

## Pastoral Letter 4 9.4.20

Dear Friends,

Lent and Holy Week has been a new experience for us all this year and Easter will be equally strange. A novel virus has brought novel challenges and many tragedies. It may feel to you like living in a bubble. Sooner or later the bubble must burst and a new normal will resume. We will have learnt from our experience of the lockdown.

As a circuit we have posted reflections for Holy Week online, and I am grateful for those who have made this possible. There have been meetings for business and for fellowship by ZOOM and there will be worship events by ZOOM also. I have been asked to use unfamiliar Apps on my phone and iPad and am trying to prove that it is still possible to learn new tricks. Lessons have been learnt but the cost is great for many people, and we pray for them all.

The National Methodist Choir of GB has launched and will be releasing a song for Easter Day. Churches in the circuit have had online events, and this Sunday Guildford Methodists with St Marys will worship via ZOOM. Knaphill has faced the dilemma of wanting to operate their clothes bank when we must lock our churches and have received advice from the Connexion. The CLT has had a virtual meeting to reflect on the virtual Circuit Meeting and look ahead. DBS check and verifying are going on as required.

CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) are organising a Big Sing for Easter. I realise it clashes with virtual events in our churches, but for those free to take part it can be found at <https://ctbi.org.uk/sing-resurrection/>.

The life of the Methodist Church is continuing. Plans are being formulated to deal with decisions normally made by Conference, even though our Synod will not be taking place. We can assume for now that ministerial moves will go ahead on 1<sup>st</sup> September. There is a great deal of information and worship resources on the Methodist Church website as well as the District and Circuit websites. I will be contacting church treasurers on behalf of the CLT to assess the likely financial effect of the lockdown on churches in the circuit. I am deeply grateful for every who is continuing to support their church and circuit.

With this email there is a Bible reflection on Peter who was a witness to the Resurrection.

May this Easter be not just different for you, but also special – a time to experience God's grace in a new and deeper way.

God bless you,

Keith

Keith C. Beckingham, Superintendent Minister