



# 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**

**Holy Week and Easter 2020**

## Thought for the Fortnight

While out on my daily exercise one day last week I came across an explosion of colour in a neighbour's window. A painted rainbow visible for all to see. Over the next couple of days more and more appeared, and this morning I could barely walk 100 yards without coming across one, either painted, coloured, chalked or collaged! It really is a sight to behold in these dark times.

Jesus' disciples knew a thing or two about darkness. Our church calendar tends to jump from the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday to the joy of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday, forgetting what happened in the middle. Holy Saturday. For one whole day humanity seemed subsumed in shadow. It looked like darkness had won. Jesus was dead. The grief must have been unbelievable; the confusion unbearable. Everything they thought they knew about the world had been turned on its head. Nothing would ever be the same again.

Perhaps some of us can empathise. There's no denying that these are uncomfortable times. We may be separated from loved ones, deprived of the comfort of routine, anxious for ourselves and others, frustrated by waiting.

Holy Saturday was a dark day. These are dark days. With the advantage that comes from hindsight we know that the world really would never be the same again. From the devastation of the cross came the glorious light of the crucifixion. For us it may not be that easy. Perhaps we too wait for our own resurrection – the day when we can be together with loved ones, pray and sing and laugh and cry together in church, meet friends in the Pastoral Centre, extend a hand to a stranger.

Surely we'll never take any of that for granted again. So maybe in that sense life won't be quite the same for us either.

In the meantime, a rainbow is first and foremost a symbol of hope: hope in God's promises; hope in a brighter future. It seems to me that this sudden desire, not just to create symbols of hope but to openly share them with other people, teaches us more than anything else about the importance of the little things in times of darkness. Combine that with the generous work of organisations like Emsworth Alliance, Westbourne Help and Southbourne Community Connections and I can't help but catch a glimpse of the possibilities of resurrection.

God was with the disciples on Holy Saturday. God is with us now. Easter Sunday is coming. Love and blessings,

## Laura

On the following pages you will find some materials to help you centre your mind on Christ's journey through Holy Week.



In order to help us worship together as a community we suggest that we all use these reflections at around **11am each day**; but whenever you choose to use them, remember that others are praying alongside you.

## Holy Week 2020 Home Worship

**Monday 6 April      John 12:1–11**

### **Reflection**

Mary, Martha and Lazarus were obviously pretty well off; the oil of nard that Mary poured over Jesus' feet cost a labourer's annual income. Whatever his motive for saying it, Judas was right: it could have helped an awful lot of poor people. On the other hand, some things are beyond price. A huge part of Mary's gift to Jesus was that, even in the community where she had some standing, she was prepared to get down on her knees and serve her Lord.

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, I ask you to accept my offering, however small and weak it may be. Receive my service to you, which you enable me to give; receive my service to others and help me to be open to receive the service of others to me; receive my time, my energy, my life. Receive my love. Grant that I may be ever ready to kneel at your feet and offer you all that I have and am in thankfulness for all that you give to me. In your name I ask it. *Amen*

### **Tuesday 7 April      John 12:20–36**

#### **Reflection**

When there's bright sunlight you're unlikely to be able to see the light of a flickering candle. If it weren't for the darkneses of life we would have difficulty in seeing the light. If it weren't for the horror of Gethsemane and the cross we wouldn't have the dawn of Resurrection day. Jesus tells his followers to carry on walking in the light. Surely he's saying the same to us here and now. Sometimes our world is so troubled, and we are so blinded by the dark, that we fail to turn our inward eye towards the light. If we consciously turn towards the light in that darkness, however real the darkness may be, that darkness will only make more plain the brightness, the stillness and the certainty of the light which will never go out.

### **Prayer**

My Lord, my Brother, my Friend and my Light, guide me all the ways along. In all the journeying of this life I ask that you may comfort me in loneliness, strengthen me in uncertainty, uphold me in weakness. In all the dark valleys of this life be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path that, when morning comes and the sun is arisen, I may still be with you. *Amen*

### **Wednesday 8 April      John 13:21–32**

#### **Reflection**

It would have been so easy for Jesus to prevent Judas going out and betraying him. Instead, he gave him a piece of bread at the table, which would have been taken by Judas as a sign that he was doing what he should, and that Jesus approved. It's then that Jesus says, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified'. He had taken the hardest step any ordinary human would find impossible to take: to sign his own death warrant. In taking that step he secures the future of humanity, and so he is glorified. The hardest steps are sometimes the ones that God wants us, and strengthens us, to take.

### **Prayer**

Almighty God, you have given to the world, and to me, your Son and our Saviour. I give you my praise and thanks beyond words that it was for me – even for me – that he enabled his own death upon the cross. Help me to

take those hard decisions in my own life which are truly your calling. Enable me to lean upon your power to do your will, whatever the cost, knowing that in Him who died for me you have made me a new creation, yours to eternal life. *Amen*

**Thursday 9 April      Maundy Thursday      John 13:1–17, 31b–35**

***Reflection***

Jesus says he gives us a 'new commandment', and yet he's quoting Leviticus. Maybe it would be better to hear those words as 'a *fresh* commandment'. He's showing us how to get down on our knees and serve each other. We're to get as low as we need to in order to care for others. Many, many people without faith show love through sheer humanity, but we need to tell people that we are doing it to serve and honour the one who got lower than anyone can imagine in order to bring hope and new life.

***Prayer***

Almighty God, grant to me the gift of your Holy Spirit, that I may discern the ways in which I may share your love in service. Give me the courage of your presence to get down on my knees before those without understanding of faith in you, that they may see some small reflection of your love for all humanity. Give me the words to tell them that, in serving them, it is to you that I give glory, thanks and praise. In the name of our Servant King, Jesus Christ. *Amen*

**Friday 10 April      Good Friday      John 18:1 – 19:42**

***Reflection***

Peter has more courage than most; he's initially prepared to defend his Master in Gethsemane, and he takes the risk of going to the High Priest's courtyard. Then his courage fails him. We all have our limits and, if we're tempted to condemn Peter for his failings we need also to condemn ourselves. The only one who doesn't condemn anyone is Jesus, the one whom we fail. He raised Peter up again on Resurrection day to become a leader of that first Christian community. Without him we wouldn't be here. Christ raises us up, with him, so that he may use us to achieve the unachievable.

***Prayer***

Thank you, Lord, that you have achieved through me things which I thought I was unable to achieve. I praise you that you raise me up to more than I can be. I ask you, with confidence, to go on releasing me from the weight of my failures. Grant me the privilege of continuing to serve you and to proclaim your message of eternal life, to your praise and glory. *Amen*

**Reflection**

We can't be certain about what faith Nicodemus had. He came by night to ask Jesus who he was, but we don't know what commitment he made at that point. Even his part in Jesus' burial may have been simply because he had sympathy and respect for him. We can never be certain of the relationship any one person has with the Lord. We can only pray that others, our family, our friends, the people we meet, will not only experience the darkness of the tomb but also be there on Resurrection day to know that life begins again in all its fullness, in all its glory, in all its eternal love.

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, I'm not always certain of my faith in you. May you bring me to the tomb, not only in the darkness of an ebbing day, but in the brightness of a new dawn. There, in light and freedom, may I greet you and know that I am yours and you are mine, my risen Lord who has broken the bonds of death for me. *Amen*

**A Message from Dot**

As you will be aware, even though all church activities are on hold, there is a lot of work going on in the background. A great deal of time and thought has gone in to how we can support and communicate with all our church family, pastorally and in other ways. Significant items of Finance and Property were addressed by a 'Virtual' Church Council meeting recently. I am also aware from contact I have had with lots of church folk that everyone is keeping in good spirits, with a 'can do' attitude, and very grateful for all the contact, telephone calls, emails, support and care that is taking place at the moment.

Emily Hall is now home from university and is offering to phone people from time to time for a chat. If this is something you would appreciate, please have a word with me (or Laura) and I will arrange it. Thank you, Emily, that is a lovely gesture.

So, very many thanks for everything ALL of you are doing. We are all in this together and will support and pray for each other. Take care and keep safe. With love to you all, *Dot*

**Easter Quiz** (Answers on page 7)

1. Which country brought us the tradition of Easter Eggs?
2. And what are they symbolic of?
3. Which item of clothing is particularly associated with Easter parades?
4. Which Russian jewellery firm is famous for elaborate jewel-encrusted eggs?
5. We call it Shrove Tuesday – what do they call it in France?
6. What is the name of the fruit cake traditionally eaten at Easter?

## Fishing for Hope

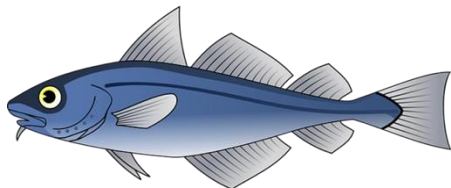
Do you remember a couple of Easters ago some of the churches in Emsworth got together to knit angels? It was patterns galore, no two angels were the same, and groups and individual got together, eventually producing more than six hundred angels!

There's no denying that this Easter is different. You may feel cut off from this kind of community activity. However, a group of people, lay and ordained, across three Districts of the Methodist Church (Southampton, South East and The Channel Islands) have conspired to bring about a different sort of prayer-related craft activity. This time it's **fish!**

In the early days of a Christian faith, believers used the fish symbol to show others that they were a Christian. It brought people together in a united purpose and enabled them to join together in prayer and fellowship. We hope that making these fish will do something similar for us.

The plan is simply to create as many fish as possible. Below is a knitting pattern and a crochet pattern to get you started. Don't worry if you don't have stuffing, we can finish them off at a later date; and don't feel limited by knitting wool! You might make them out of:

- Cutting, sewing, sticking, scrap materials
- Painting it on a stone
- Papier-mâché
- Lego
- Iron-on beads
- Clay
- Or any other creative means you can think of!



When the time is right we hope to gather all these fish together at the **District Synods** as a massive prayer of thanks to God for our community. I wonder how many there will be?! Then, no doubt, they'll be given out in communities like ours to spread the word of God; like we did with the angels, and with the painted stones, too.

If while you're knitting / crocheting / painting / experimenting with clay / generally being creative you fancy taking a couple of photos of your creations, please do send them to me and they'll appear on the website!  
<https://learningnetsi.org.uk/fishing-for-hope>

### How to Knit a Fish

**First find some brightly coloured yarn and a pair of knitting needles. 3mm needles are ideal, but it will work with any needles.**

Starting at the tail end, cast on twelve stitches. If you want a wider tail, cast on more stitches in multiples of two.

- 1.) Knit in stocking stitch (1 row plain, 1 row purl). Decrease one stitch as each end of the plain rows only, until you have 6 stitches left.
- 2.) Knit three rows in stocking stitch without decreasing.
- 3.) If you want to change colours, now might be a good time.
- 4.) Increase one stitch at each end of every plain row until you have 24 stitches on the needle.
- 5.) Now decrease one stitch at each end of every plain row until 2 stitches remain. Knit these two stitches together and bind off.

You need two pieces to make a fish. Sew them together (inside out) but leave the tail end open. Now turn them right side out and stuff – how much stuffing you use depends on how fat you want your fish to be! Sew up the tail. Feel free to add patterns or fins if you want!

### **How to crochet a fish**

This pattern was created using a size 4 hook and double knitting wool. Change in wool and/or hook size will just make a different size fish! The whole thing is crocheted in UK treble stitch.

- Make a chain of 15 stitches
- Row 1 1 treble in third chain from hook then 1 treble in each chain to end, turn...
- Always begin each row by crocheting 2 chain instead of crocheting into the first hole whether increasing or decreasing as this counts as the first treble
- Now decrease one treble at each end of next 3 rows by missing a stitch (ie. Make 2 chain and then crochet a treble into 3rd stitch and don't crochet into the 2 chain from the preceding row)
- Increase one stitch at each end of next 6 rows by crocheting 2 stitches in one hole at either end
- Work 2 rows without increasing number of stitches.
- Decrease one stitch at each end of next 7 rows. Tie off
- Make a second fish, join the two together leaving one side partly open.

### **Answers to Easter Quiz**

- |           |                        |               |
|-----------|------------------------|---------------|
| 1 Germany | 2 Rebirth and new life | 3 Bonnet      |
| 4 Fabergé | 5 Mardi Gras           | 6 Simnel cake |

## Communities Care

The following support services have been set up in our communities to help those who find themselves in any kind of need at this time. They are all staffed by volunteers who really do want to help, so don't be worried about calling them. In order to minimise travel we're asked to contact our local organisation.

### **Emsworth Alliance:**

Email address: [help@emsworthalliance.co.uk](mailto:help@emsworthalliance.co.uk)  
Phone number: 07563 831810  
Website: <https://emsworthalliance.co.uk>

### **Westbourne Help:**

Email address: [westbournehelp@gmail.com](mailto:westbournehelp@gmail.com)  
Phone number: 07895 367821  
Facebook: Westbourne Help

### **Southbourne Community Connections**

Email address: [covid19@southbourne-pc.gov.uk](mailto:covid19@southbourne-pc.gov.uk)  
Phone number: 07310 072674

If you feel able to offer to volunteer for one of these services, please do contact them directly. There may well be things you can do from your own home if necessary.

***We are proud to be involved with Emsworth Alliance***



**LOCAL DELIVERIES  
FROM LOCAL SHOPS**

Supporting The Local Community  
& Businesses

[www.emsworthalliance.co.uk](http://www.emsworthalliance.co.uk)

Also on our website:  
**ACCESS TO HELP &  
SUPPORT FROM  
LOCAL GROUPS**

Helpline: 07563 831810

**Together we are stronger**



# Service for Easter Sunday Morning

*Give thanks to the LORD, because he is good, and his love is eternal... In my distress I called to the LORD; he answered me and set me free.  
(Psalm 118:1& 8)*

## Prayer

When everything was dark  
and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,  
your love broke through.

Your love was too strong,  
too wide,  
too deep  
for death to hold.

Gracious God,  
I praise you for the light of new life  
made possible through Jesus.  
I praise you for the light of new life  
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.  
I praise you for the light of new life  
that continues to shine in our hearts today.

I pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,  
will live in us each day;  
and that we will be bearers of that light  
into the lives of others.

*Amen.*

## John 20:1–18

### Reflection

How different can people be? When it comes to the empty tomb there are three entirely different reactions. Mary Magdalene is sure that someone has stolen the body, and she's understandably distraught. Peter goes straight into the tomb, but we aren't told what he was thinking. Maybe he was just bewildered. John, on the other hand, is hesitant but then goes in and, we're told, he believed.

We aren't told *what* he believed. Saying what you *believe* involves putting your intellectual brain in gear and expressing it logically. For me, the word used here means he *had faith* rather than believed; something your soul is certain of but your brain doesn't understand.

None of these three could have given you a lecture on what to believe. They each just had their initial, very personal, response. Soon, Mary and Peter came to stand where John stood: they *had faith* that transcends logic.

From the darkness, fear and despair of twenty-four hours ago they all come to faith in Christ the Light of the world. They each make that journey in their own way until, together, they proclaim the return of hope and light to a despairing, darkened world – and we follow in their footsteps.

We each of us make the journey in our own unique way. We should never underestimate where anyone, including ourselves, is on that journey. Whether we are doubting, or confused, or faithful, Christ comes to each of us if we will wait for him or seek for him.

We travel through dark days. We fear we will see, at the end of the road, nothing but a body in a tomb. That may seem to be the logical end of the story. Instead, we shall see the risen life and light of Christ, the world set free from bewilderment, despair and pain. We each travel in our own way but, please God, when we arrive we meet the Light that lights the world.

### **Prayers for others**

Lord our Father, I pray for all those who are part of your family the church. In these times of trial may we join our voices as one to declare in word and deed that your love brings new life to each and everyone.

Risen Lord, I pray for people who are suffering. Grant your peace to those who face the end of this life; your comfort to those who mourn; the assurance of your presence to those who fear; your hope to those who despair; your strength, your wisdom, your compassion to those who express your love to those amongst whom they minister in the health services, in the community, in telephone calls, email, internet and prayer.

*Especially I pray for...*

May you, risen Christ, lead them from despair into hope.

I place into your hands all the days that lie ahead, that we who know you and love you may be assured of your light guiding each one of us. Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### **Blessing**

May our Lord our Jesus Christ receive all our bewilderment and fear and draw us to him in the morning light.

May God our Father, creator of all things, create in us the spirit of resurrection hope and joy.

May the Holy Spirit guide and guard our footsteps each day to the place where we shall meet our risen Lord. *Amen*

# Service for Sunday 19 April

## 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 20:19–31 (Jesus appears to the disciples in the Upper Room)

## Reflection:

So Jesus appears among the disciples and says, 'Peace be with you.'

Peace.

What does that word mean to you? Just for a moment, try to lay aside the worries of the day; however important. You're not forgetting about them. Just unburdening yourself for a time.

Jesus said, 'Peace be with you.'

'Peace be with you,' Jesus said when he appeared again. This time to a slightly different group of people. At least one of them, Thomas, hasn't yet seen the risen Jesus. He's frightened to believe.

'Peace', says Jesus. 'Look at my hands.'

If you can, open your own hands and look at them carefully. There will, no doubt, be scars and wrinkles. Perhaps they're very dry. Look at the lines on your hands, at your fingernails, knuckles and thumb-prints. Each hand is unique. There has never been another hand like yours, and there never will be again.

Isaiah 49:16 tells us that God has our names on the palm of his hand. Look at your palm. When Thomas met Jesus, Jesus' palms were scarred by nails. Yet he still prayed 'peace'.

Open hands can't carry weapons. Hence the cry of 'hands up!' in cowboy films. Some say that's also why we developed the practice of shaking hands. It says 'my hands are open to you. I carry no weapon. I come as a friend.' We come as friends to one another. Jesus comes as a friend to us.

Jesus' last words are a call. "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Touch your hands together. Remember you are touching a beloved part of God's creation.

In the words of St Teresa of Avila:

*Christ has no body on earth but yours; no hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on the world; yours are the feet with which he walks to do good; yours are the hands with which he blessed all the world; Christ has no body now on the earth but yours.*

We may feel at the moment that what we can 'do' is very small – hardly worth mentioning; but if all we can do is look on the world and say 'peace be with you,' then we walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Prayer** (from the Methodist Church website)

God of all hope, we call on you today.

We pray for those who are living in fear:

Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other's reactions to them.

May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty.

For those people who are worried about attending worship.

For those needing to make decisions in order to care for other

For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend.

Grant us your wisdom.

Holy God, we remember that you have promised that

Nothing will separate us from your love – demonstrated to us in Jesus Christ.

Help us turn our eyes, hearts and minds to you. *Amen*

### **Prayer Prompts**

God, beyond all our naming, the glory of creation reaches out to you.

God, beyond all our reasoning, the voice of the universe sounds your praise.

God, beyond all our knowing, all that lives finds its destiny in your presence.

God, beyond all our understanding, who understands our deepest fears and heartache.

God, beyond all our experience of loving and being loved, hold us in this time of difficulty, give us strength through your Spirit and hope and peace through Jesus Christ. Amen

**Remember:** people we know, whose lives have been turned upside down by Coronavirus; Refugee Camps in Syria where the virus has now reached. The homeless on our streets.

**Give thanks** and pray for all NHS workers, farmers, food manufacturers, delivery people, those packing the shelves in our shops. All who have helped us cope with self-isolation.