

THE LINK

The Magazine of Portsmouth Methodist Church

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Week 16 – July 5th 2020

Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest – Matthew 11:28

Information

The government has announced that churches can reopen for worship from July 4th. The Church Council has set up a delegated committee to plan for and implement the necessary measures for this to be done as safely as possible in line with both government and Church guidelines. Each centre will be ready to open at different times, due to a range of local factors. It maybe that Trinity will open on July 19th, if so this will be confirmed next week. However, the Communion service for the evening of July 19th will not go ahead. Further information will appear here as and when it is available.

John is on leave from June 29th to July 13th. If you have any urgent need of ministerial support please contact Deacon Laura Evans on Email: laurajevans@me.com or Tel: 01243 376786

A reminder of times when centres are now open for private prayer:
Copnor – Wednesday 10.30-11.30, Trinity – Tuesday 12.00-1.00,
Thursday 10.00-11.00 and Saturday 2.00-3.00.

The dial-up service is new every Sunday and is available by phoning 02393873759.

Worship materials for Sunday July 5th 2020

Opening Prayer

Jesus, I come to you to celebrate your love and to receive your word.

You taught that we must worship God in spirit. I long to worship with your people, but I know you are with me, in these difficult times. Amen.

Hymn: Love divine, all loves excelling (Singing the Faith No 503)

Let us pray together:

Lord God, I am in wonder at the world you have created and the life you have given me. I thank you for that gift of life and the joy of sharing my life with others.

I have not always lived my life as you would wish. Yet, even as I confess this to you, I know your forgiveness by the suffering and death of your Son, Jesus Christ, my Saviour. Amen.

Today's letter to an Early Church: Romans 7. 15-25a

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

Time to Reflect

Jesus' says that he is offering a new way to God. Like the old way, it aims for salvation, but He offers us strength and comfort on our path to God.

He calls us to accept the need for forgiveness, and the salvation He offers to us. Then we can receive the Spirit to follow God's way with the knowledge of His Love.

Jesus says people criticise him for not conforming to their expectations. Those who fear his message point to how he lives his life, as they had done regarding John the Baptist.

If, through our calling, we receive or fear such criticism, we must rise above it. Seeing others, we should look to what their words and actions mean for us, rather than judging their outward appearance.

It is reported that when Sydney Carter wrote the well-known hymn “Lord of the Dance” he expected the Church to dislike it because it was different. Happily, it was accepted, perhaps not as quickly as it deserved, and is now a familiar celebration of Jesus’ life.

Jesus speaks of the word of God being hidden from the wise, of those who allow wisdom or knowledge to hide the love of God, and who see the detail of the Law as overriding God’s calling that we should love God and our neighbour.

In the tale of the ‘Good Samaritan’ it was a priest and a Levite (someone who would assist the priest in the Temple), who would know the Law, who walked by.

In writing to the Romans, Paul speaks of the conflict between following the Law and accepting the call of Jesus.

This does not mean that we can disregard the Law. Indeed, often the Law shows us how to love our neighbour, but the love God shows us is not following a set of rules but a supreme act of love through suffering. Our call to respond should also be through Love.

All this is through God’s love for us, shown in the grace we are offered when he sent His Son to die for our forgiveness and salvation.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

I thank you Lord for the gift of your Son: for His life, His sufferings and death and for His Resurrection and Ascension, for the witness, salvation and hope He gives.

I thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit to those who have come to you, and especially for the gift of that Spirit in your Church.

I rejoice in the work and witness of your Church and pray that it may continue to strive to fulfil your work and proclaim your Love.

I pray for the needs of the world, thinking especially at this time of those affected by the Coronavirus, but remembering too all who suffer including those whose plight seemingly goes unnoticed. Be with all those suffering in any way. Especially be with.....(people known to me)

Be with those whose lives impact others: leaders in government, or the workplace, health care workers, teachers, emergency workers and all those on whom people depend. Grant them the wisdom and the strength to know and to follow your way.

Lord, I commend all men, women and children to your unfailing love through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn – Lord of the Dance (or a song, poem known to you).

A prayer of blessing

May the blessing of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and remain with each of us sharing His worship today and always.