

'Staying Connected'
Worship and Pastoral Resources
For Week Beginning
12th April 2020



Easter Sunday

Dear friends,

How are you?

As I meet 'virtually' with my Co-Superintendents from across the Sheffield Methodist District each week, it is becoming clear that there are some really encouraging signs that whilst our buildings are currently closed, The Church is very much open – active – and at work. As the weeks go by, we are wanting to include in our 'Staying Connected' material, some examples of what you are doing to encourage one another – and to witness to our communities – that 'we have a hope that is steadfast and certain'. That is being replicated in churches, circuits and communities across the district.

Meeting with my colleagues across the district has also struck me that for many, the reality of what we are going through and what we face, is becoming increasingly hard to cope with – not least when we hear about people who are close to us who have died – family members, friends, colleagues, or members of our churches and circuits.

We are concerned about those for whom isolation is proving to be a very lonely experience, and who realise just how important it has been to meet with others – not least in fellowship and in worship.

I and my colleagues in the circuit want you to know that although we cannot meet you, have a coffee with you, shake your hand or greet you with a hug....whilst we can't meet with you physically for worship, Bible Study, coffee mornings or planning.....you are very much on our minds and in our prayers. Julie, David, Fran and myself are also meeting virtually each week, and we regularly update one another about what we know, and how we can support you.

We hope that 'Staying Connected' is helping you feel connected to one another across the circuit....but more importantly still, to God – from whom we will never need to distance ourselves.

So in this 4th edition of 'Staying Connected', we celebrate hope and joy – that God comes near to us – born among us – lives among us – shares the best and worst of what it means to be human – who dies in our place.....and who overcomes even death – so that we can have eternal life in a relationship with Him – where there will be no more death or mourning, or crying or pain....because He is making all things new!

For those with internet access, do keep an eye out for our Easter Sunday worship which we have recorded and which will be uploaded onto the Circuit website, the Peak Circuit page on Facebook, and as an email attachment to your church contact.

May God bless you today and in this Easter season!

Rev Adrian Perry

Devotions

Prayer

Lord, we have been made aware that sometimes what we thought was important in our lives, actually isn't as important as we thought.

We have seen wonderful examples of how love and generosity can be given to others. We thank you for that. And more than that we are reminded today that there is no greater expression of love and generosity than your life, death and resurrection. Thank you so much. Praise you for the life you have won for us, and the hope that is assured!

But like Mary, many are currently living with uncertainty Lord...many with grief. Maybe we are in shock – or maybe the reality of what is happening is slowly sinking in. But we don't know what lies ahead. Lord, remind us again that whatever our circumstances, and however much we think we know what to expect, nothing is impossible with you.

So on this day, receive our praise & thanks for all you have accomplished because of who you are. And show us again that because you have made eternal life possible by overcoming the power of death, the best days are yet before us! In Jesus name. Amen.

Reading – John 20:1-18

Thought for the Day

'....(Mary) said "they have taken The Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they've put Him."

I don't think any one of us could blame Mary for her understanding of what had happened. It is perfectly reasonable to think the reason the stone was not in place, and the reason Jesus' body wasn't there, is because it had been taken away.

We have some understanding of what is currently happening, and it is reasonable with human hearts and minds to anticipate what we think lies ahead. But our hearts and minds are not all we have – because we have God.

Scripture is peppered with examples of where God's calling or intervention makes little or no human sense – and none more-so than this greatest of events. And because of this greatest of events, whatever we know and experience now – and however we might be feeling – we can have joy, because His promise of life eternal is assured for all who will receive Him!

Thanks be to God!

Prayers

Let us pray

With the power of resurrection Lord, we come in prayer before you.

We come in thanksgiving for all that is good (Share your thoughts with God)

We come in prayer for all who work so hard on our behalf (Share your thoughts with God)

We come in prayer for all who have been devastated or who are deeply concerned
(Share your thoughts with God)

Lord, we pray for your Church as we respond to the needs of our members, our communities and the wider world. As Mary went and told the disciples she had seen The Lord, give us those opportunities too. Through our actions and through our words, may people we encounter know for themselves that Jesus is risen, and may they have joy, comfort and hope in knowing the best days are yet before us. In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

HYMN – See What a Morning https://youtu.be/18_PDY22Sck

Resources/Suggestions for Worship at Home

- ***Candles of Hope***

Continuing to come together, if you're able, light a candle of hope every Sunday evening at 8pm, and pray.

- **Pray using Cliff College daily morning prayer**

An opportunity to engage in "live" morning prayers; can still be viewed later on the FB page. https://www.facebook.com/pg/CliffCollege/videos/?ref=page_internal

- **Watch 'Live-streamed' worship from Methodist Central Hall, Westminster.**
[YOUTUBE.COM/MCHWEVENTS](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMCHWEVENTS)

- **Watch weekly worship videos prepared by Peak Circuit Ministers**
www.peakmethodist.co.uk

- ***Telephone contacts and prayer***

As well as chatting and making sure we're ok, we can pray together too. If you're not sure what to pray, pray The Lord's Prayer. It's a powerful prayer!

Photos from around the Circuit

Here are some photos which have been sent in since last week showing what some of you have been doing for worship or as a witness to the community:



Castleton



Graham and Fran
Johnson



Lorraine Brown



Susie, Theo and Jonathan
Brook



Julie Letts



Hathersage

Here are some further ideas from Lorraine Brown to share with the community in celebrating Easter:

- Build an Easter garden with 'natural stuff' you find on your walk. Leave it for others to see
- Paint an Easter stone and leave for someone to find
- Paint a poster and put in window
- Make an Easter garden in your own garden
- Make the word alleluia out of natural materials on the hill or in the garden for others to see
- Make an Easter Garden – using a foil tin or baking tin – fill with soil, make a path with pebbles, create a tomb and a stone, put some flowers/moss around

.....And don't forget to take a photo so we can share them across the circuit!

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SEND PHOTOS/COMMENTS TO: www.peakmethodist.co.uk

