

**WEEKLY BULLETIN** 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

This is our weekly bulletin. Please use it to either display in church or to announce the events to your congregation. The bulletin can be received by anyone who has an e-mail address. To subscribe to this service please send your e-mail address to: [northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk) or contact Michelle in the Circuit Office on 01782 612648. All items for the bulletin need to be in for Wednesday morning.

Due to the new law that was enforced in May 2018 (GDPR) we are now required to seek permission from people or groups using a contact number, particularly on the Circuit Bulletin which has a wider viewing due to this being published on the web. Please check that contact names and telephone numbers are agreed first before sending in your advert. Many thanks.

**CIRCUIT OFFICE**

DUE TO THE RISK OF THE CORONAVIRUS PLEASE **DO NOT** CALL AT THE CIRCUIT OFFICE UNLESS IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY AND THEN ONLY BY PRE-ARRANGEMENT.

**UPDATE 2 (Please note the Worship section has been now been updated)**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
As many have said, we are living in unprecedented times, with lots of anxiety about what the next few weeks and perhaps months will bring.  
The news that came to us on Tuesday has shocked us all.

The Circuit is preparing as best we can to protect and support the most vulnerable members of our community.

We are following official guidance from both the Government and The Methodist Church in all we do.

The Circuit Leadership team have discussed various topics and how we might address them bearing in mind that this is new territory for us all.

For church members the topics that seem to be on most people's minds are:

**Worship**

Church services now are all cancelled until further notice.

**Worship this Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**

I encourage you to use the worship material from Connexion for this Sunday.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/16391/22-march-worship-if-you-are-unable-to-attend-church.docx>

Printed versions of this can be printed out and posted out if needed.

Revd John Palmer has put together a short service based on the lectionary theme for this Sunday.

~ Click on this link <http://www.northstaffordshiremethodists.org.uk/media/>

Revd Andy Fishburne on the Isle of Man hosts an act of worship on Facebook.

How to access:

~ Via Facebook [click this link](#) and ask to join the group.

~ You then go to that WatchParty at the allocated time, 10:30am or 6:00pm this Sunday 22 March.

~ You can watch the service and also join with others who are watching at the same time and send written messages to one another through the WatchParty.

In addition, the Isle of Man has a [YouTube channel](#) with other events which people can watch.

**Swan Bank in Stoke-on-Trent are offering a Sunday act of worship via YouTube.**

**How to access:**

~ Click on [this link](#) at 10:30am on 22 March and watch the worship at home.

### **Outside of the District:**

Wesley's Chapel are live streaming services.

How to access:

~ Click on [this link](#) and watch

~ Wednesday 12:45pm

~ Thursday 12:45pm

~ Sunday 9:45am and 11:00am

**Singing the Faith Plus** will be hosting various resources for use over the weeks and months to come... [click here](#).

Methodist Morning Prayer <https://www.methodistprayer.org/morning>

Northumbria Community <https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/morning-prayer/>

A Word in Time Bible Study <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/a-word-in-time/>

Prayer and Worship <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/>

Regional Pinterest Board has lots of ideas for creative worship and prayer

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/ndmln/>

### **Radio**

BBC Radio 4 Sundays 8:10am Sunday Worship

BBC Radio 4 Wednesdays 3:30pm Choral Evensong

**Television**

BBC One Sundays 1:15pm Songs of Praise

**Other services**

Baptisms will not take place in public worship.

Funerals may still take place, however number of people attending is to be limited.

**Pastoral**

Individual churches need to work out who are their most vulnerable and need practical help i.e. Shopping, picking up prescriptions etc.

You might want to consider what can be offered by telephone rather than face to face, and perhaps a telephone cascade system to enable prayer requests, pastoral news and the need for practical help to be passed on.

Pastoral Visitors can play a key role to alerting ministers where the needs are.

We are encouraging the following:

1. Consider having a "phone friend"/Buddy scheme - and commit to each other to stay in regular contact with each other via the telephone or mobile phone.
2. Make sure that family members have your ministers' phone number and email in case of need.

**Mid-week and other meetings including lettings**

All of them should be cancelled, lettings to be suspended, many around the circuit already have.

Please though check your premises regularly whilst it is not in use.

(This is also insurance advice)

**Finance**

Congregations need to be reminded to financially support churches even if there is no service.

Utility bills will still need to be paid as well as church and circuit employees.

Monetary offerings can be made by cheque or by setting up a standing order.

For any other enquiries about finance please speak to your church treasurer.

**Keep Safe**

Please keep safe and follow medical guidelines where needed.

Do not allow strangers into your home, even if they claim to be part of a Community Support Scheme.

Check with the scheme first (not using the phone number supplied by your 'visitor')

**Do not pay for shopping in advance**

Pay for your shopping deliveries by:

Bank transfer if you are online or a family member can arrange this

Telephone banking – this can be arranged by phoning the number on the back of your bank card

Cheque

Cash as a last resort

For concerns about Coronavirus please follow this link this will be updated when required:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus-guidance/>

**Finally**

Please get in touch with the circuit office or your minister if you have a particularly need or concern, we are here for you!

If there are questions that you would like us to explore any of the topics raised here then please ask.

Although the Methodist Church has suspended all worship and activities across the Connexion, we have not ceased to be the Body of Christ.

Pray without ceasing!

Be assured of my prayers for you all at this time.

Every blessing,

Revd John Palmer – Circuit Superintendent

**PLEASE CHECK THE WEEKLY CIRCUIT BULLETIN FOR UPDATES****Prayer for today**

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 and circuit in this time of uncertainty.

For us all not being able to publicly worship together.

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

# CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



# BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



# KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



**NHS**