we can pray for our community and friends.

Dining Room: Pray for communication in your family. The dinner table is a great time to communicate and pray that the Lord would bless your conversations and guide your tongues. You can take a minute to thank the Lord for the blessings in your life.

Kitchen: Pray for the food you have to eat and for the Lord's provision in your life. Pray over your finances and commit them to the Lord. Acknowledge that everything comes from him, that he is the life bread of your life. Pray for unity in your family.

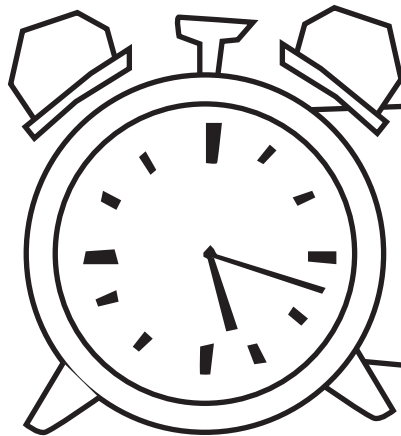
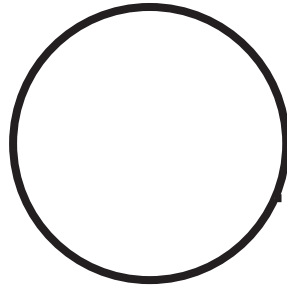
Living room: Lots of play and laughter happens in our living room, so I pray for joy and laughter to fill our home. I pray for peace and for grace. I pray for us to be a close knit family and that we would love and care for each other immensely.

Childrens rooms: I pray for each of them individually. I pray for their relationship with God. I pray for their future. I pray over my parenting. I pray for wisdom. I pray extra hard for patience!

Bathrooms: I pray for kindness and goodness to mark our lives. I pray that others would see Jesus through us and that we would be good examples. I pray that the Lord would give us a desire for his word and that we would listen to His call.

Bedroom: A room to pray for relationships and that the room is a safe space. Pray that you will always have soft hearts for one another and be quick to forgive each other. I thank God for my friends and family. I thank God for each of my children and the blessing they are to me.

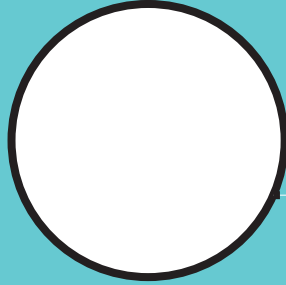
This is just one example to help get you started, but really anything goes! Prayer is always a communication between you and God, so it is whatever you want it to be like – talking about what's on your heart.



3GEN

FRIDAYS
@5:17

PRAYING IN
PROGRESS



**FRIDAYS
@5:17**

**PRAYING IN
PROGRESS**



Prayers from Linda



Prayer to Be Strengthened by the Love of God

Loving Heavenly Father, You have loved us with immeasurable love. You are love.

We pray that we will be strengthened in our inner being in our soul with the love that is wider than we can understand, deeper than we are able to imagine, and greater than we could ever know.

As you encourage and love us, may we more fully know the mystery of the Gospel's as revealed in our lives. In the love of Christ, we pray. Amen.



Everlasting Father, thank you for your faithfulness throughout the generations.

By faith, we see your mighty hand in creation and in the lives of your people throughout history.

By faith, your people have followed you through the wilderness.

By faith, your people have called out to you for peace and mercy.

By faith in Jesus, your people have been rescued from sin.

Help us to have faith in your promises.

Help us to fix our eyes on you as we run the race of life.

Help us to walk by faith and not by sight.

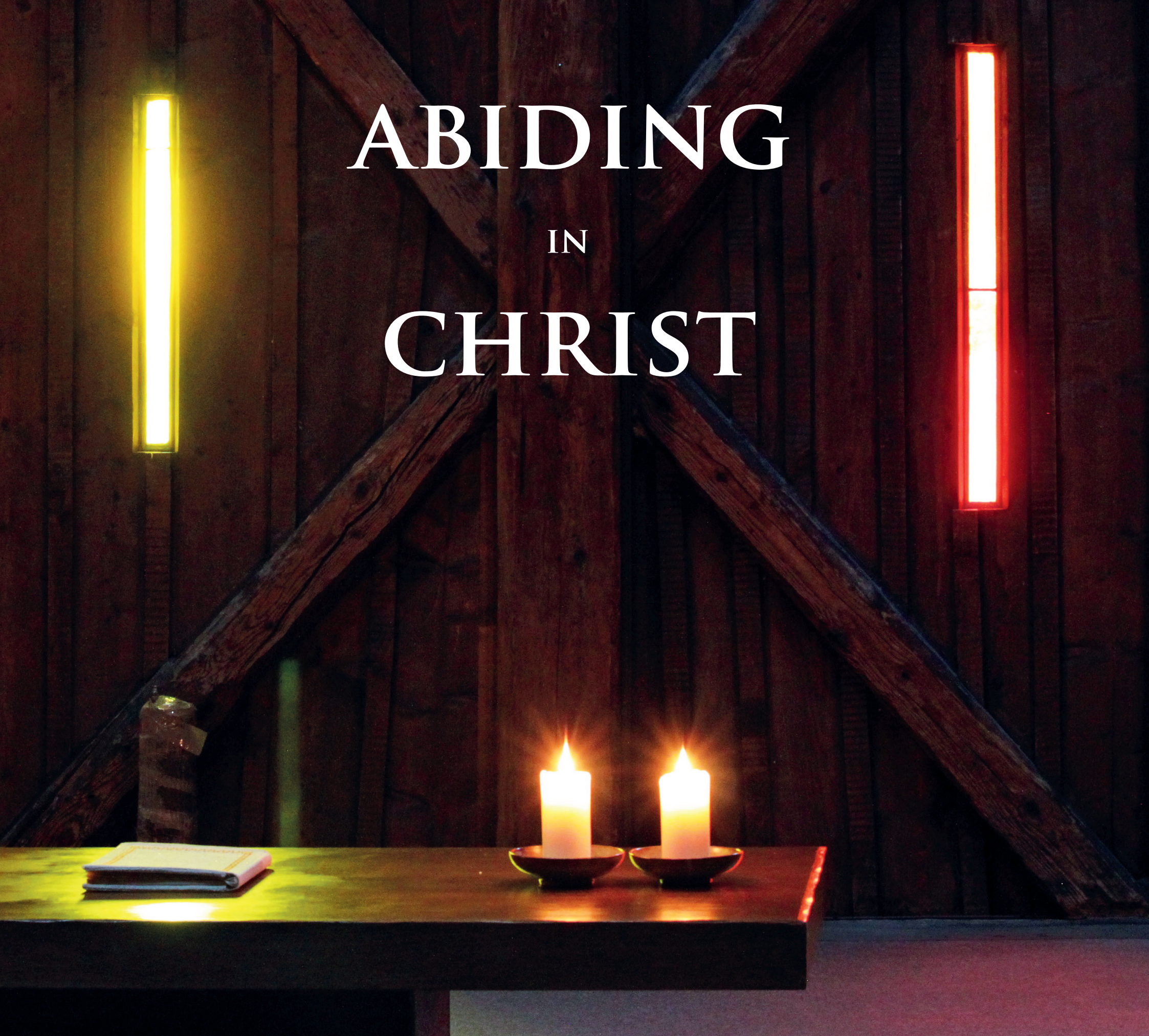
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

If anyone would like to share a Prayer with the church family, please call Linda on 07564839380 or

E-mail lindawfleming625@gmail.com.



No names required because God Knows.



ABIDING IN CHRIST

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021



Heatons Churches Partnership

Unity Sunday Service

Sunday, the 24th January 2021 at 6pm on Zoom

ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

When God calls, it tingles your ears!

Reflecting on I Sam 3:1-20

At the age of twenty, a young lad who was in his final year of the University, completing his science degree, suddenly felt the call of God to serve to the church and the society. He was part of a church youth group that were praying for the revival of the church then. The call of God came to him as he was meditating on the Word of God. It was from the passage of Mark 5:1-20, where a healed person from evil spirits was getting ready to go with Jesus on his boat, begging that he might be with Jesus all the time. In verse 19, it is recorded, "But Jesus refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.'" This verse where Jesus refuses to take him on his boat and calling him to go to his friends and share the work of God in his life, felt a tingle on his ears, spoke strongly to the young lad, and ever since then he started to pray about it realising that it is the call of God in his life to go and share the work of God to his friends. When the young lad informed his decision that he had the call of God to go into ministry to share the love of God, starting from his family to his friends to his teachers to his college everyone was surprised to his decision of going into ministry, as they had high hopes and aspirations on him to reach greater heights in a government administrative service, for which he always had dreamt for. The dad of this young lad played an important role in helping him understand the call of God, and put him through to pursue theology to better understand the relevance of faith in the context of the world. Ever since then, the call of God evolved for this young lad, for the hand of God has been graciously in leading him cross oceans and seas to share the love of God, for God at any point did not give up on him. By the way this young lad has grown up into an adult man and he is none other than the current minister in the United Stockport circuit, Raj Patta.

The recollection of my own call came to the fore, as I began to reflect on the call of God that came to young Samuel as recorded in I Samuel 3:1-20, the prescribed lectionary reading for this Sunday. Those were the days when 'the word of the Lord was rare and visions were not widespread' (1v). The people of God having settled in the promised land were without a king, and lived lives as they liked (Judges 21:25) with no rule and with no guidance. Into such a context, the call of God came to young Samuel, who was dedicated by his mother Hannah for the service of God and who was living in the temple with the priest Eli. The call of God tingled the ears of the then community by at least three ways.

1. The call of God tingled the ears of the community by choosing a young boy:

At a time when the word of the Lord was rare, and if at all the word of the Lord came it would have come through an experienced person who has known the history and tradition of their faith. Since there was no judge or a ruler, people would have been waiting for some comfort and hope from the voice of the divine. Here was Eli, an experienced priest who was serving all his life in the temple, perhaps waiting to hear the call of God himself, so that he can go and share the love of God to all the community around. Defying all the norms and rules, the call of God came to an young boy Samuel, who had no clue of what was the call of God like. Imagine when the news went around that the call of God came to a young boy Samuel, who has no experience of temple, tradition and history, it would have tingled the ears of the people of Israel. However, by choosing a young boy to be the recipient of God's voice and call, the message was clear and loud, that God's call comes to people not based on their individual

merit or experience, but based on God's graciousness. Right after the Judges who demonstrated God's call through their actions of justice, it was a young boy Samuel who heard the call of God, and since he was under God's constant grace, he became a greatest prophet of God and for God in that time and context. God speaks to the inexperienced, the unknown, and the insignificant, such a news comes tingling to the ears of the public sphere, but that's how God works, all surprising, beyond known expectations.

Now when I think of my own call, when my family and friends heard about it, their ears also were tingled, for it came as a surprise. When I informed that I received the call of God and am going to work for God's kingdom through ministry, it shattered all their high expectations they have had. God surprises and keeps surprising every day through God's call, working beyond human imaginations and aspirations.

2. The call of God tingled the ears of Samuel by repeatedly calling out his name:

When God calls, God calls repeatedly with love, till the point that the listener recognises it. God called Samuel at least four times, and with the help of Eli, Samuel could recognise the call of God. Listening again and again to the call of God with his name being called, "Samuel, Samuel," would have tingled the ears of Samuel, and even more so for he mistook that call to be from Eli rather than from God. We need to recognise the role of Eli in helping Samuel understand the call as the voice of God. Eli had that generous heart in guiding Samuel to recognise that it was the call of God which was speaking to him. In all of this, what we gather is that, God doesn't get tired of calling out someone God wishes to speak and call out. Under any circumstances, God doesn't give up God's call to God's people. No matter how many times it takes, no matter however long it takes, no matter however abstract it becomes, God keeps God's cool in seeing to it that the recipient listens to God's call. God's call comes out of God's generosity, love and perseverance. God doesn't give up so easily, God doesn't give up in between, God doesn't give up God's call. In this process of God's call, God kept calling Samuel all along, and so he was always led by the call of God in his life.

As I remember my own call, I can also vouch that God kept calling and has been helping me to know God's call at every point of my life. All I have learnt about God's call is that evolves and unfolds with time, and God has never given up giving God's call to me. God kept calling me reminding me of the purpose of sharing God's love through the various contexts and situations I have worked. God's call certainly tingles our ears as God repeatedly keep calling.

3. The call of God tingles the ears with the kind of works God does:

When Samuel recognises that it was God who was calling him, in verse 11, we see God further saying to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle..." The call of God is not always soothing and pleasant, for it is tingling with matters of justice, and in that context, it was about the house of Eli whose sons were exploiting the temple for their selfish needs. The call of God tingles the ears as it comes with voice of justice. The tingling for Samuel further continued when he was to break the content of God's call and voice straight to Eli the next morning. However, when God calls, God gives the strength to communicate it, and which Samuel experienced it during that time. Since Samuel without any fear communicated the message of God, the Lord was with him and Samuel grew up to become a trust worthy prophet in his land and to his people.

In my own call of God, I recognise that God has given me the task of contesting the oppressive structures of status quo, be it caste or colonialism, and to engage with the liberation of God. The call of God surely comes as a tingle and to spread that tingle in speaking truth to the powers.

What is the learning of the call of God to Samuel for us today in our context today? Firstly, the call of God to Samuel is an invitation to introspect our own calling in our lives. God calls each of us differently, and God calls each of us for different purposes. Some are called to be prophets like Samuel, some are called to be doctors, some are called to be teachers, some are called to be engineers, some are called to be business people, some are called to be nurses, some are called to be home-makers, some are called to be researchers etc. It is important to recognise that every work to which we are called is a gift of God and is equally ordained by God. In each of our calling we are called to recognise the hand and voice of God, so that we can exercise our work in love, peace and justice for the betterment of our society. Secondly, never discount the role and support of Eli in helping Samuel recognise the call of God. Even today, there are many Eli's helping us to recognise the call of God in our lives. Celebrate such people's contributions. Thirdly, when God calls, surely the ears and the body tingles, for God calls to share God's justice with some hard messages. In our context today, God is calling us to speak about the free school meals to be given to children during holidays, God is calling us to speak about hear the voice of God in our communities, God is calling us to ensure that the vaccine is available and accessible to all people in the world, God is calling us to strive for a just world, where love, equality and justice alone will thrive, God is calling us to locate and recognise the voice of the divine among the margins of our society, and God is calling us to speak that 'staying at home, act responsibly and care for one another,' is our witness today. Fourthly, the learning is to respond to the call of God graciously. When God calls, God also strengthens.

Martin Luther opposed the view of a "special calling" or "vocation" to the monastic life. He believed the call of God comes to each of us in our daily tasks. So, the for task we are entrusted with, we are called to recognise that it is God who has called us to it, and so we need to be engaged with it in all honesty and graciousness. May each of us recognise the call of God in our lives and live out our call to the best of our abilities depending and waiting on the Spirit of God to lead us. When God calls, it tingles our ears! Look out for such tingles.

Raj Bharat Patta,
15th January 2021

Sunday 17th January 2021 (Psalm 139: John 1.43-51)

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer reflecting on Psalm 139

Loving, gracious God, you know us better than we know ourselves. You know my thoughts and the motives for the things I do.

You know what I want to say even before I speak the words, and for that I am so thankful. Even when I struggle to find the words to worship you, you know what is in my heart. So, knowing your presence will surround me, and your love sustain me, may I have the assurance you will hear and accept my spoken and unspoken words, for wherever I go, You will be there. Amen

Hymn: 366 Thou hidden Source

Sing/ Read /pray or proclaim the words:

Thou hidden source of calm repose,
thou all-sufficient love divine,
my help and refuge from my foes,
secure I am, if thou art mine:
and lo, from sin, and grief, and shame,
I hide me, Jesus, in thy name.

Thy mighty name salvation is,
and keeps my happy soul above;
comfort it brings, and power, and peace,
and joy, and everlasting love:
to me, with thy dear name, are given
pardon, and holiness, and heaven.

Jesus, my all in all thou art:
my rest in toil, my ease in pain,
the medicine of my broken heart,
in war my peace, in loss my gain,
my smile beneath the tyrant's frown,
in shame my glory and my crown;

In want my plentiful supply,
in weakness my almighty power,
in bonds my perfect liberty,
my light in Satan's darkest hour,
in grief my joy unspeakable,
my life in death, my heaven in hell.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Let us pray together:

Loving God, you are always ready to hear us.
Always wanting to show us the depths of your love and your understanding of us.
Always wanting to comfort us and celebrate with us.

Our words are not adequate to thank you for your forgiveness and for the privilege of knowing we are accepted as your children and, because we are your children, we can know your peace and joy and everlasting love.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament

Psalm 139. 1-10

Today's Gospel Reading:

John 1.43-51

Time to Reflect

The first encounter Nathanael had with Jesus must have been a disconcerting one. They had never met before, but immediately

Jesus commends him for his faith and his integrity. Nathanael's response shows his confusion as he asks Jesus, 'How do you know me?' Jesus explains he has seen him sitting under his fig-tree, indicating he knew Nathanael was a man of prayer. In rabbinic thought the fig tree was the place one sat to study the scriptures and so, in this initial conversation, Jesus was affirming he knew

that he was meeting a man who spent time with, and who was devoted to God. Meeting someone who we feel can 'see through' us can provoke different responses. When someone says the same thing as us at the same time, it can just be something to smile or laugh at and we pass it off without thinking too much about it. But, for Nathanael, the thought of Jesus knowing so much about him was disconcerting, as it was for the Psalmist who speaks of his inability to escape from God: 'where shall I go from your Spirit or where can I flee from your presence?' In the same way we can feel uncomfortable if we think someone knows too much about us. We may consider it an invasion of our privacy or make us feel anxious. One way of responding is to put up barriers so that person, that friend, maybe even God, can't get too close to challenge our comfort. But there is a different way of dealing with that discomfort. It appears that Nathanael, despite that strange introduction, did not turn away (John 21.2) but stayed with Jesus. The Psalmist too, although he asks where he can go to escape from God, is also positive about the closeness of God's presence. He could affirm that wherever he was God's hand would guide him and hold him safe. In a year when life has been so difficult, and when maybe we dreamed of escaping somewhere, the Psalmists words still ring true, that wherever we are, in whatever circumstances, we can be assured of God's guidance and love and the conviction of God's inescapable presence.

Take a time to sit quietly:

God our companion, we bring to you all who feel alone:
 For refugees who have left behind their country, their homes and all that is familiar.
 For those, like the women in Saudi, imprisoned for protesting for human rights.
 For those who have felt isolated because of the pandemic; for students, for those in nursing homes, for all those unable to see their families.

Ubi Caritas (*Where grace and love is, there is God*)

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4TG60HvsIY>)

God, who rules over heaven and earth, we bring to you the USA as they prepare for a new administration.

For our government, that you will give our leaders wisdom and integrity.

For church leaders, in all denominations, that they will have a vision of your Kingdom, the courage to believe that change and transformation in the church and the world is possible, and the strength to work towards the fulfillment of your Kingdom. Amen

Ubi Caritas

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Singing the Faith 337

(233) [There Is A Higher Throne {with lyrics} - //Keith & Kristyn Getty\\ - YouTube](#)

There is a higher throne
 than all this world has known,
 where faithful ones from every tongue
 will one day come.

Before our God we'll stand,
 made faultless through the Lamb;
 believing hearts find promised grace:
 salvation comes.

Hear heaven's voices sing,
 their thunderous anthem rings
 through emerald courts and sapphire
 skies,

their praises rise.

All glory, wisdom, power,
 strength, thanks and honour are
 to God, our King who reigns on high
 for evermore.

And there we'll find our home,
 our life before the throne;
 we'll honour him in perfect song
 where we belong.

He'll wipe each tear-stained eye,
 as thirst and hunger die;
 the Lamb becomes our Shepherd King:
 we'll reign with him.

Keith Getty (b. 1974) and Kristyn Lennox

A prayer of blessing

May God's grace fill our lives,
Christ's love overflow in our hearts and
the joy and peace of the Spirit challenge and
inspire us today and always. Amen

Original Materials by Revd Dr Christine Jones
Hymns reproduced under CCLI 1144191.
Local Churches please insert CCCLI No here

We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team. We aim to continue to provide these resources until the end of August 2021.

Psalms 139

- ¹ You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.
² You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
⁴ Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.
⁵ You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.

John 1:43-51 (NIV)

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

- ⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee.
Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."
⁴⁴ Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."
⁴⁶ "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.
"Come and see," said Philip.

⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

- ⁴⁸ "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.
Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."
⁴⁹ Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."
⁵⁰ Jesus said, "You believe^[a] because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." ⁵¹ He then added, "Very truly I tell you,^[b] you^[c] will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on'^[d] the Son of Man.