

# WITHINGTON METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Issue 23 | Date: October 18, 2020

## Reflection from Krystyna

*For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. - Proverbs 23,7*

Dear Friends,

Experts tell us that we have 90 000 to 100 000 thoughts every day. That's a lot, isn't it?

Our thoughts are important because what we think is what we will do. Someone wisely said, 'Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.'

Are you where you want to be as a Christian? I hope your answer is no because a growing believer will always see his or her need to continue to grow. And when you think you don't need to grow anymore, something isn't right.

After years of walking with the Lord, apostle Paul put it this way: "Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onwards - to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back" (Philippians 3,13-14 MSG).

Paul continued, "If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision - you'll see it yet!" (verse 15).

Sometimes we can have blurred vision. When someone has 20/20 vision, it means they have good eyesight. They see things with clarity. We need that kind of vision as followers of Jesus because where we look is where we walk. In other words, if you are looking in a certain direction, then that is the direction you are walking. We don't generally look one way and walk another way, unless we are looking down at our smartphones.

Where you look is where you will walk. And what you think is what you will do. In this difficult time may God protect us from negative thoughts that weigh us down and help us to keep our eyes fixed on Him.

Wishing you every blessing,

Rev. Krystyna

## Zoom Worship

Caroline Wicken's would like to invite you to the weekly Sunday evening worship on Zoom. The details are the same as usual and can be found below-

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84344057526?pwd=Z3d0ZW90TUlnZHDlTkrZmtjZ3grUT09>

Meeting ID: 843 4405 7526

Password: 1901

Or dial in on your mobile with the following number and codes-

+442039017895,

84344057526 #, 0#, 1901#

## Phone Worship

Our conference call services are held on Sunday afternoons from 2:00 until 2:30 pm, but feel free to join us from 1:45 pm for an informal chat before worship where you can also share your prayer concerns. Each service includes: prayers, Bible readings, a short sermon and 1 hymn.

All you need is a phone, calls are charged at local rate and are included in network bundle deals.

To join the service please dial:  
0333 0164 757

Room number: 79317515 #

PIN: 8347 #

## In Person Worship

We've had some lovely feedback about our weekly morning live streams. It's nice to hear that this is another way of making our church family feel closer together even while we're apart.

Our service this week will be lead by Krystyna K and will again be live streamed at 10:45 through the following YouTube link-

<https://youtu.be/g9kBkneckgU>

# Lectionary Reading

## Exodus 33:12-23

### Moses and the Glory of the Lord

12 Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' 13 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

14 The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

17 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

18 Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

19 And the Lord said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

21 Then the Lord said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. 22 When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

## Reflection from Caroline Wickens

If someone were to ask you about the best leader you had ever encountered, I wonder who would come to your mind. Maybe someone you worked for, maybe a teacher or someone who organised a voluntary group, or maybe a politician or world leader. As we await the outcome of the American elections, leadership is once again giving us pause for thought – what does a good leader look like?

This week, we read psalm 99, and it considers some of the same questions. What does a good leader look like? The psalmist groups his reflections round God. God is 'lover of justice' and the one who has 'established equity' and 'executed justice and righteousness'. So a good leader is someone who is reliably fair and treats everyone the same. 'One rule for them and another for us' is ruled out under God's leadership style.

Then, a little later in the psalm, we discover more about God's qualities as a leader. We are told that Moses and Aaron and Samuel were close to God: 'they cried to the Lord, and he answered them'. This God is someone whose relationships are characterised by love and compassion. This leader is not too busy, or too distant, to hear us when we cry for help. An answer comes, guiding us in the right direction – not always the guidance we would like to hear, maybe, but always the right support at the right time.

And we learn that God gave the people statutes and decrees. Leadership involves setting firm boundaries and helping people realise what kind of behaviour is acceptable, so that we can shape our lives in the right way and grow into the sort of people God wants us to be. God's decrees were summed up by Jesus, when someone asked him what was the most important commandment: love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind, and all your strength, and love your neighbour as yourself.

Finally, in this psalm, there is an intriguing comment about personal behaviour:

O Lord our God, you answered them;  
you were a forgiving God to them,  
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

God is ready to forgive – this theme rings through the whole Bible. God is always ready to forgive us, but at the same time, God is not a 'soft touch'. God recognises wrongdoing and is prepared to act decisively to bring it to an end, even when the wrongdoer is someone whose name is honoured in the history of Israel.

The psalmist sums all this up by naming God as king, because in those times, a good king provided the best form of leadership a nation could hope for. Life has moved on; we have presidents and prime ministers, some good, some less so, and our understanding of leadership has shifted. Yet God's leadership remains constant. Maybe we wish to call God king and lord, or father and mother, or creator and sustainer, or any of the thousand other names humanity has found to express the wonder and greatness of God. Whatever the name, it honours the same reality: God, the leader who acts with justice and compassion, firm guidance and love.



## Closer Despite Covid– With Krystyna Kwarciak

***This week we have our very own Krystyna telling us a bit more about herself and her time at Withington -***

***Where did you worship when you were growing up?***

In the Lutheran Church in Poland.

***How long have you been coming to Withington?***

I became the minister for Withington Methodist Church in September 2017.

***How did you discover WMC?***

I was stationed at WMC by the Connexional Team.

***Why is WMC important to you?***

What I value about WMC is its diversity, the fact that our congregation consists of people from different backgrounds, age groups and all walks of life.

***Tell us one of your favourite hymns***

I never grow tired of the hymn 'Be Thou my vision'. It's so complex in structure, yet so easy to remember, theologically, it's as rich and deep as any hymn I have ever sung.

***One thing about yourself.....***

I love cooking and have always dreamt of opening my own restaurant. Who knows, maybe one day?



## Prayer List

This week we remember in our prayers-

Those suffering financial hardships.

Those who face an uncertain future.

Those who are lonely

Those facing redundancy

Those who have lost a family member to COVID-19

Thandiwe and Peter,

Cliff,

Cliff's Mum and Dad,

Phil,

Simon,

Stella,

Robbie,

Barbara,

Georgine,

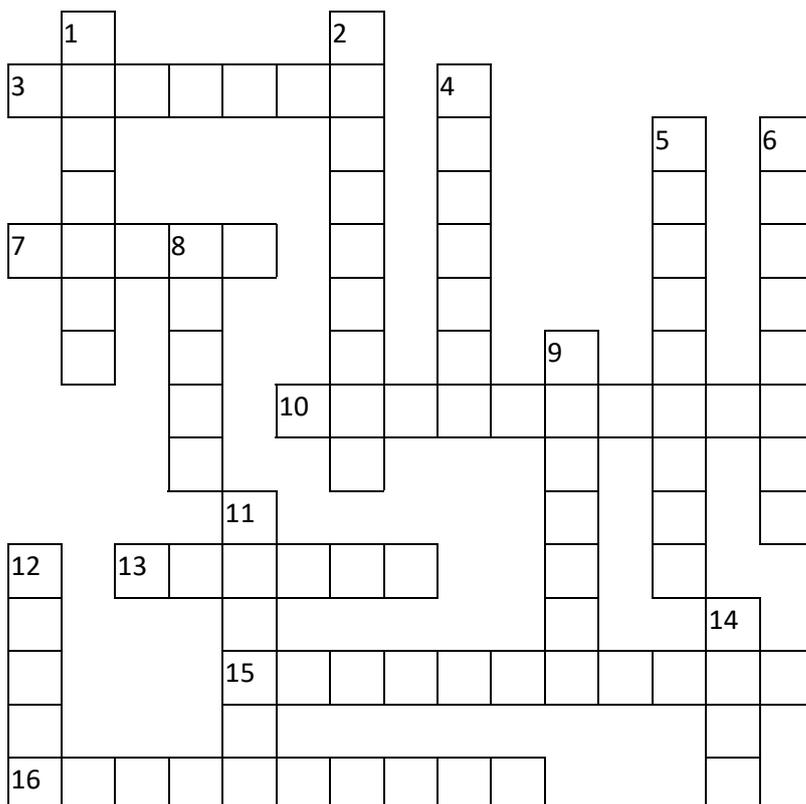
Promilla, Noel, Urima, Aima, Hannan,

Christians in Pakistan,

Pat and Jim,

Lizzie and her family

## A bit of fun!- Places in the Bible Crossword



ACROSS-

3 Sea of \_\_\_

7 Residents of this city tried to build a tower to heaven

10 Jesus was arrested in this garden

13 Ancient Jewish kingdom

15 Jesus was baptized in this river

16 God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on this mountain

DOWN-

1 Jesus was crucified on this hill

2 Jesus was born here

4 The Corinthians lived here

5 The Jewish temple was here

6 Jesus grew up here

8 Moses led the people out of slavery in this land

9 Joshua fought the battle of \_\_\_

11 Noah's ark landed in the mountains of this region

12 God destroyed this city by fire

14 Jesus turned water in wine at a wedding here

Answers- 1. Calvary, 2. Bethlehem, 3. Galilee, 4. Corinth, 5. Jerusalem, 6. Nazareth, 7. Babel, 8. Egypt, 9. Jericho, 10. Gethsemane, 11. Ararat, 12. Sodom, 13. Israel, 14. Cana, 15. River Jordan, 16. Mount Sinai!

# Is it time to come back to church?

The team at Withington Methodist Church are currently considering when Sunday morning services will reopen, There will be changes in place to make sure there is as little risk as possible of catching COVID-19. We would like to know what you think about the new safety measures below.

## You need to stay at home if you have any of these symptoms:



- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

## If you have been shielding:



Though the government guidance around shielding has changed, it is still advised that these groups of people stay at home as much as possible.

If you have been shielding, talk to your GP about whether returning to church is the right decision. You can also find more information at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

# Our promise to you

When we decide to reopen, the following rules will be in place:

## Seats will be 2 metres apart

No moving around will happen during the service. This also means no hugs or hand shakes.



## Places will be limited

There will be a booking service for everyone to use so we can ensure only a set amount of people attend.

## No singing or refreshments

To prevent the spread of infection as much as we possibly can, we have been advised not to have any singing or refreshments during the service.

Although we'd love to be able to catch up, after the service is finished, we will be asking everyone to leave straight away.

## Meet us downstairs

Services will be held in the ground floor hall.

Access to the building will be from the back door (through the car park) only, so please walk your way around.

## Please wear your mask

It is a legal requirement for you to put on a mask or face covering before you enter church, and keep it on for the duration of your stay. Some people may not need to wear a mask if they have a valid reason – for more information, please visit [www.bit.ly/facemaskchurch](http://www.bit.ly/facemaskchurch)

## You will have to sign in

The church will be running a 'track and trace' system. This means if anyone at a service has COVID-19 up to 48 hours after the service, we will contact everyone else who attended to self-isolate.

We will only keep these details for 21 days.



## We will be keeping the space clean

The worship space will be regularly cleaned, and will be well ventilated – this might mean it is colder than usual in the church, so you might want to bring a jacket or jumper.

We will also be asking everyone to use the hand sanitiser provided as they enter.



## Toilets will be available

Toilets and hand washing facilities will be available, along with hand sanitiser. Please ask a steward for more information on your arrival.

- Before we reopen, we need to know what you think:
- **With these precautions in place, how happy would you be to return to church?**
  - **What else can we do to make you feel safe?**

Please let us know by calling and leaving a message on 0161 445 0804 or by emailing [office@withingtonmethodistchurch.org](mailto:office@withingtonmethodistchurch.org)

# What do you think?

# How can I book my place for worship?



We will be reopening Withington Methodist Church for Sunday morning worship at the usual time of 10:45am, however due to social distancing measures we will be limiting attendees which means you will have to reserve your place in advance.

## How many spaces are there?

There will be a maximum of 15 people each week, with some space for couples and small family groups living in the same household. If the service is fully booked you will be able to book a space for the following week.

## How do I book?

To book your spot, either ring the church office on 445 0804 to leave a voicemail or email [office@withingtonmethodistchurch.org](mailto:office@withingtonmethodistchurch.org). Please mention the names of those attending, your contact details and whether you are happy for the church to hold these for 3 weeks for track and trace records. Richard from the office will then return your phone call or email back to confirm your booking.

## When should I book?

Booking will close at 4:00pm on Friday for that Sunday or earlier if the seats are all booked up. However in this case you will have the option to book early for the following week.

## An important note.

Before booking your place to attend Sunday worship at Withington, please familiarise yourself with the new safety measures outlined in the leaflet above. We do not want to encourage anyone to attend 'in person' worship who doesn't feel completely comfortable doing so. Please rest assured that we will continue to produce alternative worship resources for you to access at home including a live stream of the Sunday morning worship on YouTube.

If you have any further questions or concerns please let Richard know on the phone.