

KIBWORTH METHODIST CHURCH LES OJE

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ON LINE? OFF LINE ?MOBILE? LANDLINE? LARGE PRINT? PAPER? POSTED COPY?



HOW THE LOCKDOWN AFFECTS CHAPEL

From the Minister--Dear friends,,

I wish you all God's blessing and peace for this New Year. Although it has started in turbulent times, we must hold on to the faith we have that God is still with us and will never abandon this world, or any one of us. God holds us with love that lasts into eternity, and, while our grasp may be weak or flimsy at times, His grasp of us is strong and can be trusted.

At this time of national lockdown, although churches are permitted to open for worship, our Church Council has taken the decision that we will NOT at the present time be opening until the situation is much safer. There were no objections to this decision, and we will be meeting again on 4th February to review the situation. All church members are welcome to be part of the church council, which at the moment is meeting on 'Zoom'. We had planned to hold our Covenant Service this coming Sunday, but that will now take place at a later date (hopefully before Easter). Please do not come to church until further notice, and please hold our Preschool in your prayers who are continuing to enable key-workers to work, through the vital childcare they offer.

Above all, our concern is for each one of you. Whether old or young, long-term member or new to church, you are precious to God and precious to us. When we reopened in August after the first lockdown, the virus was 'behaving itself' and we could be confident that our measures in place were sufficient to remove all reasonable risk. At the moment, with the current rate of infection and the 'new variant', we are not so sure. While sometimes we must take risks for God, if one does not believe God wants us to take risks with the health of His beloved people, and so we will continue to try to pray and worship and support one another in other ways. As I ask your understanding with this, I also want to assure you of our care and best wishes. Please do get in touch if you would like to talk about anything. I leave you with a verse from St. Paul, which somebody sent me today:

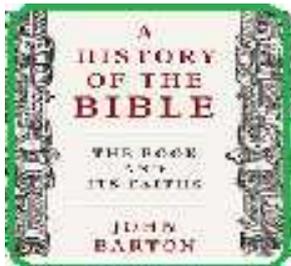
**'MAY GOD STRENGTHEN YOU IN HIS GLORIOUS MIGHT, WITH AMPLE POWER,
TO MEET WHATEVER COMES WITH FORTITUDE, PATIENCE AND JOY '**

(Colossians 1:11) ----- With best wishes, and every blessing, Andy.

JAN.10 2021 - SUNDAY'S DIARY - 1ST. AFTER EPIPHANY

SUNDAY 10th 8.10am RADIO 4 WORSHIP based on "If you believe in God.....then you should feel a responsibility to care for His Creation" (quote from the Duke of Edinburgh).

NEVER ALONE VIDEO Market Harborough Methodist Circuit You Tube channel
10.00am BBC 1 MORNING SERVICE 3.00pm From Ely Cathedral,(R.3)



A HISTORY OF THE BIBLE was last week's Radio 4 Book of the Week, 5 15 minutes extracts (adapted by the author and Richard Hamilton) being read by Hugh Bonneville and well worth a listen on BBC Sounds for around a further three weeks. Not at all heavy, most informative and sincere

ANGELS WERE BUSY AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.

-They appear to announce the pregnancy of Elizabeth with John the Baptist (Luke 1) Appear to announce the pregnancy of Mary with Jesus (Luke 1) Appear in a dream to Joseph to not leave Mary (Matthew 1) Appear at the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-20) Leads the magi from the East to Jesus (Matthew 2) Warns the magi, in a dream, not to return to Herod (Matthew 2:12) Warns Joseph in a dream to 'Get up, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt,..remain there until I tell you; ...Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.'" (Matt 2:13)

EVERY TIME THE GREETING WAS TO FEAR NOT, BE NOT AFRAID etc.
ANY READER ABLE TO SHARE THOUGHTS RE ANGELS?/WHO?/WHAT?

=====TIME FLIES !====LOOKING BACK 25, 5 AND 1 YEAR=====

25 YEARS AGO IN KIBWORTH HOUSE PRICES:- 1 bedroom cottage for sale @ £36,500
3 bedroom detached bungalow with pleasant gardens for sale @ £69,500 An "executive" detached house (near the golf club) for sale @ £119,950 4 bedroom detached with double garage for sale @ £124,950 "Executive" detached house in cul-de-sac location -£149,950.

THIS MONTH AT CHAPEL (1996) **Worship** led by Rev Stuart Cato, Rev. A Williams & local preachers.
Weekdays House Fellowship **Monday** morning :-Parents and Toddlers Drop In Monday afternoon ; Contact first Monday : Mens` Forum 2nd Monday - - Bible Study **Tuesday** lunchtime, Youth Club evening; **Wednesday** afternoons Womens Fellowship ; After School Club **Thursday** afternoons ; Bible Study Thurs. evenings alternate weeks. ...and a lady on the High Street was full of praise for the prompt and efficient response pf Kibworth fire crew to her property.. How much we still rely on them . The time taken to attend from the local stand by crew on the spot with local knowledge is so valuable when compared to what it would take to await a crew from Billesdon, Harborough or Wigston

ONE YEAR AGO COMPLETION OF CUPBOARD & DOUBLE GLAZING N`n`N RECORDED :-

"Craftsmen moved in as planned on the Monday morning, week before Christmas. The carpenter got cracking with the cupboards and shelving a little before the double glaziers arrived as he only had to travel from Whetstone whereas their two vans had to travel from the Chesterfield area. The two jobs progressed side by side on the Monday, the window firm had the building to themselves Tuesday with the carpenter working Wednesday and completing on Thursday, giving time for a thorough cleaning. "





THE COLLECT FOR SUNDAY Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted child- ren; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY THE COVID PANDEMIC (Methodist web)

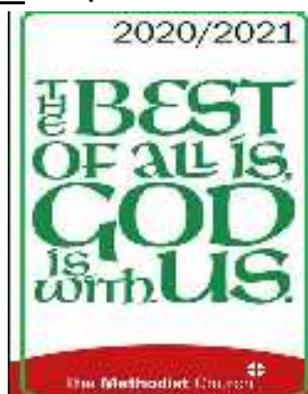
God of all hope we call on you today. We pray for those who are living in fear: Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other’s reactions to them. May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace. *We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty. For those people who (make) decisions in 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 that nothing is too great for you..

WE CONTINUE TO REMEMBER Eileen Bromley, in prayer mindful of her caring for the late Norman. *Also the Mays family, with the funeral of Michael`s mum, Kathleen, at Great Glen Crematorium next Friday 15th. It will be live streamed. so anyone who wishes to join the congregation virtually is welcome to ring the Mays (2792083)- they will next week e-mail you a service order and web link prior to the service.*

LISTENERS TO LAST WEEK`S RADIO 4`s 8.10am WORSHIP heard two leading Christian thinkers sharing how ups and downs in their own and society`s lives affected their faith as we enter 2021. Included in the programme was the quote from the late Cardinal Henry Newman, (anon in 2019). *God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.* Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about..

A THOUGHT The Magi did not know exactly **where** they going, **what** they would find, for **whom** they were seeking or **when** they might arrive- **but they still went...**

EASTER EGGS FOR SALE IN A LARGE SHOP (not Co-op) LAST WEEK !! **FROM THE RUGBY METHODIST FACEBOOK (WHERE REV. JANE GAFFNEY IS MINISTER)**





AT A TIME OF DISAPPOINTMENT, Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler (Secretary of the Methodist Conference) offers faith based advice at this time of year.

‘He abandoned his plan and resigned himself to staying at home.’

" But there is an air of disappointment that so much that had been prepared now cannot happen and that plans have had to change at so late a stage. When I was in my first appointment, the Superintendent planned an exchange with a minister in Australia. Shortly before he and his wife were due to fly to Melbourne, he was struck down by sciatica and confined to one room where he lay on the floor in considerable pain. All the plans had to be rearranged and the Antipodean adventure became a period of sick leave. As he improved, he used the time to write a series of articles that were published in the circuit magazine under the title (if I remember rightly) ‘Dealing with Disappointment’.

In his Ecclesiastical History, the Venerable Bede (670 -735) tells the story of Egbert and Wictbert. Egbert was a bishop living in Ireland who resolved to travel to Germany to preach the Good News to the pagan Saxons. He gathered a group to travel with him and made all the necessary preparations only to be told by one of his monks (who had had a vision) that God did not want him to go. Egbert ignored the admonition, but a storm that prevented his ship leaving harbour changed his mind and ‘he abandoned his plan and resigned himself to staying at home.’ One of Egbert’s companions was Wictbert who determined to go to Germany in the bishop’s stead. For two years, he engaged in missionary activity in continental Europe ‘but his great efforts produced no results’ so he returned home ‘to be of more help to his own people’.



A prayer:
Loving God, in our fear, in our grief, in our disappointment, may we know that you are with us, And as we heed the call to remain in our homes, help us there to serve you faithfully, That others might know of Immanuel, God with us. Amen.

Abandoning plans and being resigned to remaining at home will have been the experience of many (last) weekend. It is also the theme of one of the most popular of Christmas movies, ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’. George Bailey is a man whose ambition to leave his home town and make something of himself is repeatedly thwarted and we meet him at his lowest point where the accumulated weight of years of disappointment finally becomes too much – and an angel is sent to help him. The fiction expresses a powerful truth: the prayers of heaven are with us in our disappointment. Of course, it is always important to keep these things in proportion; empty chairs at a Christmas dinner table or a cancelled holiday is a small thing compared to the grief that many have suffered this year (and many more will suffer should the spread of the virus not be brought under control). But in difficult times, small things that speak of hope are important and the promise of God’s presence with us is true at all times, whether the disappointment be small or great. Over the last few months we have learnt that it is possible to serve God and God’s people even when we are not able to leave our homes. To the myriad examples of online services, prayer by phone and ministry by letter has been added the open air witness of carolling on the doorstep. The experience of disappointment is not one that we would ever seek but it can (as my first Superintendent found and many others have shown) offer us ways to be a blessing to others..



THE TOP & BOTTOM OF U.K. METHODISM. HOW SHETLAND & ISLES OF SCILLY METHODISTS DEAL WITH THE RESTRICTIONS.

UP NORTH



WELCOME TO THE LERWICK NATIVITY MON. 21st FULLY BOOKED acc.to COVID

HAVING BEEN RELATIVELY UNAFFECTED BY COVID EARLIER IN 2020.

Shetland Methodists have found the islands now in the midst of an increase in the pandemic there. On New Year`s Day some 14 new cases were declared taking the then total for the current batch into the 70s. Recent months the churches there have been very active in making extensive use of on line fellowship and worship. Shetland Methodst You Tube will take you to live stream virtually every Sunday morning from Lerwick`s Adam Clarke Memorial Church. There are some 16 Methodist chapels in regular use, including a popular Cafe Church at Walls, and a chapel on Fair Isle. Here weekly cooperation with the Church of Scotland means a service in each others` buildings on alternate weeks has been the active pattern for years. **A FOOTNOTE - ANNE & DON WINDRIDGE HAVE LINKS WITH BOTH AREAS - NORTH THROUGH A MEMBER OF ANNE`S FAMILY HAVING MINISTERED ON YELL. SOUTH DON & ANNE HAVING A GRANDDAUGHTER WHO MOVED TO THE SCILLIES.**

DOWN SOUTH



THE MAIN METHODIST CHURCH ON THE ISLES OF SCILLY IS ON ST. MARY`S- the main settlement Rev. Jeremy Dare, a one time Shetland minister, -now retired there-had earlier been Isles of Scilly minister! .Two items from the recent I of S Methodist news. ***IN TOUCH*** -From St Martin's (surely the only church where service times depend on tides) Val writes :- *Here we are again - just as we were enjoying a relatively 'new normal' we are back to lock down, when we can no longer meet in Chapel. At least we have had a few months of worship together, and were getting used to the odd humming of hymns behind our masks! Thanks to Michael for braving the elements to join us, and to Christopher and Jackie for leading worship when he was unable to..(... get across the water ..).* The other item is a quote from Terry Waite, one time Archbishop of Canterbury`s envoy who was himself ambushed and kept captured in virtual solitary for 1269 days. Against that experience and test of his faith he wrote **"Stop complaining. Change your mindse t.You`re not stuck at home, you`re safe at home. Keep your own dignity – get out of your PJs. Form a structure for the day. Be grateful for what you have – shelter, home, possessions. Read and be creative."**



The Methodist Church



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

A CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN EVERY COMMUNITY

STATEMENT FROM THE METHODIST CHURCH FOLLOWING THE PRIME MINISTER'S NOTICE OF IMMEDIATE LOCKDOWN

Following the Prime Minister's statement on 4 January 2021, a new National Lockdown has been announced in England. This now supercedes all other previous government guidance, including the Tier system. This came into effect from midnight on 4 January 2021. A number of the restrictions outlined in the new government guidance affect Methodist Church property. Unlike previous lockdown decisions, the government has decided that churches can remain open, along with community buildings for certain activities. Despite this government decision, it should be borne in mind that the opening of our church buildings is not mandatory, and it remains the responsibility of each Church Council to make this significant decision – which should not be taken lightly. It should be based upon thorough risk assessments and planning to ensure that it is safe to do so. Every venue should fully meet the health and safety requirements for a COVID-19 secure environment in opening and operation, including the impact on those opening a building and those attending if they fall into a vulnerable group. The Connexional team have provided a variety of information on alternative ways to worship, fellowship and explore mission. During this difficult time, we encourage you to explore these as alternatives to opening a building and the increased risks this may bring.

STATEMENT FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FOLLOWING THE PRIME MINISTER'S NOTICE OF AN IMMEDIATE LOCKDOWN

Following Monday's statement by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, detailing new restrictions in England to control the spread of Covid-19, The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, who chairs the Church of England's Covid Recovery Group, said:

The Prime Minister's words tonight underline the severity of the situation for the country, as the virus continues to spread rapidly. At a time like this, the Church is here to offer comfort and spiritual support to everyone. We have a duty to care for each other, but particularly those who are vulnerable or who may be most at risk. "The Government has chosen not to suspend public worship in England at this time and we will continue to follow the guidance and ensure that churches remain as safe as possible. The Government guidance on the safe use of places of worship makes clear that those attending a place of worship must not mingle with anyone outside their household or support bubble." However, some may feel that it is currently better not to attend in person, and there will be parishes which decide to offer only digital services for the time-being. Clergy who have concerns, and others who are shielding, should take particular care and stay at home.

"I would urge everyone in our churches to pray for those on the front line in our public services - the NHS and those working in social care, for schools and many others on whom we depend; and for parents and carers of children at this anxious and stressful time. "There is hope. The vaccination programme is underway and, as Christians, we have a deeper hope in God that comforts us beyond fear itself. As we have been remembering this Christmas Season, even in the midst of our darkest fears, that hope brings light."

KEEPING KIBWORTH KONGREGATION KONNECTED



FURTHER RESPONSE TO COVID - - THE BAPTIST UNION

In light of the Government’s announcement on 4 January regarding the national lockdown in England, we strongly encourage churches not to open their buildings for in-person meeting if at all possible. We recognise that the Government guidelines allow churches to remain open in England during this period; however, given the significant increase in numbers of Covid-19 infections and pressure on the NHS, we advise churches to stand with the wider community in making every effort to limit the spread of the virus. We would still support churches to open their buildings, as you have done throughout the pandemic, to provide vital services to the local community, such as food banks. We know that geographical contexts differ across England and we are aware that the decision lies with the local church. Nonetheless we are mindful of the pressure church leaders are under and the greater risk taken by all those involved in hosting open buildings for whom we have a duty of care. This is a changing situation and we very much hope this will be our advice for only a short period. Resources and sermons for inclusion in online services will continue to be shared through the national and regional team websites. We stand together in the hope we have in Christ and we are praying for all at this difficult time.

CATHOLIC CARDINAL VINCENT NICHOLS, PRESIDENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS` CONFERENCE (England/ Wales)

"The regular practice of our faith in God is a well-established source of both personal resilience and dedicated service to those in need. Such resilience and enduring service are vital in these difficult circumstances. I am glad that no measures have been introduced that would obstruct or curtail this essential source of energy for the common good. Catholic parishes will continue to serve the needs of their local community. In one parish, for example, the provision of food for the needy has increased by 400% since March last year."

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

However, the URC stresses that whilst governments allow churches to remain open, this is permissive, and not an obligation. The Elders’ Meeting (..is...) best placed to understand and assess the risk locally, bearing in mind the nature of the premises, and the activities that take place (including worship and other church-related meetings and groups) and external lettings. Due consideration needs to be given to the vulnerability of the people. Without the appropriate volunteers to manage activities and the premises, churches will not be able to maintain Covid-secure buildings, in which case activities must cease until that can be remedied. Further, churches are reminded that Risk Assessments are not documents to be created and then ignored. It is essential to put into place the mitigations identified in order to open and operate safely. Equally, when risks alter, the 'venue managers' or 'person responsible' (in government terminology) – almost always the Elders’ Meeting within the United Reformed Church – will need to consider whether the changed circumstances require changes in practice to further reduce the risks prevailing, which might include closing for a time.



ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY - A season of Song
a weekly study through to January 31

No. 7

REV. JOHN RACKLEY

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;

as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;

so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.

William Chatterton Dix 1860 -- Singing the Faith 224

For a number of years I would join some friends for a New Year retreat. It was at the Benedictine Priory in Burford. It was often snowy and we were usually there for the Day of Epiphany. The community would celebrate the day with a special meal and joyful worship. Until that time I had not given much thought to Epiphany. The beginning of the year for me was about back to the daily routine; Advent and Christmas over for another year. The Burford monks made me re-consider.

This time of the Christian year is really three seasons-in-one. Advent, Christmas and finally Epiphany have their own distinctive character. Singing the Faith suggests that the weeks of Epiphany are the time of the Revealed Christ. It is time to consider the meaning of the birth of this person not just sing about it. The story of the Magi in Matthew sets the scene for our worship for the rest of January's Sundays. Strangers from the East arrive seeking, asking and knocking on the doors of people who might know what is going on. In the hymn 'As with gladness men of old' we are encouraged to inhabit the story, travel with the visitors and follow the star. Each of the first three verses hinge on the word 'so'. Like the Magi we are to meet the Christ child gladly ready to offer our gifts to him. The verses suggest the pattern which is followed by all Christian worship. -

- we are drawn into the presence of God by awe-struck enquiry not driven by fear or coercion.

- we are called to contemplate the kindness of the Creator of heaven and earth.

- we are renewed by divine mercy and release our most precious gifts into the hands of God.

It is to be hoped that we leave worship in some way changed by the experience so that like the Magi we 'return home by another road'. Not always maybe but sometimes - or what was the point of the starting the journey? It is this experience of transformation which occupies the last two verses of the Epiphany carol. The Christian journey through life is not a walk into oblivion but into the glory which is 'the heavenly country bright'. There's no saying when we will arrive but it is our true home.

I was once told by an elderly member of my church that the most important part of the service was the Blessing. She insisted that I should always use 'the Lord bless you' and not the more inclusive 'us'. For, as she explained, they might be the last words she would hear in the worship of God's people on earth before she received the complete experience of God's blessing in heaven. It was a deep learning for me. Magi come in all shapes and sizes and you never know when they will come knocking at the door of the church, ready to give and to disturb in equal measure.

Prayer:

God of disconcerting strangers, help us not to fear what is unfamiliar and see the work of your Spirit in all that creates a path into the glory of your Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen..

AND FINALLY Unless there is a God, no one would want to find him - Rev. Lord Soper)