

The Courier

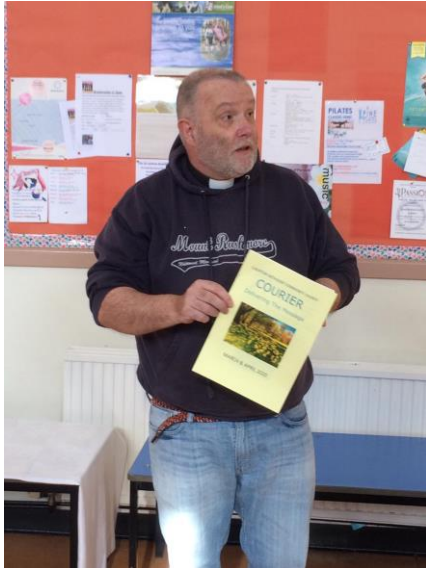
OR

"NOT GOING OUT!"

Special Edition



JOHN 13: 1-20 'Not just my feet but my hands also'



Simon launching the first edition of our new look 'COURIER' for March & April.

Sadly, as we are all so aware and affected by Covid-19, the next edition cannot be as anticipated.

This edition A.K.A. 'Not Going Out' is hoped to keep us all connected in one form or another. Hopefully there will be another edition in a few weeks so please send any contributions to me liz.mikecoleman@yahoo.co.uk

Dear One and All,
In response to Pauline's request I have put my thinking cap on.

I am a wheezy asthmatic and diabetic too, so keeping my distance at present is an absolute necessity. Although I live with my long suffering and ever-loving wife, there is a sense in which I find I am

thrown back on my own resources. I find myself in tension with myself which is not unknown. On the one hand I can be a loner and on the other I do like people, or probably more accurately I find people fascinating. If you want got be entertained spend some time people watching, that is when you can actually find a person to observe; it may have to wait until things become more normal.

When I was a school boy I used to dread the long summer holidays on my return from boarding school. Weeks stretched out before me until I could see my pals again. It was daunting and yet somehow, I survived. Being an only child compounded the situation. Long walks in the Surrey countryside and a vivid imagination helped.

Now of course we don't know how long this social isolation will go on for. Isolation doesn't worry me so much anymore as I can go on an inner journey. This is a time to reflect and study, to read and to pray. Perhaps in the busyness of normality I neglect this; I am now learning once again that the inner journey is an integral part of being a Christian and really vital to a clergyman.

It is also a time to clear away the clutter as both Donna and I prepare to move in the summer. Packing cases are being filled, shelves cleared and long lost items rediscovered. The cry 'Oh that's where I put that!' is now frequently on my lips. Clearing away the clutter should be a part of my yearly round; it's a spiritual exercise as well as a physical one.

That's where I am folks. It has been great to hear and see the video clips and general chatter on social media. The church is finding a way to be Church in difficult times. Keep safe, stay home. Bless you all.

During this time of unprecedented seclusion I would like to offer you the following liturgy as a framework for your devotions. Starting on Wednesday the 1st April I shall offer a reading and reflection. There will be another offering on each Sunday and every day during Holy Week.

Many thanks as always,

Simon

Call to Worship:

Most merciful God who through your love for humankind gave the gift of Christ Jesus; grant that we might now receive your continued blessing. Deliver us we pray, through this time of crisis.

All: Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, healer of the sick grant us your healing presence. Lord of life grant that we, enlivened by your example, might find the strength to face our own time of trial.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear prayer.

Holy Spirit, our guide and comforter, strengthen us in our faith, in our loving care of others and in our resolve to do your will in all things.

All: Father, Son and Holy Spirit we worship and adore you. Amen.

A Hymn/Song:

Prayer:

Reading: Psalm 103: 8-14

I am going to be looking at verses 8 to 14 in particular this morning. As I do so the themes Dr Dawes identified as having an overarching presence in the Old Testament, steadfast love and mercy, righteousness and justice spring to mind.

8: The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

9: He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

10: He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

11: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;

12: as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

13: As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

14: For he knows how we are made; he remembers that we are dust.

Reflection: I was somewhat taken aback to be told a while ago that 'Covid 19 was God's judgment on us'. I cannot agree. The sentiments expressed by this person seems to run completely contrary to the tenor of verses 8-14. We know God abhors sin, but we also know that in both the Old and New Testament God is a God of love and is filled with compassion, as verse 13 indicates. He is the God of righteousness and justice whose judgment is not arbitrary or vengeful, but whose judgment is efficacious in establishing restoration, peace and salvation. Let's face it the Old Testament hero David had committed terrible acts before God, as he admits in Psalm 51:1-2 (See also 2 Samuel chapters 11-12) However, God is both merciful and compassionate as God

knows how people are made. King David is no different, he is a man of dust, just as we are; and yet there is mercy, compassion and a transformed life even when one might have anticipated severe judgment.

In a sense it is through the Old Testament insight of steadfast love and mercy, compassion and justice

that the Incarnation of Christ Jesus should ultimately be seen. The salvific mind of God is established in Jesus' ministry and Jesus' journey to the Cross, his death and resurrection. God's ultimate desire to save is seen in the truth of Easter and the hope Easter brings to life. Humankind is not condemned outright. Humankind's atonement is neither found in animal sacrifice (Lev. 16) nor arguably even, in a doctrine of penal substitution, but in the depths of God's loving compassion.

The image of being dust reminds us of the ashes placed on our foreheads in the Ashing ceremony on Ash Wednesday. We are mortal. We are frail and we are sinful - 'from dust you come and to dust you shall return' gives voice to Genesis 2:7 and the funeral 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust'.

For me the God of the Old Testament is one of justice, mercy, compassion and steadfast love and this is continued in my experience of Christ and the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit. Sure there are elements of the Old Testament that I find difficult, maybe even repulsive, but that does not remove my belief in God and the unity of God through Scripture in its entirety. The Old Testament God and the New Testament God are One, not two separate deities as some seem to imply.

In our uncertain times we need to know God's compassion, mercy, righteousness and justice and to understand this in the terms of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ - pure, unmerited and undeserved.

Every blessing, Simon.

The Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God,

The Father almighty,

Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary

And suffered under Pontius Pilate,

Was crucified, died and was buried;

He descended into hell;

On the third day he rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,

And is seated at the right hand of God,

The Father almighty;

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Prayers of intercession:

Our prayers which we offer to God for the needs and cares of the world, the Church, the sick, the dying, those who mourn and in particular those who work in the NHS, the emergency services, government, food supply and medical science.

A candle may be lit:

The Lord's Prayer.

Blessing:

May the God of all mercy, compassion and wisdom have mercy on us;

May the Christ who is the Lord of life grant hope to all in their living and in their faith AND

May the Holy Spirit guide and comfort us all, both now and always.

Amen.



Although we were unable to take part in our Lent Liturgy this year, Pauline Gow & Pauline Raine endeavoured to keep it up until the lockdown.

This is the display for week 5

Heaven shall not wait

**for the rich to share their fortunes,
the proud to fall, the élite to tend the least:**

Jesus is Lord;

he has shown the master's privilege —

to kneel and wash servants' feet before they feast.

Singing the Faith 701

REFLECTIONS By Di Smart

I can and do sit in three places in my sitting room. One view from my window shows me a corner of Hooe Lake, and the river Plym. I can also see Dartmoor in the distance, over the roof tops of Oreston. The third chair faces the television! Although I have to admit the television does move according to where I'm sitting.

The view which is taking my attention at the moment isn't in itself particularly inviting, I can see a rather scruffy garden, the top storeys of a couple of houses, one of which looks more like a warehouse than a home. But what is taking my attention is the silhouette of a tree against the sky. I mostly see this in the early evening and in the past few days the sky behind it has been palely streaked with pink as the sun sets. It reminds me of how wonderful God's creation is.

I've always loved trees. Mostly in the autumn when the leaves turn colour and wonderful colours appear. I loved scrunching through the leaves as a child, getting told off because I'd get my socks dirty. To be honest, I did it as an adult as well! I love the silhouettes of the bare trees in winter. The intricacy fascinates me. The trunk straight reaching up towards the sky; the large boughs branching out from the trunk, bearing smaller branches, which in turn bear the twigs. All making a mesh against the clear blue and pink sky. And I think – what a wonderful world God is sharing with us.

A few years ago I drew a picture of a “winter” tree and wrote these words:

Firmly rooted in the ground,
spreading branches reaching wide;
Twisting twigs stretching high,
Fed by rain, warmed by sun and moved by the wind
The tree grows tall and firm and strong.

Warmed by the love of God
Moved by the Holy Spirit
Fed by the water and bread of life
People grow in faith,
Stretching up in hope. Spreading out in love
To follow in the way of Jesus Christ.



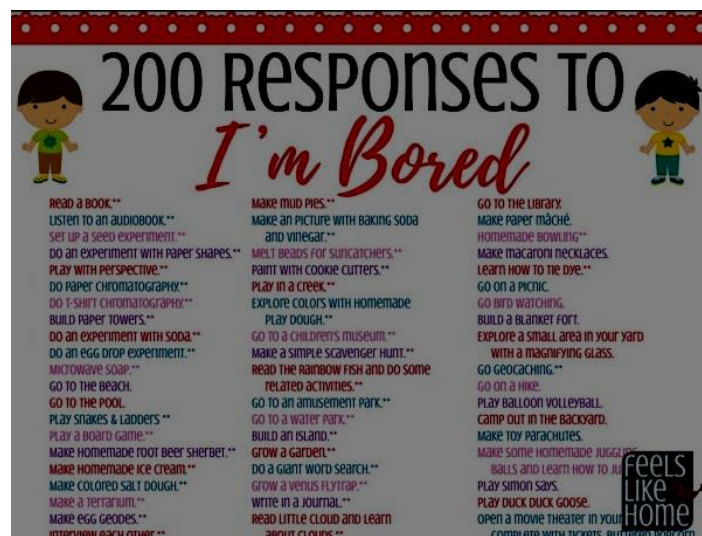
WHAT SHALL I DO TODAY?

First of all, as every morning, I will check the newspaper to see what day it is. Since all social activities have ceased, the structure of the week has vanished. Next, I will turn on my computer to see if there are any messages. As someone who was reluctant to avail herself of any technical social activity, I like most folk, am now very grateful for it. The sun is shining and I have a large garden, so will try to get out there to do something, it is unlikely that my gardener will be calling. There are lots of jobs I could do, such as turning out cupboards and drawers....the only thing is, I don't feel like doing that. I can still occupy myself with my usual hobbies, crossword puzzles, reading the paper, sewing and knitting for charity.

I tried to think, as an only child, of the things I filled my time with on a rainy day in school holidays when mum and dad were working, and try some. 1) dress my cat "Timmy" in dolls' clothes and place him in the dolls' pram...no good, all are long gone. 2) play double ball against the back door.....with arthritic hands and a PVC door, not a good idea 3) take my skipping rope out into the garden....well I still have a skipping rope, but the action of having both feet in the air whilst swinging a rope seems a distant memory 4) knit some clothes for my doll....I could still do this except that the last time I took her down from the loft (to be a substitute "baby Jesus" at church last Christmas) her legs, arms and head fell off as the elastic keeping her together had rotted. I was left with playing Patience, so I got out the playing cards and set about playing.....no good, I had forgotten how ! When all else fails, try modern technology, I contacted my friend "Google" who gave a demonstration and all was well.

I am quite used to my own company but even I can get fed up with me, so I am really glad of all the things I couldn't do as a child, like using social network to keep in touch with friends and family, especially to my niece who is stranded with her partner in Namibia not knowing when and how they are getting home. There is still nothing like the sound of a friendly voice, so I am trying to use the telephone regularly. If you are lonely and feel like a chat, I shall be here on 01752 404239.....I'm not going anywhere either. Meanwhile keep safe and keep smiling, even if it is only to yourself ! We can all look forward to seeing each other when this crisis is over and I for one will be grateful for the full life I normally have. Many thanks to Liz for her work in getting out this issue and to all who have contributed.

Jean



Blessed are the gel users – with them you are in safe hands
Blessed are the sneeze-catchers – for they will bin their tissues
Blessed are the shelf-stackers – for they mitigate panic-buying
Blessed are the ventilator makers – yesterday they built cars or weapons
Blessed are the stranded tourists – may their minibars never run dry
Blessed are the epidemiologists – for they will crunch the numbers
Blessed are the caring neighbours – for they will spot who needs some help
Blessed are the asymptomatic carriers – for it is not their fault
Blessed are you when you self-isolate – for you shall re-read every good book, eat
every tin of beans and maybe even tidy the attic
Blessed are the frequent handwashers – for their touch is welcome and their
conscience clear

Contributed by Pam Kingsland

The Unknown, Unseen Enemy *by Joan Marsh*

We cannot see it, feel it; so elusive,
like a ticking bomb that takes us so unawares,
about to envelope us, guns, drugs, knives of no avail.
A virus with no sympathy, affecting all the
elderly with the little resistance, so vulnerable.
Even die from its venomous contact; but STOP!
Perhaps the Good Lord in his wisdom to help
Teach us a lesson we well deserve, as man's inhumanity
to man worsens; Horrors daily escalate to
find this eroding virus is testing us to change,
Allowing us to show more compassion to one another,
Whatever creed or form our religious views,
As we have one chance to reverse,
it's in our very own hands,
otherwise we have to take the consequences
and all disappear into oblivion

DOCTORS ORDERS *by Teresa Hooley*

'NO VISITORS !' The doctor sternly said. He does not know
the darling visitors that come and go
outside my window as I lie in bed:
Blue tits that sway
in the tasselled silver birch tree; starlings, gay
among the chimney pots; sparrows as well,
Hopping along the tiles; a thrush to tell
of spring.....all these, and changing clouds that sail,
driven by errant winds across the pale
cold February sky; arrows of rain,
breaking in little rivers down the pane.
Sunshine in flying gleams; the tender deep
colour of dusk, and the early stars that peep
before they draw the blind. These come to me.
He does not guess the visitors I see.



These uninvited but very welcome visitors checking out the hole in the wall of our house and have decided it will make a very good place to self-isolate! Six feet from the bird feeder and bird bath, regular meals, wonderful view of the Pathfields. Social distancing from the visiting black & white cat (and very unwelcome furry friend and squirrel) Oh well, I guess the extractor fan, for which the hole was made, will stay on the shelf for another 10 years.



MEMORIES FOR VE DAY

VE day—the day that celebrates the formal acceptance by the allies of World War 2 of the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany's armed forces on 8th May 1945

Pauline Raine talks to Ivor Foster and William Morris

You will often find Ivor and Bill sitting opposite each other at the Friday luncheon club. They have more in common than just their enjoyment of the meal. Both served in the 2nd World War; both very young when they were signed up, Ivor eighteen and a **quarter** and Bill nineteen.

Talking to them I could sense how they both really respected the work of the other, albeit in very different settings and places - William as a Royal Engineer and Ivor as part of a Lancaster Bomber aircrew.

It came across to me quite clearly the importance their comrades were to them both in their different situations – Ivor said that being part of a crew of seven meant that they supported each other. 'I wasn't frightened,' he said, 'because we were all together'. He flew with the 186 squadron from Suffolk.

Bill too worked in a team as an engineer, dealing with dangerous explosives such as mines on railways in France, followed by a time working in Germany. He recalls how on one occasion after working under a train, it started moving off with one engineer, (not him) left under it. Thankfully the man just got out in time.

As for what went on VE day he said of where he was, 'There were no great celebrations but we knew the war was over.' He remembered German children scooping up any waste left over food from the soldiers' kitchen, and giving all their sweets and chocolates to them.

Ivor remembers that the day before VE day on May 7th the Lancaster teams flew to the Hague to drop off 7,000 lbs of food from a height of 500 feet. Food was transported in hessian slings under the plane. 'There were three bags inside each other,' he said, 'and the idea was that if two burst the other one would still hold.' These were Operations Manna and Chowhound.

He recalls, 'I think it was probably a race course that we flew over. I saw an old lady on her knees with her hands praying for the food.' He said that the people were like skeletons.

On May 8th V.E day, the Military Police took all the ammunition out of the guns and locked the planes.

On the 10th May Ivor flew to France with Operation Exodus to bring back twenty-four Prisoners of War to England. He recalled, 'The first fellow out kissed the grass. Those trips, bringing people back, were the best of the war.'

Just in recent years a medal and message were sent to Ivor in remembrance of the help was given. The message read, 'Thank you Liberators 1945.'

From the Netherlands in gratitude for their Liberation – The Kingdom of the Netherlands 2018.'

Ivor's pilot on the Lancaster wrote a book entitled , 'Ghosts of Targets Past'. This was written by Philip Gray and is available on Amazon or e-bay.

Bill didn't return to the U.K. until 1947 as he was stationed in various places including Peine, between Hanover and Brunswick in Lower Saxony. The Royal Engineers took over a hotel the Schutzenhaus, and then the Nazi HQ there which was staffed by German nationals. Every day there was a good meal served for the engineers which the German staff were also grateful to eat too.

The six months spent here was looking for explosives but they also found time to organise a Military Tattoo in the Berlin stadium officially opened by Hitler in 1936.

Here the army performed in full uniform, including some in kilts. Bill overheard a lady exclaiming to her children on seeing the kilts, 'Look women!'

Bill eventually made it back to the U.K. in 1947, while just after the end of the war, Ivor flew over the Ruhr taking some of the ground staff from the airbase to see Germany for themselves.

For sure both men would say they were just doing a job, but what a job they did!



Hymn titles, fill in the missing letters

HWGRTTHRT
MZNGGRC
JSTSM
BTHMYVSN
GDRHLPNGSPST
NRRMYGDTTH
BDWTHM
HLYHLYHLY
MRNNGHSBRKN
HWFRMFNDTN
NWTHNKWLLRGD
WPLGHTHFLDSNDSCTTR
WHNSRVYTHWNRSCRSS
SPRTFTHLVNGGD
THKNGFLVMYSHPHRDS
JYFLJYFLWDRTH
THLRDSMYSHPHRD
LLTHNGSBRGHTNDBTFL
HSGTTHWHLWRLDNHSHND
PRSMYSLTHKNGRHVN
DRLRDNDFTHRFMNKND
NDCNTBTHTSHLDGN
CHRSTHLRDSRSNTDY

MWiB



'GIFTS FOR GOTHENBURG

Carol, Di and Pam attended the MWiB District Committee meeting in Exeter on 4th March. Following the business and lunch, 200 donated items, mostly unwanted Christmas presents, were wrapped for a £2 'lucky dip'. This was to raise money to help enable those from less affluent countries to attend the WFM&UCW World Assembly in Gothenburg, Sweden in August 2021. The intention was to launch this at the Swanwick Weekend and would have also been available at our own District Day. However, both events have since been cancelled. Hopefully we'll eventually

be able to continue with this fundraising idea.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

It seems weeks away that we held the World Day of prayer at Elburton, together with the ladies of St Matthews. Our daily lives have changed so much in these few weeks. That was on Friday March 6th. The theme 'Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk' was arranged by the ladies of Zimbabwe, a very inspiring service



TUESDAY AFTERNOONS

As we are unable to meet on Tuesdays at the moment Di Smart has kindly put together a service each week which can be viewed as an attachment online. If you would like to receive this email, please send your address to Carol Batchelor candgbatchelor@tiscali.co.uk

Sit down with a cup of tea and know that you are sharing Christian fellowship with other folk.

MWiB TUESDAY, 31ST MARCH

Good afternoon. Welcome to our second email afternoon.

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.
You are my God and I will give you thanks
You are my God and I will exalt you
Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good
His love endures for ever. (*Psalm 118 vv24, 28-29*)

I expect most if not all of us are on Jon Carhart's email contact list and will have seen his email about a Sunday service. If you haven't, do click on it, and join in the service – it is very good and I enjoyed singing along with Helen.

Thanks to all who are making every effort to help during this time; it does take time, thought and commitment, and I am very grateful.

Let's sing, if we can, or read the following: *Hymn 439*

Let us pray:

O sun behind all suns, we give you greeting this new day
Let all creation praise you, Let the daylight
And the shadows praise you, Let the fertile earth
And the swelling sea praise you. Let the winds and the rain
The lightning and the thunder praise you
let all that breathes, both male and female praise you
And we shall praise you.
O God of all life, we give you greeting this day.
Loving Creator, you awaken us to new life every morning;
Your faithfulness is so great, it is deeper than the sea, higher than the sky
Wider than the world. Be near us, within us,
Beside us this day and for ever. Amen. *Source: Circle of Prayer – Joyce Denham*

Reading: The story of Noah: Genesis 6: 1 to Genesis 9: 17

Random Thoughts

Thought 1 This is my third attempt! I started off with the Lectionary reading; moved to Jesus' visit to Martha and Mary and; then realised there were thoughts I wanted to share and you'll see in a second or two why I've ended up with Noah!

The first thing I heard on Sunday morning when I turned on the radio, planning to tune into Radio 4's morning service was the refrain from "From Heaven You came helpless Babe". So I stopped, joined in the singing and listened to the rest of the service. There came a point when I said to myself, "this is a Methodist service"; partly because of the number of hymns! and then I heard "Thank you to the people in Devon tuning into this service from Methodist Central Hall". It didn't sound like Gareth Higgs and it wasn't, it was from London's Central Hall.

I find it very interesting that this service was broadcast at 8a.m. when (I believe) many more people will be able to listen than at 6.30a.m. when many of us are still asleep. A change. For me a welcome change. To me it says that it is recognised that there is still a place for faith in our lives; that it is important to people; and that it is needed at this time. We sang "There's a wideness in God's mercy"; one I didn't recognise though it sounded like a Wesley hymn and "Great is thy faithfulness" and the more listened the more I could relevance in the words.

Thought 2 As I've been doing my daily walks I've noticed pictures of rainbows in windows. The first one I saw was here in a 3rd floor flat and wondered if it were some kind of indication of the resident's status at this time. However, the next ones I saw were enormous ones at Hooe School. On Sunday as I did my daily plod (nearly getting blown off my feet in places!) I noticed several in the houses on the estate. One house had 3 "rainbows", the first a traditional arc in the ground floor window; the second, on the 1st floor a big circular pleated sort of fan; and on the second floor the vertical window blinds were rainbow colours. The next one had been done using glass beads and had a message which said "Stay at Home, love from Hugo". Later there'll be one in my window.

So I had to find out what they meant. Google came up straight away – all to do with The Virus! It's an idea for children to be creative, to help them understand and have something to do. I suspect if we gave our minds to it we could think of all sorts of different ways to create a rainbow. The idea is to cheer folk up, to make people smile offer a message of hope.

But, of course, it reminds us of Noah and God's covenant with the earth. I've just read the whole of the "story of Noah" and found that Noah and his family – human and animal – were confined to the Ark for 11 months! If you start imagining what natural events went on in that time – well actually perhaps better not!

What strikes me about this story is Noah's faith in God; in his obedience to what God asked him to do. Build an ark to these specifications. Gather all these animals, four legged, two legged, no legs. Creatures that eat each other all confined to a few cubic feet. Plus his sons and their wives. There's no mention of children. It has been said that the result of our present situation could be a baby boom and/or a divorce boom!

Noah and his family certainly had their world turned upside down. Confined to an ark for 11 months.

We may feel our world is being turned upside down at present. Jenny Hawke (*daughter of Eddie Askew of the Leprosy Mission*) says that when she was going through a particularly difficult time she was told by a friend "Don't forget God's promises to you; stand on the promises."*

God has made promises to us – He has promised us His rainbow as a symbol of hope: He has promised us His peace, which is unlike any other peace; He has promised to be with us to the very end of the age. God never breaks His promises. Let us stand on His promises.

Let us pray:

Lord, we pray for all who are doing their very best to keep us going in this difficult time. We give thanks for all those who are working to bring us food, medicines, to take away our rubbish. We give thanks for all the many people who are offering their time and energy to help those who are unable to help themselves. We pray for and give thanks for all doctors and nurses and other carers. We pray for those who have come out of retirement to help.

Lord, in this time, help us to remember and pray for those who are ill with other conditions and need care and attention. We pray for all who are lonely and alone.

We do pray that we will all heed the advice, the regulations, that have been put in place for our protection. We know it will be difficult, but we also know that you are with us supporting us with your peace, your grace and, most of all, your love.

And, Lord, many of us complain about technology taking over from personal contact, but at this time, Lord, we give thanks for it, as it enables us to keep in touch, to order food and many other things.

Lord, we praise you, give you thanks, and pray that we may be always conscious of your presence. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Hymn

O Lord all the world belongs to you
And you are always making all things new
What is wrong you forgive
And the new life you give
Is what's turning the world upside down.

The world's only loving to its friends
But you brought us love which never ends
Loving enemies too
And this loving with you
Is what's turning the world upside down

This world lives divided and apart
you draw us all together and we start
in your body to see
that in fellowship we
can be turning the world upside down

The world wants the wealth to live in state
But you show us a new way to be great
Like a servant you came
and if we do the same
We'll be turning the world upside down.

O Lord all the world belongs to you
And you are always making all things new
Send your spirit on all
In your Church whom you call
To be turning the world upside down.

Patrick Appleford
(In *Methodist Hymns Old and New*)

May God's blessing surround you each day
As you trust Him and walk in His way
May His presence within guard and keep you from sin
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.

* You can listen to the hymn "Standing on the promises of God" on U-tube. I've listened it's a very catchy tune and easy to sing along to. Just go on Google, type in the title and it should come up as a pink bible and an arrow comes up, just lick and it works!! (From "*Elephants in the Rush Hour* by Jenny Hawke.)

Be patient Keep Smiling Be hopeful

Prayer Page

Reflection

Singing the Faith 51

*Great is thy faithfulness. O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever will be*

Great is thy faithfulness ! Great is thy faithfulness!

Morning by morning new mercies I see;

all I have needed thy hand hath provided.

Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

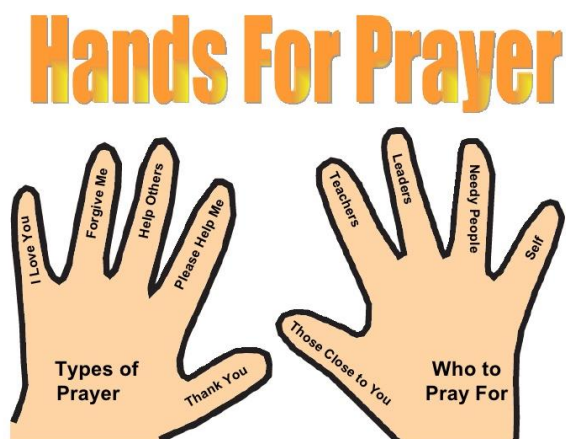
Thank you, Dear Lord that we have everything we need. We are warm, well fed and have a roof over our heads, but we pray for the people of your world who at this time are suffering from the lack of food and water, poor shelter and are feeling very cold. In the world there is enough for everyone. Guide us to share and help each other. May the governments of each country come together and be united in caring for everyone.

Heavenly Father stay close to the doctors and nurses and all the people who are working for any part of the NHS. May they know that you are beside them in their dedication to looking after the people who are very sick.

Please give us “*strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow*”.

As this coronavirus is spreading so fast may the people who have to stay home find contentment and peace, knowing they are surrounded by your love and prayer.

If you have a prayer request, please contact Margaret Passmore (404929)



Trying to Get Ahead of the Curve

A few weeks ago, I imagine that an awful lot of us had never even heard of Wuhan, China. Now we all have and to go with it a whole collection of words that we didn't use before. Had you ever heard of Social distancing or Lock-down; Personal Protective Equipment? I certainly hadn't. I seldom used terms such as Isolation or Quarantine either.

I certainly had never used Zoom to interact with a video meeting and only occasionally used FaceTime to talk to friends or family, and had never been asked to keep two metres away from other people whenever I was out, or used hand gel in a shop.

Today we are have so many new and strange experiences in our lives. So what have we been up to and thinking about?

Here's what some of you have written to tell me:

Joan Edwards commented, "This unprecedented time has made me appreciate so much that I would previously have taken for granted: the walks out with the dog at any time of day, the ability to drive around and shop, the freedom to do what we actually want to do!

We have been shown a lot of kindness from neighbours and people in the community and beyond. The local council have set up a group of volunteers to shop and make prescription collections I realise that I live in an amazing, supportive community.

When we are over this pandemic, hopefully I will never again take anything for granted. Please remind me of this!

And **Pauline Gow** had this to say - "In some strange way I have almost enjoyed being in isolation, it's given me time to reflect on my life and realise the importance of family members, friends and my faith.

I have enjoyed getting up at leisure and then being able to catch up on certain jobs such as painting the conservatory, porch, radiator covers and this morning creosoting the shed!

Social media has been a great way of keeping in touch with Church Members, some of whom have offered help to older people such as Andy and myself.

Tracey, Simon and Morwenna have come to see us most days, albeit we can only talk at a distance through the newly painted conservatory window.

On a lighter note Andy can now toast tea cakes without burning them!

Take care, keep safe!

Di Smart says, “My strategy at present is not to do anything for too long at a time. I do a bit of housework, computer things, knit, puzzles etc and go for my walk. I love Countdown so being able to watch it daily is a plus.

On Easter Saturday I should have gone to Wesley’s Cottage to listen to St John’s gospel. Instead, I plan to watch my DVD and (possibly) read the gospel as well.

I’m also doing a weekly email which was intended to keep MWiB in contact with each other, but it’s being suggested that it could be extended to others”. (See Newsletter)

Jon Carhart commented, “IT is very much in demand at this time of working from home” and, “apart from working we have been finding ways to entertain the children.”

I, myself have been thinking:

“I have been getting immense excitement from the clever technology that we have available today.

It has been just wonderful to talk to family and friends on FaceTime. I remember thinking, when I was just a small girl that a picture on your phone would be great – and it is!

I really enjoyed going to virtual JAM on Sunday joining in with Jon and Helen and the activity with the young families. They painted rainbows as a sign of hope and promise, so I had to too, didn’t I? Later when I saw three children coming down the road I had to quickly put it up in my window. The angle of the arc was a bit wrong but hey! The whole idea is that children can count them when they go out for a walk. Also we have been asked to put teddies in our windows too! One of mine has got some cool sunglasses and leather trousers! I was delighted to find that my Dutch friend is’ doing the teddies’ in Holland too!

Sunday evening I listened to Jon preaching a sermon and did a ‘sing – along with Helen’.

I also attempted a Zoom Dance Fit class done from the teacher, Sarah’s kitchen. This proved to be a work still in progress but it was fun to see her leaping about near her washing machine!

So many of us are so fortunate! We have telephones, emails, messaging, chat rooms, social media apps, video conferencing, talking across the garden fence, talking at two metres when we meet someone when exercising – and isn’t everyone so chatty these days!

I feel so blessed that we are able to communicate in so many ways with each other.

We are not *socially* isolated, just *physically* isolated during this Lockdown.