

For your devotions ...



“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)

A Prayer for Others

Come and see, and join in praying for the people of the world waiting to hear good news. Loving God, we pray for the states of America to be united in the days and weeks ahead. We pray for an end to violence, for wisdom and protection for President-elect Joe Biden and all who will take office in a few days' time. We pray for those threatening to disrupt the inauguration, and for the police force and those entrusted with keeping the law and peace.

Lord, hear our prayer and draw us all closer to you.

We pray for those around the world at the mercy of extreme weather conditions. We pray for the people of Japan, of Indonesia, especially those rescue workers who died trying to save others, for those bereaved in the plane crash, for those in our own country without power and heat. We pray for those tackling the climate change challenges of our time and for our own response in our day to day lives.

Lord, hear our prayer and draw us all closer to you.

We pray for all who are pushed to their limits at work and at home, for Intensive Care Staff, for all in the emergency services, for GP's, teachers and school staff, for parents and students, for all whose mental health is at breaking point. We pray for our Government and all whose decisions affect millions of lives. And we pray for one another as we respond to the restrictions locally and nationally.

Lord, hear our prayer and draw us all closer to you.

We pray for those whose businesses are closed, whose shops are locked up, whose rooms have no guests, for those whose money is running out, for those on the brink of despair.

Lord, hear our prayer and draw us all closer to you.

We pray for your church, entrusted with the good news of Jesus, and charged with serving all those in need. We pray for hospital chaplains, for those ministering to the bereaved, and for one another as we seek to share our faith and our hope in Jesus Christ. **Lord, hear our prayer and draw us all closer to you.**

Amen

All contributions for future notices & items of interest for the Church Website are welcome! Please contact Lesley Jackson on 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.

Stokesley Methodist Church



Sunday 17th January 2021



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The website address is www.stokesleymethodistchurch.co.uk .

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

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

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(a.dumphybrook@gmail.com or mobile 07717 503761).

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, at home with family, online with friends, coming back together again in Church. 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.

Today our Online Service at 10.30am will be led by Rev Andrew Robinson.

www.youtube.com/stokesleymethodistchurch/live

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

and <http://www.facebook.com/stokesleymethodistcircuit/>

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



A Gathering Prayer from the Roots resources:

We have come together into the presence of our Lord.

So, let us quieten our hearts and minds,

put aside our concerns and distractions.

Let us open ourselves to listen for God's voice,

for the word God has for his people.

Almighty God, you speak to us in so many ways.

Help us, in our worship today, to hear your voice and know it is you.

Speak to us in the silence, through Scripture and by the Spirit.

Speak through others and through your creation, through images,

experiences, music and encounters. Speak in ways that we can understand.

So, speak, Lord – and help us to listen.

Amen.

Come, See, Hear

Today's Lectionary Readings:

1 Samuel 3 v1-10, (11-20) (p274) The Lord Calls Samuel

Psalms 139 v1-6, 13-18 (p628) You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me ...

1 Corinthians 6 v12-20 (p1148) Sexual Immorality

John 1 v43-51 (p1064) Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

Message from the Church Mouse for EVERYONE!



This week our reading from John's Gospel helps us to focus on how we can help each other to hear God. Today we hear about two friends who have an unexpected encounter with Jesus and initially react in very different ways.

Together, Philip and Nathanael help each other to understand who Jesus is and they begin a journey that will redefine who they are.

Nathanael is surprised that Jesus knows not only his name, but much about him too. Jesus knows each of us as individuals but sometimes, like Nathanael, we can wonder 'Why would God be interested in me?' Some of us will be, like Philip, keen to follow straight away. Some of us will be more like Nathanael – full of questions and concerns. This story shows that wherever we are, Jesus finds us and knows us. Are we looking and listening out for him – and helping others to do so?

You probably don't think much about your skin, yet your skin is a protective covering that shields the rest of your body. It protects your muscles, bones – all that is inside such as your heart, stomach and liver. Your skin protects you from diseases and it lets you know when something is too hot or cold. Your skin stretches just as much as it needs to. When you smile or laugh (a lot, I hope) the skin on your face stretches. The skin on your knuckles is quite stretchy. The thinnest skin is on your eyelids and the thickest skin is on the soles of your feet.

You might be interested in a couple of interesting facts about animal skin. A rhinoceros's skin is almost two inches thick & snakes have thinner skins, often beautifully coloured and patterned. A polar bear has black skin underneath its white fur!

Our human skin comes in many colours – all beautiful. Our skin protects our amazing bodies. The Psalm today tells us that God knew us before we were born and that we are "wonderfully made". God took care of every detail to give us just what we need to have bodies that allow us to run and play and laugh.

When you look in the mirror, thank God for that beautiful skin and healthy body. You are truly "wonderfully made!"



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

PLEASE CHECK THE CIRCUIT WEBSITE EVERY WEEK TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH THE CIRCUIT PLAN AS THIS MAY BE AMENDED DEPENDING ON GOVERNMENT/METHODIST CONNEXION GUIDELINES

Please note that all the circuit churches will be closed for worship until further notice & this will be reviewed mid-February. The churches will remain open for funeral services. There will be online worship available from Stokesley and Gt Ayton during this period.

Your Sunday 'Worship Online' Services

This is a time of real uncertainty for everyone and the Church will continue to be central to the life of our community in bringing light and hope in any way we can.

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 from 10.15am 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. This will be followed by our weekly Zoom 'Feeding Station' at 11:30am. 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/19882/17-jan-worship-if-you-are-unable-to-attend-church.pdf>

IF YOU CAN HELP WITH STEWARDING, WHENEVER THE CHURCH IS OPEN, PLEASE SEE DOROTHY BLAKEY – your help will be much appreciated.

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 18th January	2.00pm Nattering & Knitting – Please join us for a 'chinwag' & to catch-up on all the things we've been doing at home! Contact Ann Keene (keene.home@yahoo.com)
Tuesday 19th January	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. Contact Mandy Robinson (mansemum01@gmail.com)
Wednesday 20th January	'Hymn-a-Long' with the Choir at 7.00pm. The Zoom ID is 288 056 7734.
Thursday 21st January	
Friday 22nd January	 Sadly, due to the current Lockdown, we feel that it is unsafe to encourage people to leave their homes, so we hope you will join us in a quiet prayer-time between 10am-11am from your living room. Light a candle & pray your own personal prayers.
Saturday 23rd January	10.30am – Coffee Morning with a theme, on Zoom (ID 288 056 7734). Contact Mandy Robinson (mansemum01@gmail.com) 11.30am Saturday Quiz



The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - 18 and 25 January

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2021 has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme that was chosen, "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit", is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community's vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.

Today the community has fifty sisters, all women from different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion. They remain faithful to a life of prayer, life in community and the welcoming of guests. The sisters share the grace of their monastic life with visitors and volunteers who go to Grandchamp for a time of retreat, silence, healing or in search of meaning.

For 2021, the sisters are inviting churches across the world to enter into their tradition of prayer and silence that is rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church catholic. Especially now, when many of us are praying from the quiet of our homes, this is something we can all join in.

Christian Aid

Each year Christian Aid provides the [Go and Do action points](#) for each of the daily reflections – linking into the important work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and advocacy of justice.

Abiding in Christ is an inner attitude that takes root in us over time. It demands space to grow. It can be overtaken by the struggle for the necessities of life and it is threatened by the distractions, noise, activity and the challenges of life.

We live in a time that is both troubling and magnificent, an often dangerous time where we are challenged by pandemics, wars, violence, poverty, racism and climate change. Yet as Christians seeking reconciliation, justice and peace, we also know the full value of a spiritual life, have an immense responsibility and must realize it, unite and help each other create forces of calmness, refuges of peace, vital centres where the silence of people calls on the creative word of God. Find space, be silent, take time to pray & abide with Christ.

<https://ctbi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/WPCU-2021-English-pamphlet-Final.pdf.pagespeed.ce.SnR5lgw9dp.pdf>

If you click on this link you will be able to access the resources for the whole week, with a Meditation for each day of the week.

TALE FROM THE GARDEN!

Don't let dark winter days get you down – brighten your life with a colourful bowl of scented hyacinths. There is really nothing more cheering in the New Year than the fragrance & colour of this winter favourite.

Potted up as dormant bulbs in autumn, kept cool & dark for a couple of months in a shed or garage, the spikes will push up among the starburst of shin green leaves to produce their drumsticks of fragrant flowers in shades of pink, blue, creamy yellow & white. They are truly nature's room scenter



Apollo, God of the Sun, and Zephyrus, God of the West Wind, both fought for the love of a young Spartan prince named Hyacinth (HYAKINTHOS in Greek). He was known to be one of the most beautiful men alive so they were vicious in their fight - however Hyacinth chose Apollo. One day while Apollo and Hyacinth were playing a game of discus, Zephyrus watched in jealousy. In a rage, when Apollo threw the next discus, Zephyr blew a gust of wind that changed the direction of the discus and it struck Hyacinth on the head, killing him instantly. Apollo, broken-hearted, noticed that a flower sprang up from the blood that was spilled and named the flower 'hyacinth' in honour of the boy. That's why as well as being a symbol of the Spring Equinox, the hyacinth is also known as 'the sorrow flower,' and 'flower of the rain.' I love to offer the hyacinth flower as presents, to welcome spring & to symbolize a fresh start. I offer them as a silent prayer of hope. **The Hyacinth Flower's Message Is:** Be happy and make time to play, but do not act rashly, as this can lead to deep regrets. At this time, with the Covid virus on a devastating rampage across the country, we have to be especially careful, act responsibly & be considerate for the safety & wellbeing of those around us. One of my favourite sayings is this: "Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning to dance in the rain." We can be happy NOW, we can dance NOW (even if it's in our living rooms!) because we have a lot to be hopeful for. The hyacinth may be the 'flower of the rain' but that doesn't mean we can't see beyond the rain clouds. When you smell the perfume of the Hyacinth, close your eyes & feel the love. When planted in swathes, look at the sea of colours which reflect the blue skies & pastel countryside, & know that the little trumpet flowers herald a new beginning.