

The Drive Methodist Church
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

NEWSLETTER

May 2020



Minister: Rev'd Mmasape Zihle

www.drive-methodist.church

Church Mission Statement of The Drive Methodist Church

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

Our Minister writes:

“Who is to blame?”

Whenever something goes wrong, be it a road accident, a window or a vase breaking, a deadline missed or a meal burnt, or even a global pandemic, the question inevitably gets asked: “Who’s fault is it? Who is to blame?” And fingers get pointed in all manner of directions but rarely to self.

As I write the letter, the government has just extended the initial 21 days lockdown by another 21 days in the face of increasing new infections and rising death tolls. With the lockdown comes the rising concern for the economic downturn and potential depression as job losses and poverty soar. The question continues to be asked “whose fault is it?”

When God created the world he put everything we would need to survive in abundance but through human action to want to possess and hoard for ourselves we developed economies of bartering and finance. God’s economy was freely received – freely given. As we celebrate Easter we are reminded of how God in love gave Jesus to take the place for our failings. Similarly in John 9.1-4 we read: “As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him”.

It is possible that we are where we are as a human race to learn the greatness of God in response to our actions (cumulative actions) of omission and commission to creation and each other. Jesus’ life, death and resurrection is for us a gift, a second chance to live life differently, to make better choices.

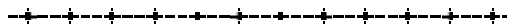
Rather than seek to blame and to scapegoat, we are to find a way to be there for those who will be hard hit physically, emotionally, mentally and economically by this great ill. Ours is to help rebuild lives and to show Christ' love shown to us.

As we celebrate this month what it means to be Methodist, I conclude with John Wesley's words for us to uphold social holiness equally as we hold scriptural holiness – living out the gospel:

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can".

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! ALLELUIA

Mmasape



We ask for God's blessing and pray for all those in our church family who are unwell and for all those we have concerns for at this time.

We send Sandra Runeckles best wishes, as she starts another round of treatment. Sandra is in good spirits and has been doing lots of crafting and gardening. Please remember Sandra and her family in your prayers.

We were very sad to hear of the deaths of Kay Whiddon's father, Vassos and Amy Gabbidon's friend, Emerica. We remember Kaye, Amy and all their families and friends in our prayers.

Corinne's funeral was held on Monday 6th April at Banbury in Oxfordshire. Only three people were present. Nic, her younger brother, Lynette, her older sister and Kevin, Nic's friend.

We were able to join together and think of Corinne as Mmasape said a prayer on the WhatsApp group at the time of her funeral.

Easter Cross



Thank you to Lorraine and Peter Bendon for erecting our Easter Cross outside the church and arranging for its decoration with flowers. It looked beautiful!

Many congratulations to Mmasape and Jongi on becoming grandparents to baby Riley, born to daughter Pearl and partner Luke on 26th March.

Well done to David Wright (son of Jo and Andy) on completing a marathon on his balcony and raising almost £2000 for the NHS. A great achievement!

Church Prayer Meeting - 28th May

Due to Coronavirus, this will now be held at home on Thursday 28th May at 7.15pm – 7.45pm. There is a prayer sheet on the Drive Church web-site. Please join us in prayer if you are able.

Bible Reading Group - Date and Time to be Announced on The Drive Together WhatsApp Group.

We will be discussing Luke Chapters 10 to 16 and Proverbs 2
We will use Zoom to Video Conference and post information on the Bible Reading Group WhatsApp group.

If you would like to participate then email John Pearson with mobile number and he will add you to the group and invite you to the discussion.

john.pearson27@ntlworld.com

Jan and John Pearson

Prayers

Here is a selection of morning and evening prayers that have been written or submitted from members of The Drive Together WhatsApp group. Many thanks to all who have contributed to our daily prayers.

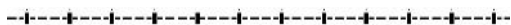


Morning

Lord our God we thank you that you nourish us with your word and Spirit so that in times of storms, turbulence and upheaval we can still stand.

Bless us this day to find strength and courage to stay where we are until this season blows over.

Protect our minds and strengthen our bonds of unity, through Christ our Lord. Amen



We give thanks for your ever present grace and mercy. We thank you also granting another day.

Bless all those who continue to go out to work each day for the benefit of our society.

Help us to use this time in quarantine to continue to connect with each other via electronic means, to deepen our family relationships and also to improve the skills which you have blessed us with.

Let your spirit fall afresh on us all, and bless this day ahead of us. Amen



Living, loving God we greet you as we greet this new day. In its peace and quiet now, we ask that we may find peace and quiet for our restlessness. May we believe in your sufficient grace and trust in the knowledge of your promise to be with us to the end of the age.

We pray for all who need our prayers today. Amen

Lord we pray for our Church again this morning and ask that you will prosper us and give us growth and life. We pray for all our Ministers and Stewards and Leaders and Members. Please grant us the grace which is sufficient for all our needs today. Please keep us in mind of your love and care for us as we go about our day. If we feel daunted by our present circumstances may your Spirit prompt us to remember that you are with us and will never leave us nor forsake us. Amen



Father we thank you that you have brought us safely through another night, be with all your people throughout the world as we face up to this pandemic. We thank you for the courage and skill of all the front line staff, doctors, nurses, technicians, police, firefighters, ambulance crews, carers and all those who help the lonely. We pray through your son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen



Glorious and Almighty God, we thank you for your gift, life in Jesus Christ. With all nature on earth and in heaven we declare your glory. May we live this day as a people of reconciliation - bringing together that which is broken. Live as an Easter people - in new ways of life.

May we show by example as we obey the instruction to stay where we are in order to save lives. May we lock our doors till this passes over.

Be with those who give of themselves for others. Be with the afflicted and be with the sorrowful.

Grant peace to the dead and dying and receive them into your keeping until all souls are resurrected to you. Amen



Evening

Dear God, as we prepare to sleep, calm our minds and dispel any worries and stress that we may have. We thank you for all the blessings you have provided us today. Grant us restful sleep, healing any aches or pains that we may have. Protect us as we lay our heads. Amen

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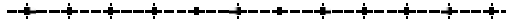
Lord, as this day draws to a close we thank you for watching over us during this blessed day. We think especially of those who cannot be with their loved ones during due to the disruption caused by coronavirus. We pray that you will guide those who will work throughout the night. Let your spirit descend down onto each and everyone of us, giving us peaceful rest. Amen

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Calm me O Lord as you still the storm. Still me, O Lord, keep me from harm. Let all the tumult within me cease. Enfold me, Lord, in your peace. Father bless the work that is done and

the work that is to be. Father bless the servant that I am and the servant that I will be. Thou Lord and God of power shield and sustain me and mine this night. Amen

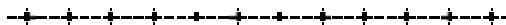
Celtic Daily Prayer



The peace of God be over me to shelter me, under me to uphold me, about me to protect me, behind me to direct me, ever with me to save me. The peace of all peace with us all this night. Amen

O God of goodness and generosity,
We come to you in prayer this evening.
In you we place our confidence, not trusting in our own strength.
Fill us with your love, all -loving God!
Look down on us your Church and send the light of Grace.
Guide us in our decisions, send guidance to your Church.
Send guidance to our government and all whose decisions affect this nation.
Be our peace oh guiding Spirit as we come to rest this night.
Hear now our holy prayers.
We share one faith and love. Amen

Adapted from Desires of the Heart



Thank you for bringing this day to a close. Thank you for giving me rest in body and soul. Your hand has been over me. Forgive my lack of faith and any wrong that I have done today and help me to forgive all who wronged me.

Let me sleep in peace under your protection and keep me from all the temptations of darkness. Into your hands. I commend my loved ones and all who dwell in this house. I commend to you my body and soul. Oh God, your holy name be praised. Amen

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



We asked what people had been up to during the lockdown:

Name them one by one



Suddenly everything had become strange and unusual. My arthritis was even worse than usual and I could hardly crawl around. My treasure of a home help and excellent long-time gardener were unable to come so the house was looking somewhat unloved and the back garden was rapidly becoming overgrown. I hadn't even been out of the door for nearly three weeks, I'd used up the last spoonful of breakfast marmalade and I had a toothache. Frankly it was one hell of a day!

Her Majesty, God bless her, has said that we live in challenging times. They're not only challenging, they're downright frightening and we just don't know how long they're going on do we?

We're only human and we really are being sorely tried, so we're bound to have some bad moments whilst this horror is tearing everything apart. I'm normally quite a cheerful old

girl, but as I stood at the window and watched the rain absolutely chucking it down I have to admit that I felt like taking a long walk off a short pier.

Then I remembered something my Celtic Dad (who had a fine baritone voice) used to say. "When you're fed up, sing". So I did! I'm no Kathleen Ferrier, but somehow I found myself croaking out a dear old chorus I'd learned at Sunday School which went "Count your blessings. Name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done". I think my Muslim neighbour, who was taking out his dustbin, was somewhat surprised too!

Then I sat myself down at my desk and started writing a list of all my blessings beginning with the courage and selflessness of the NHS medics and the kindness and concern shown to this elderly lady living alone by her friends, neighbours and church members during these dark and difficult days.

The list was a foolscap page long for there are so many things we just take for granted and never fully appreciate the way we should.

I can't give you a written guarantee that just writing out a list of your blessings is going to make everything a whole lot better, but all I can say is that it has for this ninety-one year old, 'dyed in the wool' Methodist. It really has.

Give it a try anyway.

Betty Griffiths

What the Bendons have been up to

Generally, we are good at keeping busy but there have been moments when we have thought we may run out of `jobs'.... but of course, we haven't.



The beautiful weather has resulted in our garden getting extra care and thanks to Peter's skills we now have a bug hotel which looks at home under our enormous Bay tree.

Our Spaniel Flo has taken up the extra time she has on her paws to patrol the bird feeders, eat any minute specks of bird food she can find and generally act as a security guard on her patch.

However, she wasn't too happy when I bought dog clippers and elevated myself to `dog groomer' status, but I'm sure her coat will grow again very soon!

Does deep cleaning plug holes and polishing leaves of the house plants count as new interests? I do hope not. I did manage to read a whole book in one day which felt like a bit of an achievement. A first for Peter was making shortbread which was very moreish. We will make sure to have some to enjoy with our coffee at church when we are able to all meet up again.

I've loved having more time to chat to my friends and family and we've even played Trivial Pursuit and other board games via computer screen with a group of friends but the overwhelming feeling is to see everyone and go to places we both miss. Keeping spirits up for the elderly people in the family and ensuring that they are busy and occupied is keeping us on our toes.

I am a compulsive volunteer so jumped at the chance to be an NHS Check in and Chat Responder which requires talking with people who are isolating and feeling lonely and anxious. Interestingly, to date I haven't had any referrals and I hope this means that we have all been really aware of those around us and offering support where needed without resorting to an organised service.

I continue my involvement with the Essex Crisis Support Team who during this crisis have set up a Well Being data base to link those in need with the appropriate support.

We continue to take joy in what we have and look forward.....

Lorraine Bendon



My Daily Exercise

I suspect that for many of us, one of the few positives to come out of the "lockdown" has been time to undertake activities that we cannot fit into our normal daily routines. For me, this has been the opportunity to visit as many of the local parks as I can as part of my daily permitted exercise. Where possible I have followed the course of the small rivers that flow through (and under) many of the parks and supply the park lakes.

On Good Friday I walked to South Park just off Green Lane. On Easter Sunday I walked over to the church to place some flowers on the cross. My route took me along the Cran Brook which enters the park near Perth Rd and feeds the boating lake before discharging into the Wash. On Easter Monday I ventured south into Mayesbrook Park and followed the course of the Mayes Brook which is visible for much of the way. On Tuesday I walked through my local Goodmayes Park and to

my surprise found a new short cut across Orchard Playing Fields to the south of the park.

On Wednesday I went north through Seven Kings Recreation ground and then into Seven Kings Park. I was following the route of Seven Kings Water which flows from Hainault Forest, through Hargreaves Scout Camp, along the side of Seven Kings Park and eventually joins Loxford Water at the lake in South Park. I was particularly pleased to find the location of "Happy Valley". This is a small wooded dell with a footbridge across the stream on the eastern edge of the park and features in a book of old Ilford photos that I have.

On Thursday I walked to Valence Park in Dagenham. The park is notable for the Grade 2 listed 17th C manor house complete

with moat. Previously used as the Borough's Town Hall it is now a museum thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. On Friday I set off west to visit Loxford and Barking Parks. Barking Park has an attractive boating lake fed by Loxford Water.

On Saturday I ventured over to St Chad's Park. The Mayes Brook rises in the north east corner of the park, but there is nothing to see apart from a very large manhole cover, as the stream here is culverted. And on Sunday I walked to Parsloe's Park in Dagenham.

At the time of writing there is at least another three weeks of lockdown. So I have made a list of parks that I can reasonably visit on foot. The list includes: Little Ilford Park, Goresbrook Park, Pondfield Park, Old Dagenham Park, Clayhall Park, Wanstead Park and Barkingside Rec which is enough to keep me busy for another week or so!

Jeremy Foster

Keeping going during lockdown



- I've walked round Loch Lomond with Julia Bradbury also been to the Lake District.
- Dived down my needlework box and found end of a fancy wool – now a slim line scarf.
- Decorated an Egg Tree and displayed it in the window with lights at night.
- Can't count how many games of patience I've played.
- Gardening is limited so going for the wild garden option have Devon primroses and comfrey everywhere.
- Time for exercise and another walk up and down the garden. Hooray for the sunshine.

Audrey Taylor

Abroad thoughts from home



To escape the dreadful news, I have enjoyed talking to friends and relations far and near. I have telephoned Denmark, France, Canada, the USA and Switzerland and most people are doing the same as us; staying in as instructed, often by their children. A few are able to shop in smaller places near their homes.

Usually I only exchange Christmas cards with these people; we haven't spoken to each other for years.

St Georges Day was very different this year, but the flag was outside my front window as usual. What a dreadful dragon we have to defeat this year. We need Saint George to help King George and all the other hospitals.

Susan Ruckes

News from the Wright/Sayers clan

Dad (Frank) would like to wish everyone well, and says he misses seeing his friends at The Drive. He appreciates the phone calls he has been receiving. Dad and I sang along to some of the Easter day hymns, which we both enjoyed.



Iris has learnt how to ride her bike without stabilisers and an alternative way of tying her shoe laces, that enables them to remain tighter for longer. With Lorna's encouragement, she has also continued with her school work.

We are lucky to have a garden and Andy and Iris have been doing a lot of digging in the sunshine. Andy has planted tomato and courgette seeds, in the hope we get a bumper crop in the summer.

Lorna and Iris have been busy updating Iris' bedroom because now Iris is 8, she is too old for "Frozen" – a Disney film with Princesses!

I have been looking through my mum's hand written recipe book. It dates from the war years and has some interesting ingredients and recipes. Does anyone remember "mock crab?" It was grated cheese, mustard and tomato ketchup. Mixed together, it did look a bit like crab meat. You then had it in a sandwich. Why not try it!

Many of you know that my son, David, completed a marathon on his balcony. He has raised almost £2000.00 for the NHS and thanks to those who sponsored him.

My other son, Timothy, is doing his first year university exams on the computer and is enjoying not having to set his alarm clock.

You and your families are in our prayers, and we are looking forward to seeing you again soon.

Frank Sayers, Jo Wright and family

News from the Rodways



Pauline and I go cycling every day.

Pauline has ditched me for Joe Wickes and his exercise workouts (he has lots of hair).

My working life (and those of my colleagues) is much more flexible and (the enforced) working at home will become the norm.

Colin Rodway



The Drive – online!

From time to time, we all moan about our lives. Sometimes it takes a situation like the current “lockdown” to make some of us realise how fortunate we are.

Personally, I am fortunate to have a secure job which pays me to sit in my comfortable home with a south-facing garden, where I can chat with my friendly neighbours over the fence. I’m in (reasonably!) good health, so I don’t have to queue outside the pharmacy for prescriptions. I have well-stocked local shops just around the corner, and a car for occasional trips to Tesco when necessary. It’s made me acutely aware of

people who do not enjoy so many of the things I take for granted.

I was a child in the 70s (hard to believe, I know!) and remember the power cuts of the 3-day week. I remember this as an exciting time – the lights would flash off and on 20 minutes before the power went off completely, giving us time to rush around the house and find the candles. Then we would spend the evening in the glow of the gas fire in the front room playing board games on the carpet. I imagine it wasn't quite such an exciting time for my parents and many other families with young children to entertain when the TV went off!

So I wonder – how would we have coped if this pandemic had struck when those of my generation were children? Because now, many of us have home computers and... THE INTERNET! What a lifesaver this has turned out to be. People can stay in touch as never before – my mum has learned how to use FaceTime so that we can see each other as we chat every day. I have finally given in and started using WhatsApp.

Many of us can work from home (boo...). We can stream any amount of entertainment directly into our homes – I've taken advantage of some of the live recordings of concerts and theatre shows that have been made available. Musicians of all kinds, most of whom have no work at the moment, have taken to the internet in order to keep performing.

And churches all over the country have been recording or live streaming their services so that people at home can stay connected with their place of worship, "united in purpose though separate in place". Some were already using the internet as a form of outreach and are already expert at it – most however have been forced into it and are learning very quickly! All of this online activity has meant that we are able

to “visit” many churches each Sunday – something I can rarely do as I tend to be sitting on the organ and piano stools at The Drive every week! It’s been fascinating experiencing different services of different traditions and also the different ways they have been put together.

People have been speculating about what will change as a result of the “lockdown”. One thing I’m sure of is that The Drive, in common with many churches, will continue to have more of an online presence. Now could be the time to start planning what that will look like. The WhatsApp groups will continue. We will make more use of our excellent website. Creating films and online worship might not be a weekly thing, but could be part of our future witness. Any thoughts and ideas?

And for those not able to access all this digital activity, the Newsletter is still a vital link – thanks Diane for keeping it going!

Andrew Taylor

News from Woodlands Family Centre

Hello All

In the midst of this difficult time for us all I thought you might like to know how we are continuing with our service.

Woodlands Family Centre is endeavouring to provide ‘business as usual’ to the vulnerable children and families the best way we can. Parents whose children are in care want to be assessed so that they can hopefully have their children returned to them as quickly as possible.

Where it is safe to do so (no symptoms shown by family member or assessor) then Social Distancing is practised.

We have found that the family centre is an environment that enables this quite well; we are fortunate to have a good housekeeper who is learning very quickly what he needs to do with anti-bacterial wipes!

If during the assessment process it is necessary to Socially Isolate then we are using visual social media (Zoom, Skype etc.) so that the sessions can continue; using this medium means the assessor still has the benefit of observing body language and personality traits. The Family Courts are holding Virtual Hearings and these are working well too.

Each family is being individually risk assessed to ensure that they and the social workers are not put at risk; the child's welfare remains paramount.

Essex County Council have had to stop all face to face contact with children over 6 months old. This is to protect the child and the foster carer's home environment from potential contamination. Contact supervisors are being very creative with parents/children so that they still manage to have good quality contact; it is amazing how well the parents have coped with this new 'rule'. Those parents who are permitted to have face to face contact with their babies are required to have their temperature taken beforehand to ensure it is safe for all parties for this to continue.

As employees of ECC we feel quite well cared for. We have full sets of PPE and training on how to use this effectively along with counselling and bereavement support if required. We have an opportunity to be 'tested' at Stanstead Airport if we believe we have Covid-19, with results coming back within 48 hours.

Workers are being encouraged to work from home wherever possible so that Social Distancing in work can be better achieved. To prevent workers feeling isolated, daily virtual coffee breaks/team meetings are taking place thus promoting peer relationships, reflective supervision and camaraderie.

The workers at Woodlands Family Centre thank The Drive Methodist Church for their ongoing support and would be grateful for your prayers at this difficult time for us all.

We hope you all stay well, safe and at home.

Laurette
Team Manager Woodlands Family Centre



A few puzzles to keep you busy...(those on the WhatsApp Group will have already seen these but they may want to have another go!)

Rearrange the letters to find out the names of the books in the Bible...

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Used ox | 11. sew herb |
| 2. hi, mac | 12. money due to 'R' |
| 3. O, I had B.A. | 13. Ben's rum |
| 4. coins a loss | 14. threes |
| 5. to my hit | 15. Mt. Wheat |
| 6. me, Saul | 16. hurt |
| 7. metal nations | 17. raze |
| 8. O, Sam | 18. I select cases |
| 9. no Oslo fogs on 'M' | 19. a shoe |
| 10. cats | 20. shines on a salt |

Take the letters of the words THE DRIVE METHODIST CHURCH, find 20 words within those and use those 20 words in a short story. How creative can you be?

Audrey Taylor submitted this puzzle and here is her story:

Time to shut up shop, we must not herd together thus we shout and strum and do not stay mute.

We hope you are not sore and rose feeling well. We must strive not to feel hurt.

Jeremy has checked the meters, the trees are blossoming – how high is the oak tree in metres?

Together we will strive to sort it out and at the end of the day dive under the duvet for comfort.

Can you find her 20 words?

Find 16 books of the Bible hidden in the paragraph below:

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. A certain luke, kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others, it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to numbers of our readers. To others it was a job. We want it to be a most fascinating little moment for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help find them. I will quickly admit it usually takes the preacher to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how you will compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen books of the Bible in this paragraph.



When this is over

When this is over, may we never again
Take for granted a handshake with a stranger
Full shelves in the shops, conversations with neighbours
A crowded theatre, Friday night out.

The taste of communion, a routine check up
The school rush each morning, coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring, each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.

When this ends,
May we find, that we have become
More like the people we wanted to be
We were called to be, we hoped to be
And may we stay, that way – better, for each other
Because of the worst.

Laura Kelly Fanucci

Deadline for June Newsletter – 24th May