

Dear Heaton Moor United Church,

May God's mothering love and care be with you all. Trust you are all doing well.

This week, last year in 2020, the World Health Organisation has announced Covid as a global pandemic, and it has been a year since we have all been coping with it.

Thanks to Carol Jack for her video reflection on our Church YouTube this week. I also want to thank Paul Brewerton for leading the 'Good Read' session next week. Thanks to our friends for joining in the Circuit zoom services and the mid-week Lenten Bible studies.

This week I attended the Jewish Strategic group meeting of the North West region, and it was quite interesting to learn their involvements in the community. It is good to learn the contributions of various faith communities for the cause of community, sharing love and care for one another.

We had our Church leadership team meeting this week, and it was agreed that our Church building will be reopened for public worship on Sunday, the 18th of April, 2021. Thank you for all those volunteers who are opening the Church building for private prayers on Sundays during this lockdown. We also met as Worship group this week to plan for the services in April and May. Thanks to all our friends offering and leading services online thus far.

This Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent is observed as Mothering Sunday in the UK, where historically people travelled to their mother churches for worship. We will uphold all mothers in our prayers, and also remember people for whom Mothering Sunday is a difficult one due to various reasons in their lives.

Let us uphold David Smith and his family in our prayers as Audrey Smith went to be with the Lord this week.

This week, I am sending a re-reading of Exodus 2 as my reflection for this Mothering Sunday titled "Who said saviours don't come from mothers?" and the worship resources for your kind perusal.

Next week, we have our Circuit meeting and seek your prayers for all the Churches in the Circuit.

May we all have a meaningful week and stay blessed.

Thanking you,

With warm regards,

Raj

12th March 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-EDITOR

Who else was jumping for joy on Monday that the children had gone back to school? Just me then!

It feels good to be getting back to a routine and am looking forward to when that routine includes seeing people back in the building. This week I have been working with friends from Stockport Interfaith and Stockport Council on a Interfaith event on Monday 22nd March to coincide with the National Day of Reflection on the 23rd March more details will be shared shortly. On Wednesday I felt a bit like Santa as not only was I delivering our usual meals to our Dementia Friends but this week they also got a bunch of daffodils for Mothering Sunday from us and also a lovely scarf kindly donated by Rotary Lamplighters all were gratefully received.

As Raj's letter services will resume on Sunday 18th April, COVID restrictions will still be in place so it is essential you book via the booking form which Sharon will send. We will be open for Private Prayer each Sunday until then and on Good Friday between 11:00 and 12:00. In the meantime we continue to offer the following things we can all do together but apart this week;

- Take part in Tune In to God: Fridays@5:17.
- Watch the weekly reflection posted on Sunday morning on our YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyhynK2FIPDTbOugBiO6D9A>
- On Thursday evening light a candle from 8pm until 9pm

Just as in the time pre-covid the team are here to answer any questions, be a listening ear or signpost to other services. Please do get in touch with us if we can be of any help.

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

JoAnne

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Heaton Moor United Church



Heaton Moor United Church



heaton_moor_united_church

It's great to see the donations on our JustGiving page – to date we have raised £300

If you would like to donate the cost of your vaccine please visit

www.justgiving.com/heaton-moor-united-church

Two doses of the COVID vaccine might be between £4-£30. If you could have afforded to buy it for yourself please celebrate your vaccination by making a donation.



MARK 12:31 love thy (global) neighbour

TWIN YOUR VACCINE

Communities across the UK are being protected against COVID but across the world, there are many countries where this is impossible. It may be that they cannot afford to vaccinate their people or that their infrastructure may not even include basic refrigeration in places.

UNICEF has vast experience in delivering vaccines worldwide and so will be major partners in distributing vaccines to the very poorest in the world through their association with the COVAX programme.

Join Heaton Moor United Church in
raising funds for UNICEF
www.justgiving.com/heaton-moor-united-church

My Shopping List

Jars of pasta sauce
Tinned vegetables (peas, carrots)
Tinned tomato
Tinned kidney beans
Tinned chick peas
Baked beans
Custard / Rice pudding
Tinned fruit
Jam / peanut butter
Dried red lentils
Crisps and child friendly goodies

School Pantry CAR PARK COLLECTIONS

**Saturday 13th March at
Heaton Mersey Methodist Church**

**Saturday 20th March at
Heaton Moor United Church**

From 10:30 until 12:00

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

Found on **facebook**



Moor Magazine

10h · 🌐

Have your say.....



Friends of Heaton Moor Park

16h · 🌐

If you have come inside to recover from this windy weather, why not turn your attention to a local consultation about Heaton Mersey Common? (Note: closes Friday 26 March, so only 2 weeks left.) It's a bit of dilemma, there's interest in improving accessibility but some of the action will involve felling mature trees, creating 3 meter tarmac paths and putting in lighting in one of the few 'wild' areas in the Heaton. Is this taming necessary? Have your say: <https://consultation.stockport.gov.uk/.../subpage.../>

https://consultation.stockport.gov.uk/policy-performance-and-reform/heaton-mersey-common-path-improvements/consultation/subpage.2021-03-01.1002778381/?fbclid=IwAR3V9RiH1_UT1aw9jCKvoYoi2rNtHyc89YXP9sYkH_45UBqrAXPdbvbl_io

Thursday Prayer

Loving God,
In Jesus, you walked the earth as fully human,
You experienced the many joys and delights of life -
Fun, laughter, meals eaten with friends,
The richness of loving relationship with others.
And yet you also experienced the more difficult side of life -
Grief, loss, suffering and death.

We bring to you the present suffering of our world,
Our concerns for family, friends and fellow humans,
Knowing that you understand all too well
the experience of worry, pain and death.

Bring comfort and peace to all who fear death this night,
Either their own or that of a loved one.

Bring relief from suffering, and wherever possible, healing this night,
To all who are ill in body, mind or spirit,
Whether with Covid-19 or anything else.

Bring rest, renewal and restoration this night,
To health and care workers,
To all who are heavy-laden
By all they have seen and experienced during the pandemic.

We pray, believing that,
You are a God whose love knows no bounds,
And there is no place, even death
That your love cannot reach.
Amen.

Jonnie Hill URC Ordinand

You could give the gift of a Bible by volunteering your time

Bible Society, Wycliffe and Mission Assist have come together in a Bible Digitalisation Project. They are seeking volunteers who are patient, accurate and can use a computer to copy older translations word by word. It's a fascinating and satisfying volunteering role that can see believers read the Bible in their heart language, perhaps for the first time.

They will help find out whether this role is for you and offer full training. To find out more contact Volunteer Enquiries volunteers@missionassist.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

School Pantry Food Collection – 13th March 10:30 – 12:00

Heaton Mersey Methodist Church Car Park

Make a Square – 16th March at 2pm

See your Easter pack for more details. Zoom ID 812 9419 0431 (passcode 123802)

Circuit Lenten Study – 17th March

See notice header for zoom link

School Pantry Food Collection – 20th March 10:30 – 12:00

Heaton Moor United Church Car Park

Stockport Inter Faith Time of Reflection 22nd March at 2pm

See below

National Day of Reflection – 23rd March

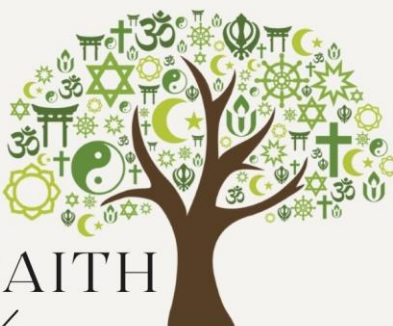
Green Evangelism – 25th March 7:00 – 8:30pm

What does climate justice have to do with sharing our faith? We know as Christians we are called to care for creation, but what if our mission and evangelism were more connected to climate justice than we thought? Can we do one without the other? In what way does our commitment to God's earth enable and power our mission?

To register click here [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Celebrate 5 years of Eco Church – 26th March at 11:00

Register on Eventbrite (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/eco-church-fifth-anniversary-online-celebration-service-tickets-138450825145?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>)




22ND MARCH 2021
2:00 - 3:00PM

STOCKPORT INTERFAITH

Time of Reflection

A multi-faith event to reflect on the past year. A time to pause and think about the unprecedented losses we have faced and to share our hope for the future.

Zoom ID 860 0374 4982





Prayers from Linda

We need you



Jesus, please be with all our friend's reading this prayer. You know every wound, every joy, every fear, and every dream. Heal old wounds. Heal new wounds. Rejoice alongside us. Help us in our time of sorrow and every fear. Fulfil God sized dreams in our hearts and help us be patient in the waiting. Help us all to see the power of your resurrection at this time. Give us eyes to see where new life springs in our hearts. Help us when we are weak and sad. We need You Jesus. Amen.

Follow Your Ways Prayer

Gracious Heavenly Father, your word says that you will always guide us. You do not leave us wandering through life, but you are with us during every moment of every day. You will satisfy our needs when we feel frustrated you will strengthen us when life makes us weary. Help us to follow your ways as you lead us into a life of fruitfulness and joy. May we be like the well-watered garden which thrives because the roots are firmly planted in your love? 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.

Who said Saviours Don't Come from Mothers?

Exodus 2:1-10

"Every boy that is born, throw them into the Nile"
The empire decreed to contain the slaves,
Moms were fighting death to deliver their sons,
Only to deliver them into the hands of death,
The shape of the water was the shape of a new grave
Streams flowing, were streams burying,
Tears flowing as babies crying,
Parents crying as babies thrown to drowning,
No human came to stop such inhuman act,
No saviours yet to save those little babies wet.

Who said saviours don't come from mothers,
Sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins and those 'others'?
There comes a mother courageous, shrewd,
creative, daring, loving, to save her child,
hides him for three months dressing in pink,
weans him and plans him not to sink,
then places him in a tarred basket to float on waters,
turning water graveyard to waters of life.
A saviour did come in a mother,
Saving a saviour and all the others of his kind.

Who said saviours don't come from mothers,
Sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins and those 'others?'
There comes a sister Miriam, loving, caring,
Intelligent, smart, watching his brother's life
Float on waters, that's sucking life to death.
On finding that he was drawn by a princess,
She brings a mother to the child convincing the royal woman,
A mother of her own child now hired to be
Raise a child of her royal princess.
A saviour did come in a sister,
Saving a saviour and all the others of his kind.

Who said saviours don't come from mothers,
Sisters, daughters, cousins and those 'others?'
There comes a royal daughter, whose dad was cruel,
Yet she comes with a heart full of compassion,
Risking to save her slaves child, willing to mother him,
Naming him 'Moses', for she drew him out of waters of death,
Knowing not that this child will lead a nation to freedom of life.
A saviour did come in a daughter,

Saving a saviour and all the others of his kind.

Who said saviours don't come from mothers,
Sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins and those 'others?'
There comes an aunt, another slave girl of his kind,
Working as a servant to her royal princess,
Who dared the currents of the water to fetch this basket,
A basket of life amidst the waters of death,
Skilfully drawing him to the shores,
placing him in the hands of a new mother, the princess,
sensing that this little bundle of life will channel a breath of new life to her people.
A saviour did come in an aunt,
Saving a saviour and all the other of his kind.

Who said saviours don't come from mothers,
Sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins and those 'others?'
God knits the basket of life, by knitting people who we think
Cannot be saviours, moms, sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins,
God's mothering is to knit life using the ordinary,
God's mothering stands for life amidst the waters of death,
Defeating death and liberating people to life
Inviting us to channel life in our times filled with lifelessness.
So look out for a saviour among the ordinary and unthinkable,
Look for a saviour from mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts, cousins and those 'others,'
Treating them as equals, respecting and loving them in our fullest.

Raj Bharat Patta,
Mothering Sunday 2021

Sunday 14 March 2021

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

'Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His faithful love endures forever. [Psalm 107:1]
Holy God, though we do not worship together in one building we worship together in one spirit and with one heart. Through our worship reveal to us your will we pray. Amen.

Hymn: Praise to the Lord (Singing the Faith 88)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen here:

[Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation! \(StF 88\) \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/stf/88)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, brothers and sisters, draw near,
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee:
ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
who with his love doth befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, who doth nourish thy life and restore thee,
fitting thee well for the tasks that are ever before thee,
then to thy need he like a mother doth speed,
spreading the wings of grace o'er thee.

Praise to the Lord, who, when darkness of sin is abounding,

who, when the godless do triumph, all virtue confounding,
sheddeth his light, chaseth the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!

All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!

Let the amen sound from his people again:
gladly for aye we adore him.

Joachim Neander (1650-1680)

Let us pray together:

Holy God,
we praise you for the faithfulness of your people down the ages.
We worship and adore you as creator of this wonderful earth, and of us made in your image.
We praise you that you are a Giving God. For our family and friends, God we thank you.
For the signs of Spring all around us, God we thank you.
For the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God we thank you.
Forgiving God, we bring you our confessions now.
We are sorry God for the times when we have failed you and ourselves.

(in a moment of quiet offer your confession to God)

We know God you are quick to forgive.
As Jesus said to many he met, 'Your sins are forgiven', it is on this promise that we too rely. We pray in Jesus' name,
Amen.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament:
Numbers 21:4-9

Today's Gospel Reading: John 3:14-21

Time to Reflect

I wonder how many times through this pandemic you have been unhappy with things and complained out loud or inwardly to yourself? Perhaps you haven't agreed with Government decisions, perhaps you have been angry at the people who seemed to mindlessly flout the rules put in place to keep us all safe, perhaps you've complained when you were unable to attend church, or if you were, you were unable to sing; there are many reasons of late why we are likely to have moaned. And this is how it was with the Israelites as they travelled slowly towards the promised land. They took their frustration out not only on their leader Moses, but also on God. They had forgotten the miracles God had performed for them, their faith was waning, and they refused to obey God's law (see Psalm 78). We see too that when the Israelites complained things only got worse. They improved at once though when the people recognised that they had sinned against God through their attitude and actions. When the bronze snake was hung on a pole the Israelites didn't anticipate the fuller meaning that Jesus would bring to this experience. In the Gospel reading Jesus explains that just as the Israelites of old were healed of the sickness caused by the snake bites by turning their gaze towards the snake on the pole, we today can be healed from the sin that pervades our lives by turning our gaze towards Jesus' death on the cross. You see it was not the bronze snake that healed the Israelites, it was their renewed belief in God's healing power, in God's compassion for them, in God's love for those created in God's image and called beloved. Today, God's healing power, compassion and love exists for each one of us too; it is there for the taking but like the Israelites we too need to recognise the times we stray away from the path of light that guides us and turn back wholeheartedly towards God. Amen.

Take some time to sit quietly in reflection.

A time of prayer

Gracious God,
We thank you for the blessings in our lives,
We pray now for those struggling at this time:
We pray for our world in these difficult times,
that your peace will reach across borders and
into the lives of all your people.

We pray for our Christian brothers and sisters
living in lands where they risk their liberty and
lives to follow you, be their courage and strong
foundation.

We pray for leaders and others in positions of
authority and power, that they will be guided by
you.

We pray for your churches who await your
direction, may your will be done.

We pray for all people suffering with ill health at
this time, for those awaiting treatment or test
results, for those recovering from operations or
illness, for those suffering with mental health
problems, may you heal them.

We pray for all who have suffered the loss of
loved ones, may you be their source of strength
to face another day.

We pray for ourselves, may we be people of
peace and justice, bringing hope to those we
interact with.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

***Hymn: Listen to a fabulous version of 'Turn
your eyes upon Jesus' here***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2tKVqZZiI4>

**or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to
mind**

A prayer of blessing

God of grace and restoration be the strength
in our lives as we go about our days, now and
forever more, Amen.

Original Materials by Rev. Zena Smith
All

Hymns reproduced under CCLI 1144191.
Local Churches please insert CCLI No here

Numbers 21:4-9 (NRSV)

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous[c] serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

John 3:14-21 (NRSV)

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

The Ethiopian eunuch: 'identity politics' and liberation

A Bible study by Ruth Wilde

Reads: Acts 8:26–40 (New Revised Standard Version)

²⁶ Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰ So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³² Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptised?" ³⁸ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptised him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Reflect

- Do you think this man – the Ethiopian eunuch – is a person with privilege? Why?
- How has this story been interpreted by religious leaders in churches you've been to?
- Do you think it's important that this man was Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official and a religious person? Which of these do you think is the most important?
- How does this passage speak to your own experiences?
- Which parts of the eunuch's complex identity do you identify with?

Think

We are not really familiar with eunuchs these days, but they were a common fixture of the ancient world. They were isolated by mainstream society and stood out with their high voices and unusual height, but they also often had high-powered jobs, like this one in Acts. This eunuch would not have been poor economically, and he was well-educated. He was evidently able to read, which most people would not have been. He would have had a roof over his head, and access to healthcare, such as it was in the 1st century.

However, in other ways, he would have been 'poor'. He did not have the freedom that others had – he was entirely dependent on Queen Candace. He was unable to have children and would most likely have remained single all his life, in a world where the family unit was important socially.

He had no place in a world which was divided strictly between women and men either – in this way, he was what we might term 'queer' in today's vocabulary. As a religious person and a Jew, he would have had the experience of not knowing where to worship at the temple, as the temple had a section for women and children, and a separate section for men. He was most probably forcibly castrated as a child, and he would not have felt entirely comfortable or accepted in all-male spaces and society; however, he also would not have been welcome in female spaces.

Listen

Privileged people often attempt to reduce the important work of justice and liberation for marginalised people to the term 'identity politics'. However, only those people who do not experience prejudice against their identity can afford to say identity doesn't matter. Some people are excluded from jobs because of the colour of their skin, treated differently because of their sexuality, and patronised or worse because of their working-class background or because they're disabled. For these people, identity matters. Identities must be named in order for prejudice against them to be shamed and then dismantled.

Often, in church services, we have heard this passage explained as a story about mission – the mission of the apostles to convert people to Christianity. We are then told that we too must go and convert people so that they can be baptised. As Marianne Kartzow and Halvor Moxnes explain, however, this is a very Western interpretation – it has become the hegemonic interpretation, excluding all others. It is time to re-read the story through the eyes of marginalised and poor people – this is liberation theology. If the writer of Acts did not think the eunuch's identity was significant in this story, why was he described in such great detail?

People being treated differently because of their identity or background is not a new phenomenon. The eunuch in Acts was excluded from 'normal' society in many ways – he was excluded from family life; he was disabled – with a scar, missing genitalia, an unusual voice and height, and the inability to procreate; he was a Black, African Jew; he was queer or gender divergent; he was foreign; and he was a servant – yes, a wealthy one, but one who was still dependent on his employer.

The people who have risen up and said that 'Black Lives Matter' this year have not done that because they sat down and thought about how they might get 'identity politics' on the agenda. They have done it out of anger, desperation and pain, because Black people are being treated differently and unfairly. In some cases, Black people are even in danger for their lives. The death that sparked a worldwide outpouring of anger and protest this year – that of George Floyd – was watched by millions around the world on a nine-minute video. According to the Black theologian Dwight Hopkins, it

is likely the fact that so many saw it happen on camera which really moved people to action.

The eunuch in this story came from Ethiopia, and in this era of renewed struggle for Black freedom and justice, that is particularly meaningful. Ethiopia has a long and proud history and is often seen as a symbol of Africa as a whole. It is where some Black people decided to move to in the 20th Century to escape injustice and 'exile' in the West. That project of returning from exile to Africa may not necessarily be a long-term solution to the racism people face, but it gave hope and a focus to many who have been treated so unjustly for so long.

The Bible scholar Peterson Toscano says that the eunuch could have been moved by the passage he was reading, as it related to some of his own experiences of forced castration and exclusion: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted... he was led as a lamb to the slaughter." Toscano wonders whether he perhaps read on to Isaiah 56, where he would have read about God's promise to foreigners and eunuchs: "Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, 'The Lord will surely separate me from His people.' Nor let the eunuch say, 'Behold, I am a dry tree' ... To them I will give in my house and within my walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off" (Isaiah 56:3-5).

The promise in Isaiah is not only God's promise to a eunuch in the 1st century; it is God's promise to all who have been excluded, marginalised, mistreated and abused. You will have a name better than that of sons and daughters, says God. You are my children.

Act

Create a study group at your church to look at identity and inclusion. Use the Inclusive Church set of books, especially the personal stories in them. You can also use the stories on the Church Action on Poverty website here: <https://www.church-poverty.org.uk/stories/>

Pray

Dear God, in our efforts to dismantle racism, we understand that we struggle not merely against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities -- those institutions and systems that keep racism alive by perpetuating the lie that some members of the family are inferior and others superior.

Create in us a new mind and heart that will enable us to see brothers and sisters in the faces of those divided by racial categories.

Give us the grace and strength to rid ourselves of racial stereotypes that oppress some of us while providing entitlements to others.

Heal your family God, and make us one with you, in union with our brother Jesus, and empowered by your Holy Spirit. Amen

(adapted from Pax Christi USA's 'Prayer for Dismantling Racism')

Take it further

Analysis quoted in the study comes from these sources:

- 'Complex Identities: Ethnicity, Gender and Religion in the Story of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)' by Marianne B Kartzow and Halvor Moxnes in *Religion and Theology* 17 (2010)

- 'No Nuts? No Problem! Disability, Stigma, and the Baptised Eunuch in Acts 8:26–40' by Anna Rebecca Solevåg in *Biblical Interpretation* volume 24: issue 1 (2016)
- Inclusive Church video on Black theology at www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FNRTQqyQgY
- *African Renaissance: When Art Meets Power* at www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000lwf2/african-renaissance-when-art-meets-power-series-1-1-ethiopia
- 'Intersecting Identities – Queer Theology and the Ethiopian Eunuch' by Peterson Toscano at petersontoscano.com/ethiopianeunuch

You could also look at:

- The Inclusive Church book series: *Ethnicity, Poverty, Sexuality, Gender, Disability, Mental Health*
- *Brit(ish)* by Afua Hirsch
- *Is God Colour-blind?* by Anthony Reddie
- *The Talk* on All 4

