

## Welcome to week two

### “Keeping in Contact and Worshipping at Home”

We continue in these uncertain times to keep in contact through our networks of phoning, texting and other social media contacts. Remembering especially those on their own and who may be isolated.

I am happy for anyone to contact me even if it is just for a chat.

My mobile: 07753856503 email: hazcook@cheerful.com

During these unsettling days when it seems day by day there is changing advice and regulations it is more difficult to find something to hold onto and rely on. We sense a deep feeling of anxiety as well as a deep resilience and much good will, care and concern for others. Like many, I for one have found that the whole of my life is turned upside down.... ministry has to be exercised in a different way, and it gives time for reflection as to what it is we are really all about.

More than ever we may feel the need to sustain our spiritual lives and realise how our faith can connect to our lives no matter what we are going through.

Services available on the Methodist website: [www.methodist.org.uk/worship-during-coronavirus](http://www.methodist.org.uk/worship-during-coronavirus)

**Praying “apart but together” gives us a sense of our belonging and being there for another, it reminds us we are not alone and above all we have the assurance of God’s all-pervading love.**

#### Daily praying together

Is it possible for people as much as possible to pray at the same time each day, or to choose another time which is more suitable? **Suggestion: 11am and/or 7pm**

#### Prayers for the week

##### Monday

Normal routine has been put on hold, our world is getting smaller, and for many the home will be our world over these next few weeks.

Think about this for a few moments, what three things in your home can give you a sense of God’s presence and help you through these coming days. Have you got something you find difficult....can you share this with a friend...or family member?

**Dear Lord,** Thank you for my home, with all its ups and downs, even with all the restrictions. Help me to think of others and thank you for those who think of me.

##### Tuesday

Looking around the home there are lots of things that may remind you of past memories, of times shared with a loved one, of things that have been part and made up your life’s experience. We praise God for all that is past and trust him for all that’s to come.

**Dear Lord,** Help me to remember good times with thanksgiving, help me in times of sadness, bring me to a place of deep hope, and give me strength for today.



### **Wednesday**

Have you a picture on the wall of your home, or somewhere that reminds you of a favourite place you like to visit, holiday with the family, a beautiful scene – near or far away, country scene, sea or theme park? Imagine that place for a few moments, being there and enjoying it. All these memories are part of who we are, they do not go away and can give us joy and happiness as we reflect and think of them.

**Dear Lord,** Thank you for those places which inspire us and uplift our spirits, help us to journey there in our imaginations. May we find a place of rest and peace. Bless and be with those whose past memories are clouded by sadness and hurt. Help me today to create a good memory for tomorrow.

### **Thursday**

Have you got a favourite hymn....song or piece of music that you love? We can enjoy music from all walks of life and all different traditions.

We have seen lots of wonderful examples of people even during these days being brought together through singing. What favourite hymn....song is on your mind at the moment? Think about the words...sing it out loud and give thanks to the Lord.

**Dear Lord,** Thank you for the music of the soul, thank you for music we can enjoy together or on our own. Be with those who can't find a tune to cheer their spirits and refresh their souls. Bless and help each one. May our tunes be a blessing to others.



### **Friday**

We all have different gifts...skills and talents. Baking, sewing, drawing... craft... gardening....music....writing.....IT skills, sport and any others.

Even at home is there a way you can build on your gifts and skills, or even more make time for something new...something you haven't tried....or had time for? We have been blessed by other people's skills and talents and give thanks for those.

**Dear Lord,** Thank you for all the gifts and skills I have, help me at all times to make the most of them. Thank you that you always want me to learn and develop something new...open my eyes to what that might be for today.

### **Saturday**

I wonder how your shopping has been this week? Things we take for granted, like going to the shops, have suddenly taken on a new dimension. We think of those for whom shopping and getting supplies are always a challenge. Give thanks for food shared today, maybe meals are being prepared and eaten differently in these days.....maybe alone...not able to go out for a meal or coffee. Help us to appreciate the time we have when we have our meals....no matter what the situation.

**Dear Lord,** We are reminded that we are dependant on so many people for our daily needs. At this time especially we think of those who ensure we can have our daily provisions. We are truly grateful. Help us not to take anything for granted. "All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above."

"Give us this day our daily bread" May everyone have daily bread as we learn to share more freely God's provision.

## **“Worshipping at Home” for March 29<sup>th</sup> 2020**

Create a sacred space for worship today. Mark it out in your mind and, if possible, in the room where you are worshipping. Something to focus on may help – flower, candle, picture, Bible or prayer book or something else. Remember the wider church family, name them in your hearts and know we are one in the Spirit at home or at church.

So in this time, may our minds switch off for a few minutes, may our hearts rest and be still, may we recognise all our different emotions, worries and hopes.

And in this space God’s Spirit is present, may the gentle movement of the Spirit be known to us today.

### **We remember the hymn**

“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 wilt 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 thee
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### **A prayer of thankfulness**

Loving God, the sun has been shining this week, the birds have given us a dawn chorus, the work of nature in Spring continues and reminds us of love eternal.

The small and beautiful things we may not always notice can stir our heart with wonder and gratitude.

We may have felt worried this week for ourselves or others, our normal routine may be on hold, we may have been attuned to the latest news and statements but in this quiet moment we draw breath, hold onto your grace and proclaim with hope that we can sing a song even in a strange land. Amen

### **Bible focus**

The Christian year leads us on through Lent, and we bring now to focus our attention to Jesus’ journey to the cross.

### **The passage from John’s Gospel today is the rising of Lazarus John 11:1-45**

You may like to read and reflect on that.

Here are some single verses which you may like to ponder on as we remember the passion of Jesus and remember his journey to the cross:

### **John 12:24**

Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit.

### **Luke 9:22**

And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

### John 11: 25.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die".

### Philippians 2:7-8

Rather Jesus made himself nothing, by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

### To ponder

Take your time with these verses, maybe jot any thoughts down about how they may speak to you for these days. Be thankful that God's word can speak to us in all circumstances of life.

### From a hymn



From heaven you came helpless babe  
Entered our world Your Glory veiled  
Not to be served but to serve  
And give Your life that we might live

This is our God, the Servant King -  
He calls us now to follow Him  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King

There in the garden of tears  
My heavy load He chose to bear  
His heart with sorrow was torn  
Yet "Not my will but Yours", He said

Come see His hand and His feet -  
The scars that speak of sacrifice  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered

### Prayers for others

Take time to think of those who have been directly affected by Coronavirus, for children and families doing home schooling, for those in complete isolation, for those worried about their financial circumstances, for ourselves and our families, for key workers and those in authority. Loving God we hold each one, bring strength hope and courage for now and for each day. We look to the hope of Easter.



### The collection

In our weekly service we make a collection, if it feels right for you, is there a way you can do this for the church over the coming weeks?

### Pray the Lord's prayer

#### A verse from the great hymn

And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain?  
For me, who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

#### Blessing

As we wait on you, Lord God, renew our strength, our hope, and our vision to be your arms in this world, reaching out and enfolding with love and prayers day by day. Amen



Have a cup of tea or coffee, why not phone a friend. I'll be in touch next week. God Bless.

## **Reflection on Romans 8:6-11 by Philip Ronson**

*“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace” (Romans 8:6)*

Paul says that if we set our aims on earthly things, our physical nature, physical desires and physical needs, then our ultimate destination is only death. There is no lasting hope in our earthly life. But as believers in Christ and the resurrection, we have hope. We are reminded to set our aims, our hopes and dreams on spiritual things; the presence of the Spirit of God dwelling in us; life that does not end in death. Are you aware of God’s presence with you and in you?

Seek his presence and allow him into your life. Allow him to draw you away from fear into peace. Allow God’s Spirit to sustain you and inspire your thoughts. Reflect on God as Spirit embracing your spirit and become aware of his presence; allow your physical desires, your concerns about your physical life, to be replaced by your desire to be with God, where you are safe in his loving, forgiving embrace.

**Prayer:** God of everlasting hope, thank you for the life-giving, refreshing, reviving Spirit that, by faith, makes me spiritually alive in Christ. Thank you for the presence of the Spirit of the resurrected Lord Jesus living in me. Thank you that although I live in a physical body, which is subject to physical death, you have given me the hope of immortal life by faith in Christ Jesus.