



Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre



a serving and worshipping Christian church in the heart of Emsworth,
working closely with other churches and with the local community

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Newsletter

25th April 2020

Thought for the Fortnight

The Zulu language is spoken by upwards of 10 million people and is one of the many official languages of South Africa.

Translating between languages is always a risky business – subtleties get lost and some words simply do not have an equivalent. Anyone who's ever read more than one Bible translation will know that! However roughly speaking the Zulu greeting, 'Sawubona' means 'I see you,' and the response, 'Ngikhona' means 'I am here.' Inherent in all this is the implication that until I am 'seen' I am not fully present; that there is something about being acknowledged by another person that makes me more human.

Last Thursday at 8pm, as on every other Thursday since this crisis began, I stood on my front door step and, along with dozens of neighbours (including, somewhere, what I assume was a child employing a wooden spoon and a saucepan!) clapped for the NHS and other key-workers.

Now, don't mistake me, 'the clap' – as it's become known around here – is a drop in a very large ocean. There is so much more practical support needed to help NHS and other workers in their calling. For instance, 'the clap' won't bring in more healthcare workers, neither will it provide PPE. It

will do nothing to stop lives from being lost. Some might say it is a pointless waste of time.

I don't think so. I don't think so because, as a result of 'the clap', for five minutes per week one of my neighbours who is a nurse and another who works at a supermarket is 'seen' – recognised, not just quietly in our minds and prayers but in a corporate act of thanks. Having been seen, keyworkers can then know for absolute certainty that they are part of a community that values them.

Perhaps one of the greatest things about Jesus wasn't his stories or his miracles but the simple fact that he 'saw' people and encouraged communities to see too, and love what they saw. Maybe it's that, by seeing people, he enabled them to become more fully human.

Sawubona.

Laura

All We Can Emergency Coronavirus Appeal

As you are aware, we usually have a special collection for AWC appeals when there is a major disaster. Many of you will already have had this via email, but for those of you who haven't, here is the information:

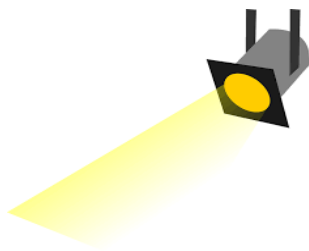
'Can you imagine having to face Coronavirus without access to running water and soap? In cramped and unhygienic conditions, where social distancing simply isn't possible?

'This is the reality facing people living in some of the world's poorest communities right now.

'*All We Can and the Methodist Church in Britain* have launched an Emergency Coronavirus Appeal, to help equip vulnerable communities across the globe to combat COVID-19. For communities with weaker healthcare systems, or who lack access to clean water and handwashing facilities, the impact of Coronavirus will be catastrophic. That's why we're asking: **please do all that you can to help save lives today.'**

You can donate online, or cheques can be sent to:

All We Can, 25 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JR



Spotlight on... Bill

After our first 'Spotlight on...' article in the April News sheet, here is another – this time about Bill.

1.) What job do/did you do?

After leaving school I was a cashier at West Sussex Motor Tax in Chichester, licensing vehicles and drivers before computers muscled in. Then I was a cashier with Anglia Building Society (remember that?!) before going to theological college. After a few years as a Methodist Presbyterian I left and became a Civil Servant with The Tax Office (now also long gone!) and a couple of years with DWP. Since 2006 I've gradually returned to church ministry, wandering around trying to look useful.

2.) What are your hobbies?

I have a go at sax and guitar, and re-writing gospel stories and Thoughts for the Day for Angel Radio.

3.) What is your favourite food?

Gammon. Ham. Pork. Bacon. Anything pig-orientated. I got hooked when Mum used to bring home brawn from the local butcher's when I was small.

4.) How would you spend an unexpected £1000?

No idea. During the current pandemic it would need to go to someone who's struggling, but I can't guarantee I'd be so altruistic during less troubled times!

5.) What is your favourite verse in the Bible?

It changes from day to day and need to need. When I'm out and about looking at the world, the infinity of space and the intricacy of creation, I think of 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him, the son of man that thou carest for him?' (Psalm 8)

6.) What is your ambition?

To be content that I've got within sight of being the person I was always intended to be.

7.) Please tell us a bit about your family (including pets)

Wife: Jan – ex-nurse and hospital discharge coordinator. In 'retirement' an inveterate organiser of Child Contact Centres and HPP, a Street Pastor, etc.

Daughters: Kate – married with a twenty-year-old son. HMRC employee but quite normal otherwise.

Amy – has a degree in art, so works as a hospital clinical photographer in Wales.

Pets: Reggie the stropky terrier.

Mice under the floorboards that Reggie and I are trying to get rid of.

8.) What is your favourite TV programme?

Would I Lie to You? and BBC News. The former is considerably more humorous than the latter.

9.) What makes you turn off the TV?

Just about everything else, but *EastEnders* more speedily than all the rest.

10.) Who do you most admire?

So many people I've known down the years who've struggled with life's challenges, but still smiled and thanked God.

11.) What concerns you about the future?

Trying to respond to it appropriately as it happens. Otherwise, not a lot in any overwhelming way so long as I remind myself that it's in God's hands, not mine.

12.) What are your favourite books?

Factual stuff about the Middle Ages, to remind me of my youth, and a book of Celtic Daily Prayer.

13.) What makes you nervous?

Most things.

14.) What is your favourite hymn?

And can it be that I should gain/ An interest in the Saviour's blood?
.... isn't it everybody's??

A Special Wedding Anniversary

Many congratulations to Arthur and Doreen
who have recently celebrated their **66th** wedding anniversary!

Happy 66th Anniversary

Quiz: Significant Dates in History

2020 will definitely be a significant date in world history. Here is a quiz for you to identify other significant dates in British history – with little clues to help you! Have fun!

1066	B of H	
1215	S of the M C	
1348	B D c to E	
1455	W of the R	
1564	W S b	
1605	G F G P	
1666	G F of L	
1815	B of W	
1837	Q V c t t t	
1876	C F S laid	(very local!)
1966	E w the W C	
1969	F M on the M	

Answers on page 8

(Thank you to Dot)

Daily Reflections

In an attempt to find an outlet for the creative juices I've taken to producing daily reflections. They consist of an image, with a few words to provoke thought on the Bible reading for the day. I hope that some people will find them useful.

These are available at: www.facebook.com/emcandpc which can be accessed in the same way as any other web page. You do not need a Facebook account.

If you'd prefer to receive a week's worth of reflections by email please let me know and it would be a pleasure to send them to you on Mondays.

Laura



Home Worship for Sunday 26th April

Psalm 116:1-2 NRSV

- 1. I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my supplications.*
- 2. Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.*

Prayer

Lord, may we praise you in spirit and in truth:
you who hear our prayers,
you who draw near to us,
and bring new life out of death.

May we live in the confidence of knowing we are your children,
with the security and joy of your saving grace.

For in your gift to us of Christ your Son you bring us
new life, forgiveness, the Spirit as gift!

So we lift our voices and our hearts in love, thanks, and praise.

We will praise you, our Lord as long as we live!

Our Lord's Prayer

Reading: Luke 24:13-35

Reflection

When the two disciples got to the door of their house in Emmaus they invited this stranger in. He'd talked to them for some time and they readily warmed to him, but they thought that they knew absolutely nothing about him. If they'd caught sight of his face in the setting sun along the road, they still didn't recognise him. Maybe his injuries made him walk with a limp and his voice hoarse and unrecognisable. They didn't even know his name. When they invited this mysterious unknown man in, at least partly because that was only good manners.

They even did him the honour of asking him to break the bread at the meal.

It was then that they realised. They had appeared to be doing a kindness to this stranger on the deserted road. Now they realised that it was *he* who was giving *them* something way beyond all human hope and imagination.

This injured, nameless stranger had brought to them the certainty no human being could have expected: the certainty that Christ is alive, life is reborn and hope returned to the world.

From a long, dark and lonely road the light comes into their souls. And all because, out of simple human kindness, they'd said to a stranger, 'Come in and eat with us.'

As a minister you get to meet and visit a huge range of humanity. It's part of the job, if you like. I do it to try to share a little of God's love and because I enjoy doing it. What I so often find, though, is that the person I'm meeting gives me infinitely more than I can give them. It's as if I'm one of those disciples offering something, only to discover that I'm the one who's received. I've gone to serve a human being and been met by Christ.

Why not reflect for a moment on one or two people you've spent time with and felt that, really, there's someone else there: Christ himself.

Let's pause for a moment.

A Celtic Poem

*I met a stranger yest're'en;
I put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place;
And, in the sacred name of the Triune,
He blessed myself and my house,
My cattle and my dear ones,
And the lark said in her song,
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise;
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.*

Prayers for others

Almighty God, Creator Father, we pray for those who are ill or dying, mourning or fearful. May they know that their strength is in you. Assure them of your presence, your comfort and healing in this world and the next.

We pray for those who seek to serve, in danger of their own wellbeing. At home, in care or in hospital, may they discover that in serving the stranger they serve their Lord.

We pray for those whom we know and love. Keep them wise; keep them caring; keep them safe.

We pray for the leaders of the nations. Guide them into wisdom and truth. In leading may they learn how they serve humanity and their God.

We pray for your church on earth that as we go to others as strangers they may see Christ in the stranger's guise.

Receive our prayers, Lord, not in our own worthiness but in the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Blessing

God may come to us, unrecognized, as a stranger.
The Risen Christ reaches out to us in unexpected ways
as we travel our own Emmaus roads.
May the Word of our Stillspeaking God
continue to burn in our hearts
in all our ways along.

United Choir Easter Offering

Even though the United Choir was unable to sing on Good Friday, we enjoyed rehearsing together for a few weeks, and some money was raised: £120 was sent to Freedom for Torture. Sue I. has had a letter of thanks from the charity.

Keeping in touch

As well as being immensely grateful for modern communication technology, some of us are rediscovering the pleasure of writing and receiving letters in the post. Margaret S. is receiving a letter every day from her granddaughter, and I'm exchanging letters (less often!) with my grandson, aged 5.

Diana

Please send contributions for the next fortnightly newsletter to
notices@emsworthmethodistchurch.org or
newsheet@emsworthmethodistchurch.org
by Wednesday 29 April

Good news is especially welcome!

Quiz Answers:

1066	Battle of Hastings	1666	Great Fire of London
1215	Signing of the Magna Carta	1815	Battle of Waterloo
1348	Black Death came to England	1837	Queen Victoria came to the throne
1455	Wars of the Roses	1876	Church foundation stone laid
1564	William Shakespeare born	1966	England won the World Cup
1605	Guy Fawkes Gunpowder Plot	1969	First Man on the Moon

Emsworth Methodist Church

How many can you find?

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

EMSWORTH
LADIESGROUP
WORSHIPING
SATURDAYS
NOTICES
FELLOWSHIP

METHODIST
GUILD
SERVING
SUNDAYS
PASTORAL
FRIENDSHIP

CHURCH
PRAYERS
WEEKDAYS
NEWS SHEET
CENTRE

Home Worship for Sunday 3rd May

Opening prayer:

Loving God, we gather as a community – though dispersed for a season. May each and every one of us know your presence. May we see you more clearly, love you more dearly, follow you more nearly, day by day. *Amen.*

Reading: John 10: 11-18

Reflection:

Jesus called himself the good shepherd. In first century Palestine, and for that matter in 21st century Palestine, the image of the shepherd on the hillside carefully tending the sheep would have been very familiar and comfortable. The sheep following the shepherd. The shepherd watching over them and protecting them from harm.

Imagine. Imagine that flock of sheep in Palestine Jesus is talking about, and him as the shepherd.

We come from a different place, a different time. It may be that as you imagine those sheep, that shepherd, another character finds a way into your thoughts.

Jesus never included a sheep dog in any of his stories or parables. Why should he? Sheep dogs have never been used in that part of the world to herd sheep – such a concept would have been entirely unknown. All the same, I wonder if there is a place for a sheep dog in Jesus' Good shepherd narrative. Some time ago, while reading, I came across to idea of Christians as sheepdogs. Jesus refers to his people as sheep. What if we can be both sheep and sheep dogs?

For me, this metaphor is helpful because it moves us from the 'sheep's passive acceptance of God's love and care to the sheepdog's active engagement in the shepherd's plan.

The sheepdog gathers the flock to the shepherd, following his commands or instructions. The sheepdog might not always know what the overall purpose is, but they've been trained and they have learned to recognise the call of the shepherd. As anyone who has ever owned a dog will know, the training never ends – there's always something new to learn and sometimes what is taught is forgotten in the rush to get to something that is seemingly better!

How would our faith-life be different if we understood that we were always in training?

What would it mean to understand that there are new things to learn, old skills to sharpen?

Pause for reflection

If Psalm 23, another example of God as Shepherd, speaks of intimacy and security then this reading can only reinforce it. Jesus isn't just a hired hand who runs at the first sign of danger. He embodies strength, power, sympathy, kindness and mercy, and he doesn't just care for the sheep, he gathers the flock to himself.

Prayer (by Rev'd Barbara Glasson: President of the Methodist Conference)

Loving God,
If we are ill, strengthen us.
If we are tired, fortify our spirits.
If we are anxious, help us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air.
Help us not to stockpile treasures from supermarkets in the barns of our larders.
Don't let fear cause us to overlook the needs of others more vulnerable than ourselves.
Fix our eyes on your story and our hearts on your grace.

Help us always to hold fast to the good,
See the good in others,
And remember there is just one world, one hope,
One everlasting love, with baskets of bread for everyone.
In Jesus we make our prayer,
The one who suffered, died and was raised to new life,
In whom we trust these days and all days,
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Blessing





Prayer Prompts – 25th April 2020

You are invited to use the suggestions listed below in your prayer times.

Loving and gracious God, you understand suffering, because you are my crucified Lord. Draw me closer to you for I need your companionship, help and strength at this time.

I remember stories of Jesus, appearing to his disciples after the Resurrection; they were often slow to recognise you, just as I am slow to recognise the presence of my Risen Lord in daily life.

Through the working of your Holy Spirit in me, please heighten the awareness of my spirit to recognise Jesus in the kindness of others, the warmth of sunshine, brightness of spring flowers, bird song; worship shared with voices I know, or hymns I sing with *Songs of Praise*.

Lord, in your mercy, hear my prayer.

Prompts for prayer:

Care workers: in community, Care and Nursing Homes. Hospital nurses and doctors, cleaning staff, paramedics. Midwives, therapists, GP surgeries, pharmacists.

Farmers and deliverers of food to shops. Those who collect our rubbish and recycling goods.

Those who live on their own; the fearful, lonely and those who grieve.

Volunteer services: cooking meals, shopping, the *Emsworth Alliance*, those supporting others through phone calls. Families growing closer through talking more, using modern media.

Thanks: that God loves me and that Jesus, through his Spirit, is with me to the end of time.

We have a small **Prayer Chain** working within the church. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayer please do contact Chris Walters on 01243 379254 or email c.walters5@homecall.co.uk

Sad news

I'm sorry to tell you that Rev'd Trevor Payne passed away peacefully at 8am on Thursday 16th April. He had suffered a stroke the previous week. Please hold Trevor and his family in your prayers at this very difficult time.