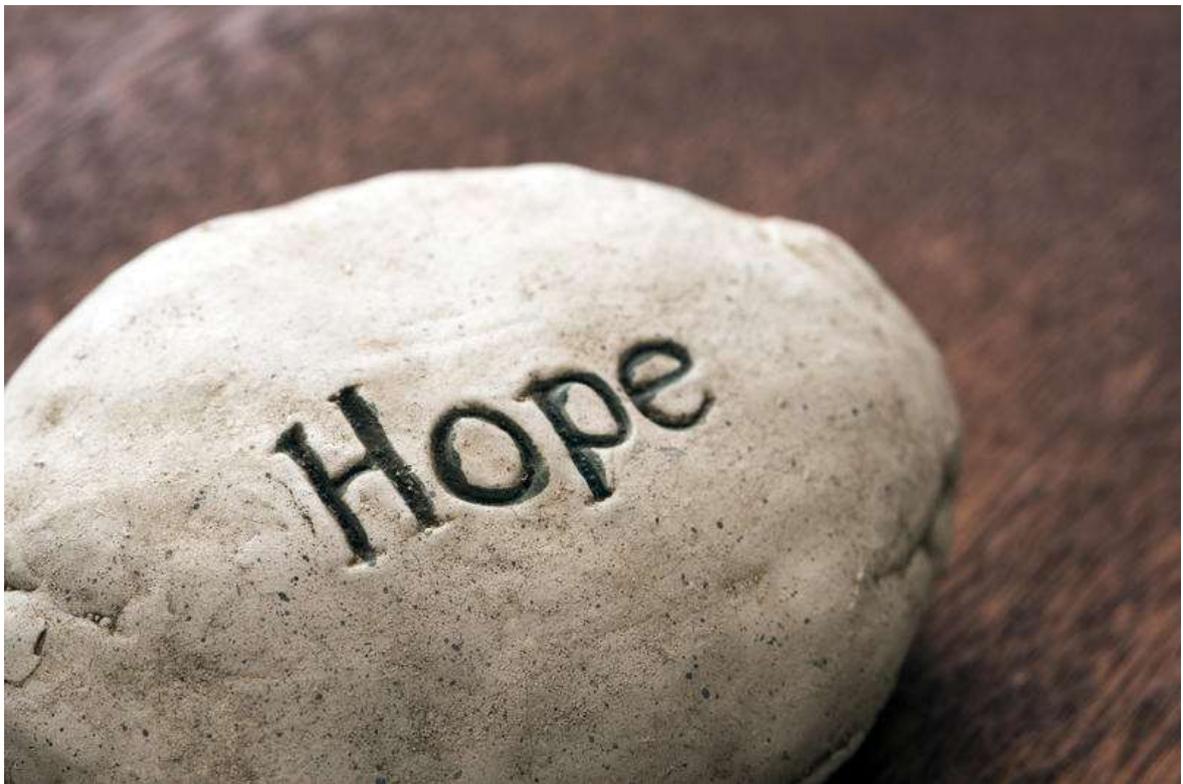


South Wigston Methodist Church

The Oracle



February 2021

Cover photo: The word Hope incised onto resin or stone is an inspirational concept for the coronavirus pandemic. This image by [gratuit](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License](#).

Our Mission Statement

The people of South Wigston Methodist Church are called to live the good news of God's love through open hearts, open minds and open doors.

We strive to be a place where understandings of Jesus Christ can flourish.

We're called to be good neighbours to people in need, to challenge injustice, and to meet regularly for prayers, singing and learning.

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One of the ways in which we seek to put this mission statement into practice is to ensure that our church is a safe place for all who use it by following the safeguarding policies and practices of the Methodist Church. Our church's safeguarding policy is on the noticeboard in the lounge. The Safeguarding contact is Helen 07500 180517.

South Wigston Methodist Church
Blaby Road, South Wigston LE18 4PB
www.swmchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev. Fran Rhys 0116 257 1069

Senior Steward: Mary B. 0116 281 2625

Leicester Trinity Circuit, Charity registration number 1129943

Editor: Mary B. contact: pmmmbry@gmail.com 07891 917768
Contributions always welcome; deadline 20th of each month.

Worship in February

February services in our church have been cancelled.

Fran and your stewards felt that, given the severity of the pandemic, it would not be appropriate to open the church for worship.

Bishop Street Methodist Church is offering a Zoom service every **Sunday** 10.30am for 10.45am start. All from Cosby and South Wigston Methodist Churches are warmly welcomed to attend. There is the option of breakout groups at 11.30am for chat over your coffee. Zoom links will be published in the weekly newsletters or contact Fran. s

Sunday 21st February 8.45 am Bible breakfast via Zoom. Link from Fran or Mary B. and will be in the newsletter.

Sunday Evening Circuit Services

Sunday evening Circuit online services started in January. They start at 6pm and you are invited to join.

The services last around 40 minutes, and there is the opportunity after the service to chat to people from around the Circuit.

Please contact Mary B. or Fran for the Zoom link – this remains the same each week and is also sent out with the regular newsletters.

Church Council meets on 24th February – probably via Zoom.

World Day of Prayer 5th March – service cancelled. See page 13.

Lent course – see back page



A message from our minister

We're hearing quite a lot about how the lockdowns are taking their toll on people's mental health. The lack of face-to-face contact with others, health and money worries, the lack of routine. All these and many other things are assailing us. I came across some helpful advice from the organisation MIND, which was founded in 1946 as the National Association for Mental Health:

“All the usual advice about keeping well still applies – be kind to yourself, connect with others (texts, videocalls, phone calls, letter writing), stay active if you can, treat yourself to nutritious food where possible, and be mindful of the amount and types of news and information you're consuming.

Don't worry if you can't manage all of the ways to stay well in one day, or any of them at all – that may just be a sign that you need a little extra support.”

As a church community, we're organised into pastoral groups, so in the first instance be in touch with the leader of your pastoral group, or with another church member with whom you find it easy to talk. Please also feel free to be in touch with me (Fran) as your minister on fran.rhys@methodist.org.uk, or call 0116 257 1069.

Above all, try not to feel ashamed if you don't feel you are coping well. You are not alone – many people are feeling the same pressures.

Perhaps a simple version of the 'Jesus prayer' which you can repeat over and over may also be helpful. It is based on the story of the Pharisee and the sinner in Luke 18:13.

Lord Jesus Christ
Child of the living God
Help me I pray
Give me peace.

Free phone lines for prayers, reflections and news from the Methodist Church are as follows:

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to a pastoral message from the President and Vice President: 0808 281 2695

Listen to our Podcast: 0808 281 2478

Other resources locally include:

Your GP

www.mind.org.uk 0300 123 3393

www.rethink.org 0300 5000 927

The Samaritans 116 123

Spiritual sustenance when in isolation

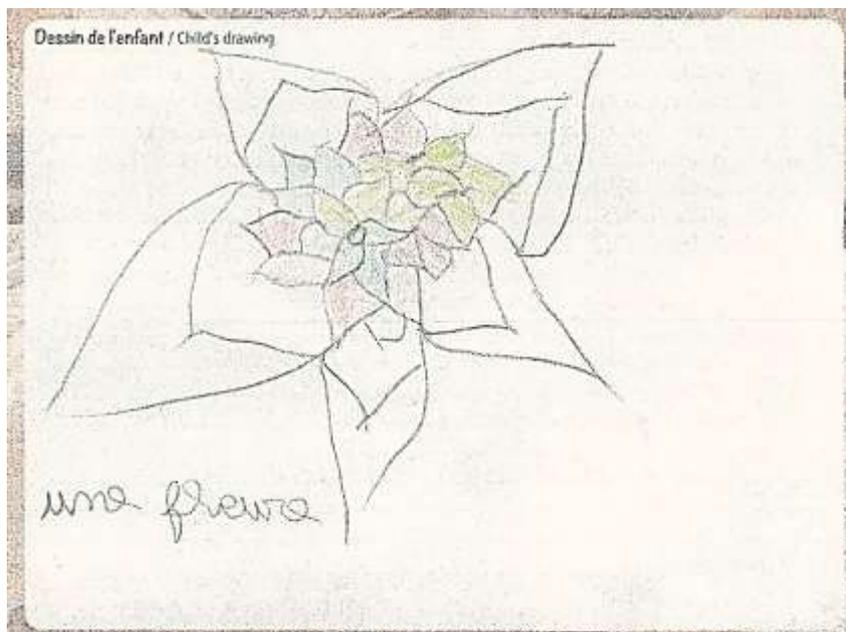
During this time of 'lockdown' this page on the Methodist Church website <https://tinyurl.com/yxz2phrb> signposts you to resources to help nourish your spiritual life. These are mostly resources that are provided centrally.



We are continuing to support Mariam and her family who live in Burkina Faso.

Here is her latest letter, dated 2nd November (translated from French).

Hi! Thank you for your warm welcome to me through your letters. I am so grateful to you. The rainy season is ending and the cold season will be soon. Rain is more and more rare here now. It is harvest time right now. The farmers do not take much time to harvest over the risk that animals graze and spoil the crops at night at the farm. We have resumed school and I am in 5th grade. God gave us a wonderful teacher who gives us good explanations of courses, we will have test soon. Do you know pigeons? Do you like breeding? Please pray for my CEP exams.



Mary has replied sending a picture of pigeons in her garden and talking about pigeon racing and other information. I wonder whether they breed pigeons for food.

Church family

We wish a Happy Birthday to everyone who celebrates in February

20th Leo & 27th Eva (Sam & Steve's children)

THANK GOD FOR THE JAB!

“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.” John 1 verse 5

I hate getting up on these dark mornings. These last few days you look out of the window and it's pouring with rain, which only adds to the feeling of gloom. Imagine what it must be like for our doctors and nurses (and also the support staff) turning out to run our hospitals where they face the task of caring for the victims of this awful virus, who are fighting for their lives. The staff are tired, drained and almost overwhelmed. Truly they need our prayers, support and love, for the NHS is at crisis point.

But the light shines forth in the darkness. Thanks to the amazing skill and dedication of so many dedicated scientists we have a vaccine that offers us light in the darkness, and hope! Thanks to the care of so many practitioners we can have the JAB. Alleluia. Ann and I went on Wednesday to the General Hospital for ours. We were amazed at the organisation and the care of everyone in taking care of us. And so our nurse gave us our jab. It didn't give us healing BUT it put an end to our FEAR! We have light in the midst of darkness. Thanks be to God.

Ann & Steve

The New Dawn

In Lockdown still, but the beginning not the end.
In answer to a summons to attend
And receive a covid-nineteen award, the first it seems of two.
At the racecourse we take our slot, and nod to those we
knew.

and comply with instructions given,
Proudly now, we display the mark,
To show that at last we have received a sign -
To Heaven and Tomorrow's Dawn.

Glory, Glory, Halleluiah!

A O K

The day war broke out – reminiscences from Eric Mewis

The day war broke out I remember it well, 3rd September 1939, my Dad's birthday. It was a Sunday and I remember going to Sunday school coming out about 11.15 and walking down Glengate. I remember it because it was the first time I had worn long trousers! Half way down the street someone came out and shouted 'we are at war' - all my friends scattered and left me on my own in the middle of the road.

Some time later Sunday schools and the schools got together and sent 30 of us to Saddington Hall. My sister Sylvia looked after me whilst I was there. On the Tuesday afternoon of that week, it was decided we would go for a walk to Saddington reservoir. Sylvia put me in my pushchair as I couldn't walk very well. We was walking down the middle of the road, 30+ people, when we heard a loud noise - from around the corner came a German fighter plane. Everyone scattered again, as before, and left me in the middle of the road in my pushchair.

I remember it very well and can still remember the German pilot looking down at me as it was that low, but fortunately it did not fire any guns at us. People said later 'that lone plane attacked the gas works at Aylestone with incendiary bombs.'

We had air raid shelters built of brick in the streets and also underground shelters in Station Street where the bus garage is now. I remember the air raid siren going and we all went to the air raid shelter in Station Street the underground ones. My dad carried me as I didn't have my calliper on. When we were in the shelter my dad carried me up the steps to see the planes coming over, they were going along the railway line from London and turning towards Coventry. There were 100s of planes in the sky and the next thing we knew you could see the flames in the sky from Coventry from the shelter.

When I was ten, I spent nine weeks in hospital for a big operation on my leg. Pat Cadney's mum, Hilda Claridge, heard that I was in hospital and she transferred to my ward to help look after me. There was five of us boys together, all under twelve, in a ward full of soldiers, sailors and airmen having different operations. Hilda came to us every night and read us the bible and tucked us all in bed and gave us a kiss each and said good night. It was Christmas 1941/1942 I spent Christmas in hospital; we were only allowed one visit per week on a Sunday. My mum use to bake a meat and potato pie in an enamel dish; the meat came from Rawlinsons. It was brought in on a Sunday for my lunch on a Monday. The nurses warmed it up for me I had half and the nurses fought over the other half - they certainly enjoyed it as so did I. I had an egg brought in from Mrs Upton who lived on Kirkdale Road and kept chickens. Whilst I was in there, we had one wind-up gramophone, which we were allowed to use once a week. The

only decent record we had was Bing Crosby singing 'White Christmas' and we played it over and over again till everybody complained and took it off us! They had definitely had enough of listening to it.

This was spoken by Eric, and Laura Merry, his granddaughter, has written it up in Eric's words specially for The Oracle.

I wonder if Eric heard about the Treacle Mine!

Looking for a copyright free photo of the Hall Mary B. came across this in the Wikipedia entry for Saddington:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saddington>

The Saddington Treacle Mine is a notable fictional local attraction, often referred to by locals of the surrounding villages.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treacle_mining



Treacle mining is the fictitious mining of treacle (similar to molasses) in a raw form similar to coal. The subject purports to be serious but is an attempt to test credulity. Thick black treacle makes the deception plausible. The topic has been a joke in British humour since the mid-19th century. The article also mentions Debdale Wharf as having a treacle mine.

I was born in Plymouth and lived there for 13 years. When we had cream it was always clotted cream. A favourite treat was "Thunder & lightning" – clotted cream & treacle on bread, splits or scones. This was known in our family as crinkle-crankle.
Mary B.

Quiz

The NAMES quiz raised £150 for Church funds, thank you to everyone who took part, and to all who sent me their money. The winner was Mrs. Sheila Jones with 49 correct.

I did 4 quizzes last year and raised £535 in total.

My next quiz is on “Things to do with TIME” and is now available at the usual price of £1 a copy, donations also accepted.

This quiz is for The Residents’ Amenity Fund at Aigburth Methodist Home, Sadly, not for outings this year, but as many in-house activities as possible are continuing.

Christmas presents

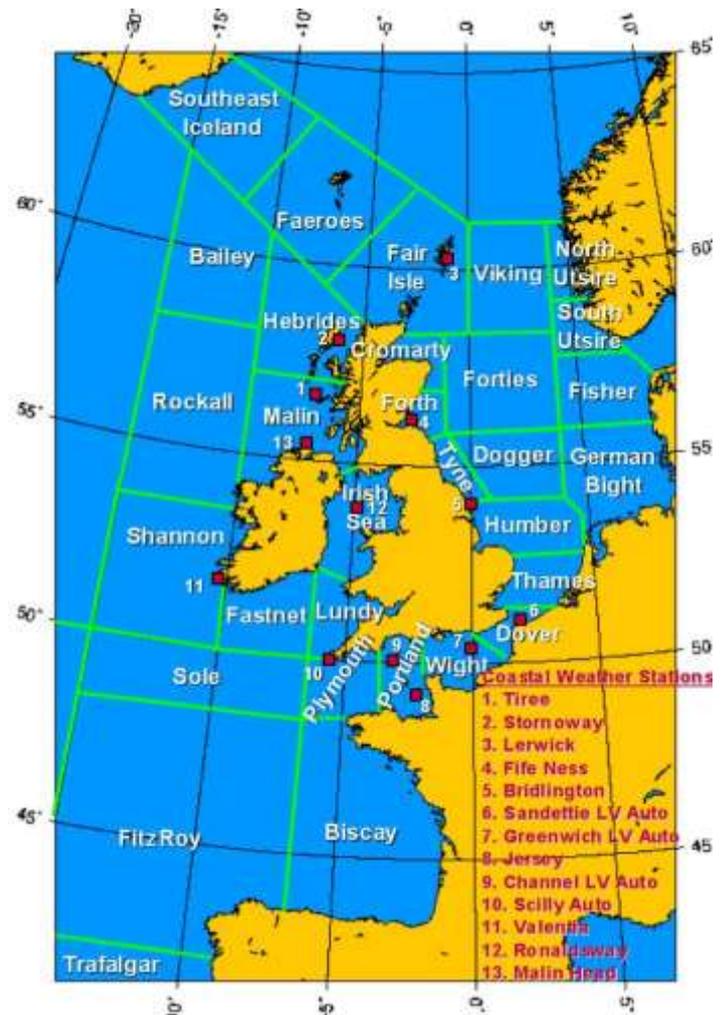
Christmas seems a long time ago now, but I was thinking about presents and was wondering if anyone had an unusual present to tell us about, or are there books or DVDs you could recommend? Alan had the DVD “*The Good Liar*” with Helen Mirren and Ian McKellen, which we both enjoyed and well worth viewing. It is advertised as “Gripping and deliciously deceptive.”

I used to be an avid fan of “*The Archers*” right from the beginning. In the early days it was broadcast at 6.30 in the evening. We didn’t have TV then.

In later years I occasionally tuned in to the 2.00 pm repeat. I would have the radio on a few minutes before and heard the Shipping Forecast; I was hooked, fascinated with the names of the various shipping areas around the coast, and looked forward to listening to that almost as much as to the Archers. Rosemary caught the interest from me and her Christmas present to me was a book of water- colour paintings of the different areas by Peter Collyer. It took him 2 years to travel the length and breadth of Britain recording the Shipping Forecast place names in words and pictures. Over the years,

areas have been added and some names have changed, Finisterre is now Fitzroy and Heligoland has changed to German Bight. The book is a good read with beautiful pictures.

Brenda



Setting the Trend

East north east in Dogger, Humber, Fisher, German Bight, South east four, becoming five, Thames, Dover, Portland, Wight.

Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea, occasional force nine.

Shannon, Rockall, Hebrides, the day will be quite fine.

Fair Isle, Faroos mainly fair, occasional quite good.

Southeast Iceland, Malin, Sole, prepare to pack a hood.

Viking, Forties, Cromarty, beware a coming storm.

Biscay, Fitzroy, Trafalgar fair weather's more the norm.

Rosemary Kind ©

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World Day of Prayer

Last year we were fortunate to be able to hold the World Day of Prayer Service before the lockdown restrictions came in.



Unfortunately, it has been decided to **cancel** this year's Service, which was to be held at our Church on Friday 5th March. It is hoped that

copies of the worship booklet will be given to those who usually attend.

The Service has been prepared by the women of Vanuatu and is entitled "Build on a Strong Foundation."

Vanuatu is a cluster of 80 islands, 65 of them inhabited, stretching for about 400 miles and is just over 1,100 miles to the east of Australia in the southwestern Pacific Ocean.

It was named The New Hebrides by Captain Cook and became Vanuatu on independence in 1980.

The people of Vanuatu understand the need for safe buildings as the islands are in a tropical cyclone zone and are also prone to earthquakes and volcano eruptions.

Most of the people are of Melanesian decent, with Polynesians in the outlying islands. The population is estimated to be 312,000, with almost a fifth living in the capital city of Port Vila on Efate Island.



Flag designed by Kalontas Mahlon

Wikimedia commons



Travelling between the islands is time-consuming, and within islands is not easy as there are rarely metaled roads, but the mobile phone has revolutionised communications.

Since independence, the Constitution provides for gender equality, but there is little political will to implement it. However, the gender gap in literacy is narrowing and girls are outperforming boys in school attendance. Primary education is not free or compulsory, although there are some subsidies. Secondary education is only available to the better off, and boys are usually prioritized over girls.

Through writing the service, representatives from the islands have developed an ecumenical relationship. The Vanuatu committee's prayer is that the voice of Vanuatu women will be heard across the world and that, in Vanuatu, health and educational opportunities will improve.

They thank God for triumphs in key moments in their history and proudly declare their nation is built on **the Rock of Ages Christ the King**.

Fairtrade fortnight 22 February to 7 March 2021

From the Fairtrade Foundation website www.fairtrade.org.uk

For two weeks each year at the end of February and start of March, thousands of individuals, companies and groups across the UK come together to share the stories of the people who grow our food and drinks, mine our gold and who grow the cotton in our clothes, people who are often exploited and underpaid. In 2021, Fairtrade Fortnight will feel very different. 2020 has been a hard year for everyone and we know that physically campaigning and meeting people will continue to be challenging in 2021 but we have also heard from so many of you that you want to continue to support Fairtrade through this time. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us more than ever how interconnected we are globally. This interconnection is at the very heart of the Fairtrade message and is where your role begins.

You are part of the Fairtrade movement and you have the power to drive long-term change, not only with your shopping choices but with your support in spreading the message. We just have to do this a little differently in 2021!

In Fairtrade Fortnight 2021, we will highlight the growing challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers in the communities Fairtrade works with. The facts are straightforward. Farmers and workers in countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Honduras, who have done the least to contribute to climate change, are disproportionately affected by it.

New Covid Rules for Retailers – from the Just Shop in Leicester.

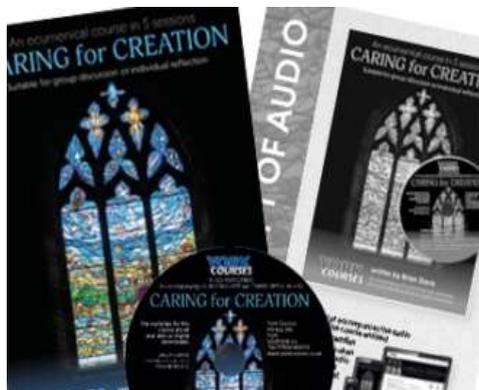
We were contacted by the council and told that we should not be selling our non-essential goods. No, we didn't understand either! So if we can't, why can shops like M&S and Wilko sell their non-essential ranges?

The rules have changed. Shops can sell anything on the same floor as their essential products. So Wilko in town is all on one floor, so the whole shop is open to customers. M&S have moved stock down onto their ground floor so they can sell it alongside their essentials. So we can sell anything upstairs in our shop as that is where essentials are displayed. We can not sell anything on the ground floor or from the basement.

You can order many essential & non-essential items online at <https://shop.justfairtrade.com/>

The Lent course starts on Tuesday 23rd February

It will be held on Zoom from 10 to 11, and there will be 5 sessions. We will be using the York course booklet:



Caring for Creation

The human race is facing its greatest challenge: global warming, leading to climate change. This, along with the damage we have done, and are still doing to the environment, God's wonderful creation, means that we all have to make radical changes to our whole way of life.

Many of us who care about this issue are sometimes understandably quite pessimistic about the future. That's where faith in God should make a difference. Hope for the future is not the same as being optimistic. Being optimistic suggests always looking on the bright side. A hope based on faith in God should enable us to open our eyes and see what is actually happening to our planet today, and still believe there is much that we can do, individually and together, with God to guide and strengthen us.

The 2020 Coronavirus pandemic continues to have a big impact on all our lives. It has important lessons to teach us about our life together on this planet, especially when we compare it to the greatest challenge of all to life on earth: climate change.

Mary will be ordering and distributing the course booklet (price £3.80) or you can download a digital copy for £3.10. For more information or to buy a digital copy visit:

www.yorkcourses.co.uk/product/caring-for-creation/