

## Pastoral Prayers



“A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples; if you love one another.” (John 13 v34-35)

### For your devotions

#### A prayer for others

The Canaanite woman sought your help.

She loved her daughter so much, she was so desperately in need, that she wouldn't give up till she had her answer.

Lord, may we learn from this woman, to wait on you expectantly, patiently, persistently, doggedly.

Grant us the courage of our convictions when we truly believe we are doing your will.

We pray today for those who feel excluded, whatever their situation, whatever the reason:

for prisoners, refugees, the homeless;

for the sick, the mentally unstable;

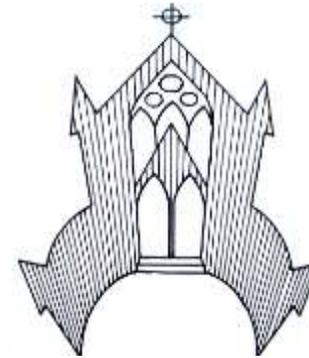
for any who feel that they are outsiders.

We pray for ourselves when our faith is weak, or we feel that we don't belong.

**Amen**

All contributions for future notices & items of interest for the Church Website are welcome! Please contact Lesley Jackson on [brackenjack@btinternet.com](mailto:brackenjack@btinternet.com) or **telephone 01642 714384** or **Text on 07837178938**. All notices must be received by the Thursday before the following Sunday. Many thanks. Please be aware that what is printed in the notices will now be posted onto our website, which is open to the public. If there is anything sensitive that should not be placed onto this public space, please phrase your notices carefully or let us know that it is for print only. The notices are taken off the website at the end of each month and do not include personal details unless part of an “advert”.

## Stokesley Methodist Church



**Sunday 16th August 2020**



Minister: Rev Andrew Robinson

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The website address is [www.stokesleymethodistchurch.co.uk](http://www.stokesleymethodistchurch.co.uk) .

Circuit Website <http://www.stokesleymethodistcircuit.org.uk/>

Leven Online – Your local Radio Station: <http://levenonlineradio.com/>

During these unprecedented times, we have changed the way we 'go to church' to help to protect ourselves and others. We have put in place measures that will enable us to still be part of the worshipping community, whilst for everyone's sake staying away from our church buildings. If you go to the Circuit Website you will find a range of resources available for you to use at home which we hope will help you to continue your cycle of prayer and worship,

**This week's worship in the Circuit is led by Rev Andrew Robinson & Rev Richard Bradshaw.**

<https://www.stokesleymethodistcircuit.org.uk/news/join-us-at-home.html>  
and <http://www.facebook.com/stokesleymethodistcircuit/>

The Methodist Church is more than its buildings and we can continue our life as Methodists without using our buildings.

Light a candle on Sunday as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ.



### **A Gathering Prayer from the Roots resources**

We come to our Worship time, Lord, ready to focus totally on you. Help us to be brave enough, like Peter, to ask the questions that we would like to ask, and open enough to hear your answer. In our worship today, speak to us, Lord. We are listening. Lord God, as we come before you now, we open our hearts to you. Help us to see that we can learn so much from others, even from those with whom we think we may not share much in common. Make us willing to stand out from the crowd, to hear your voice, and act upon it.  
**Amen.**

## *Listen and Understand*

### **Today's Lectionary Readings:**

**Isaiah 56 v1, 6-8** (p742) Salvation for Others

**Psalms 67** (p581) May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us.

**Romans 11 v1-2a, 29-32** (p1138) All Israel will be Saved

**Matthew 15 v(10-20), 21-28** (p982) Clean and Unclean/The Faith of the Canaanite Woman

## A Message from the Church Mouse for EVERYONE!



In recent months, we've all experienced the feeling of being 'untouchable'. We've had to keep our social-distance & walk round people, avoiding hugs & physical contact. It's not been nice & it's felt very unnatural.



Of all the many virtues Jesus displayed in his life, none is more attractive, I think, than his compassion. Jesus spent so much of his time and energy reaching out to the poor, to needy sufferers. He readily communicated his compassionate healing with a touch, even to those who by reason of their illness or disability were considered "untouchable." Lepers, gentiles, prostitutes, tax-collectors, they all found in Jesus a never-failing fountain of mercy.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus appears strangely cold and uncharacteristically hard-hearted. So what's going on? The merciful and compassionate Jesus we know & love not only appears to reject this desperate mother's plea for help, but he does so in what seems to be a harsh and offensive style. How could he speak this way? This whole disturbing encounter is intended to be exactly that – it was intended to be an encounter that disturbs us. I believe Jesus' original purpose was to make his disciples think, to get their attention & to plant a seed in their minds and hearts for what will eventually become their own mission. A second thing to note here is that Jesus did grant this mother's request. But before he did, he made it hard for her by using language that seemed to build a wall to keep her out. It wasn't that he didn't care. The point is that Jesus was testing the woman's faith. So he appears to put her off, and the woman persists in asking. Isn't that a wonderful image? When God seems to close the door in our face, he doesn't do so to exclude us or to shut us out. He only wants us to come after him harder, to pray with all the more intensity. Life can deal us many hard blows that seems to negate all our hopes and cancel all those good promises. We face trouble, or suffering, or death. The Coronavirus pandemic has been like that. Suddenly it looks as if God is frowning upon us, like he has closed the door in our face, as if he's shut us out from all that we'd hoped for.

But this is the critical moment. Now we must choose what we're going to believe: we'll either believe that God's promises still hold true, that he's still good and kind and compassionate or we will succumb to the evil appearance of our circumstances. So we have to decide what we'll do, will we turn away from the Lord and sink into despair, or will we pursue him all the harder and ask for his blessing.

Remember this. When God seems to be frowning, when he seems to have shut you off from his blessing, don't lose faith. Don't turn away. Keep on pressing toward him. Push your way into his presence and ask him for his blessing – he will touch you too.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SERVICES/ACTS OF WORSHIP/WEEKLY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES IN CHURCH ARE CURRENTLY PAUSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Look out for other ways to meet up online – watch out for emails inviting you to join a **Zoom** meeting. **Zoom** is an easy, reliable cloud platform for video & audio discussions, worship & fellowship, chats & catch-ups, & ‘virtual’ events. Simply download the Zoom App from Google Play, sign up by entering your email address, first & last name, & then agreeing to the terms & conditions. Then to join the meeting, you will need to enter the Meeting ID & Password which will be provided in the invitation.

You don’t need any special technical skills to be able to join our online coffee mornings, bible studies, fellowship groups or sing-a-longs. Zoom can be accessed visually using your computer or tablet OR audibly on your phone. You can dial in using the telephone number 0203 481 5237 (local call rates apply) & enter the code for the meeting (phone Mandy on 01642 710358 for details or email [mansemum01@gmail.com](mailto:mansemum01@gmail.com) ).

PLEASE BE MINDFUL OF THOSE IN OUR CONGREGATION WHO ARE HOUSE-BOUND, ELDERLY, VULNERABLE, ISOLATED ...

IF YOU CAN GIVE THEM A LIFELINE, A REASSURING PHONE CALL, ANY PASTORAL ASSISTANCE POSSIBLE, WE WILL BE VERY GRATEFUL.

If you need help – picking up shopping, posting mail, delivering urgent supplies or simply making a friendly phone call – please contact Rev Andrew if you are self-isolating & would like this pastoral care.

Rest assured that all who are in a position to offer this help will take every precaution to spread ONLY KINDNESS! They will avoid physical contact (keep a 2m distance), wash hands regularly & leave all items on your doorstep.



SHOULD YOU NEED ANY ADVICE PLEASE CONTACT  
REV ANDREW ROBINSON (TEL: 01642 710358 / MOB: 07718 516236)

Alison Dumphy-Brook, Circuit Support Manager for Stokesley Methodist  
Circuit ([a.dumphybrook@gmail.com](mailto:a.dumphybrook@gmail.com) or mobile 07717 503761).

## Your Sunday Services

It's simple! Please go to the Circuit Website & click on the 'Worship at Home' Logo:



On this page you will find the links to any recorded services provided by the ministers or local preachers for the coming Sunday. Rev Andrew will be streaming his morning worship on Sunday at 10.30am on the [Stokesley Methodist Church YouTube channel](#) (use Google search).

If you want to follow the service at your usual worship time you know that you are joining with friends in their homes at the same time. After a short comfort break (usually approx 15 mins) we'll be meeting online for one of our weekly Zoom Bible Studies. We're starting a brand new subject this week, Breaking Free from Fear – a COVID 19 study. If anyone is interested in joining us, please get in touch for the joining details and to receive a PDF copy of the material for each session (it will be mailed out too). Morning worship at Great Ayton Methodist Church will also be streamed on its YouTube channel on Sunday 16th August at 10.30 am. More information can be found on the Circuit Facebook page. In addition, each week we are provided with a worship sheet from District which you can find on the 'Worship at Home' page & which is also available to download from the link in these notices.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/17960/16-august-worship-if-you-are-unable-to-attend-church.pdf>

You will also find regular reflections and prayers from our local preachers and worship leaders (click on the 'Thought for the Day' logo).

If you would like to bring your prayer requests – prayers of concerns, prayers of thanks, or anything in between – to the Prayer Wall on the Circuit Website, please use our designated email address ([stokesleymethodistprayers@gmail.com](mailto:stokesleymethodistprayers@gmail.com) ). If Andrew is able, he will write out all the prayers & hang them on our prayer tree in the church. All prayers will be anonymised unless we are given permission to share details.

## The Food Bank

While we are facing increasingly challenging times, let's not forget others facing difficulties in our community. Please continue to donate any non-perishable food & toiletries, but while the church is closed, you can use the Food Bank collection points in the Co-Op stores. Many thanks.

### What's On This Week

Monday 17th August	The Natterers & Knitters are on holiday this week! We'll be back on the 24 <sup>th</sup> August.
Tuesday 18th August	Our Tuesday Night Fellowship will be meeting as usual at 7.00pm (Zoom ID 288 056 7734). We will have a catch-up for an hour and then move into our online Oasis Study Group at 8.00pm based on our current Holy Habit of Gladness & Generosity. Contact Mandy Robinson ( <a href="mailto:mansemum01@gmail.com">mansemum01@gmail.com</a> )
Wednesday 19th August	'Hymn-a-Long' with the Choir at 7.00pm. If you would like to join in, please let Helen know (tel: 710630). The Zoom ID is 288 056 7734.
Thursday 20th August	
Friday 21st August	10.00am – Online Prayer Group with Rev Andrew. If you want to join in contact Andrew ( <a href="mailto:revandrew@gmail.com">revandrew@gmail.com</a> )  10am-11am - Open Church for Private Prayer 5pm-6pm – Open Church for Private Prayer
Saturday 15th August	10.30am – Coffee Morning with a theme, on Zoom (ID 288 056 7734). Contact Mandy Robinson ( <a href="mailto:mansemum01@gmail.com">mansemum01@gmail.com</a> ) Today's quiz theme is 'Plants' 

## It's a Gardener's World!

Few flowers brighten a garden quite the same way as the fuchsia. Fuchsias provide colourful displays in beds and borders, hanging baskets and all manner of containers. They are so popular, that fuchsias have their own national society – the British Fuchsia Society – plus numerous local clubs and societies. We're certainly going to miss the fabulous spectacle we get in the Horticulture Tent at Stokesley Show this year! But if you want to see a remarkable display, there's a garden full of fuchsias in front of a cottage overlooking West Green.



The beautiful pendants come in a range of colours, though my favourites are the deep, dark pink variety. They seem so perfect in every way, their shape, their form & their colour. I marvel that God has created something so wonderfully meticulous & is repeated from flower to flower. Folklore has it that the fuchsia provides fairies with a favourite hiding place! They make me think of little ballerinas with their outstretched petals that look like a tutu skirt and their stamen that look like legs!

In western Ireland, it's called 'Deora De', which translates as God's Teardrops. There is an ancient story that the fuchsia sprang from the blood of Christ at the foot of the cross. Its pendants dangle because it hangs its head in sorrow.

**Fuchsia** is a **symbol of** elegance, good taste, **confiding love** and amiability. So, generally, fuchsias are given as a way of expressing your trust for someone. The Canaanite woman trusted that Jesus could & would heal her daughter. We too should be willing to entrust all that is personal to us, to Him. Should we feel at times disheartened and discouraged, a **confiding** thought, a simple movement of heart towards God will renew our powers. Whatever He may demand of us, He will give us at the moment the strength and the courage that we need.