

BISHOP STREET METHODIST CHURCH

... serving people in Leicester city centre through welcome, worship and mission

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(Reg. charity 1129068)

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Open Forward Planning Meeting, Tonight Thursday 9 July 7.30 - 9pm (on Zoom) - Taking forward 13 June Vision Morning ideas, and considering Church reopening possibilities.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5604319478>

Meeting ID: 560 431 9478

Password: 343329

Dear Kindred Disciples of Christ,

The Methodist Church has an article on re-opening churches from Jude Levermore, the Head of Mission, who writes of her hopes for how the Church will move forward, by being 'the pilgrim people of the moment':

"As we begin to think about 'going back into our buildings' I am hopeful that we will take time to consider what we have learned from being out of them. I am hopeful that we will have solidified our understanding that church is not a building- we teach that to our children, but do we hold that in our hearts? We, the people are the church, the body of Christ meeting together in community, acting together in mission, longing together for the transformation of our world, responding together to our calling.

I'm praying that as we share a road map for leaving lockdown, with all its needful risk assessments and procedures, we will guard against entering another lockdown, that of being so caught up in our buildings that we miss the opportunities to be church without them.

First undertake a spiritual assessment; to what is God calling this church, this chapel? I believe the Spirit might be asking us to be brave, to not cling to the old but to be the pilgrim people of the moment. Let's be a people of vision, let's not long to get back to normal, let's see what God might do if we allow ourselves to be led somewhere new." These are inspiring thoughts, and they support the Leicester Trinity Methodist Circuit's concern that a return into our buildings should not be done in a hurry.

Recent news from the Government and from the Methodist Church on reopening churches (whether for private prayer or for a worship service) involves at least a team of four people per church (who are not in the four 'at-risk' categories). These roles are: a Covid-19 Responsible Person; a Steward at the door who registers people as they arrive; a Steward introducing the service, as usually happens; and someone who is mindfully aware of people's pastoral needs, and whether there is

anything which needs following up. A cleaning team is also needed. Bishop Street Methodist Church also needs the risk assessment to take account of the Chapel Cafe, rental groups, and individuals entering the building, all of whom will need to list their name and contact details for the sake of 'tracking and tracing'.

A deep clean is currently being required before and after each event, which basically involves a thorough clean of all frequently touched surfaces. Reducing people's contact with surfaces and objects is better than relying on cleaning once contact has taken place. The risk assessment therefore involves thinking about how a church (or other premises) can limit the movement of people as far as possible and reduce people's need to touch surfaces or objects. airing the building before and after events is also essential.

At the moment the risk assessment, procedures, and volunteers needed for reopening are rather daunting. As time progresses, if the virus recedes, these demands may lessen. What we're being encouraged to consider in the face of these demands is: what has been learned about Church and about being people of God during the past 3 months? What is God asking us to take forward from these experiences, rather than simply trying to resume things as they were before (which isn't really possible at the moment.) Let's share together our thoughts and insights on these questions.

Rev'd Fran Rhys

A pastoral letter from the Chair of the Northampton District:

30th June 2020

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Having heard of the extended period of lockdown which is being put in place in Leicester, just as other communities are being offered a significant relaxation of the rules I wanted to write and assure you of my love and prayers and those of the District and the connexion. The Methodist Conference is meeting virtually and the President prayed for you, your communities, hospitals, schools, businesses, care homes and churches this morning.

I know how hard this must be for you all, after so many weeks of restricted activity, and how many of you have lost loved ones and already been impacted on by Covid-19. I am aware there have been some mixed messages and little warning of what was being put in place for Leicester. Clarity helps and uncertainty just adds to anxiety. I wanted to write to you to assure you that the whole District is praying for you and to thank you for your continued faithful witness as Methodist people in Leicester. I know that you will continue to be kind, generous and compassionate Christian neighbours to all who are impacted by this decision.

We hold you, and all whom you care for, in the everlasting and generous love of God.

Every blessing,

Rev'd Helen Cameron

Circuit Diary Dates

Rev'd Edson Dube's Farewell Service, Sunday 26 July, 6pm (on Zoom)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83528524403?pwd=NkNlOGsvaVVML0pLSUJmWWJlNElmZz09>

Meeting ID: 835 2852 4403

Password: 239119

Giving

Thank you to so many of you! Your generous giving to the church has reached 95% of the level anticipated, should services have been held in church. It's best if you can send in your offering now, so that the church can claim Gift Aid on it, rather than waiting until the church reopens. You could post a cheque to the church's gift aid officer, Tony Moore at 46 Holmfield Road LE2 1SA.

Alternatively you could make a BACS transfer to Bishop Street Methodist Church, The Cooperative Bank sort code 08-92-99 and account number 65242955. Give your name as a reference.

Finally, we now have the ability to receive payments by credit or debit card or to set up a Direct Debit on line. These can be accessed from the Donate buttons on the church website – www.bishopstreetchurch.org.uk

To God be the glory, great things God has done!

Circuit Churches

Many of our Circuit churches are in financial trouble. Following a generous donation, the circuit has set up a fund to enable it to offer support to help those churches in their mission. If you want to support this in addition to the brilliant way you are supporting your local church, please use these details:

The Circuit's bank details are:

Name Leicester Trinity Methodist Circuit (for cheques)

Sort Code 08 92 99 The Co-Operative Bank

Number 6526 2650

The donor should use their name as the reference if paying by bank transfer.

If you are able to Gift Aid your donation, please contact finance@leicestertrinitycircuit.org.uk

Other News

If you didn't have time to listen in to the Methodist Conference you can catch up now with discussions on everything from disinvesting from fossil fuel companies to

whether or not online communion should be taking place. There's also an array of fringe events that you can access here: <https://lght.ly/k181bie>
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-conference/conference-2020/conference-live-stream/watch-again/>

Take a look at these 30 visions for a post-Covid Leicester. Which do you especially like the look of, and why? Send an email to be included in the next notices...
<https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/30-ideas-better-leicester-de-4190039>

Facebook Group Bishop Street Community needs your likes and your comments. Inspiring daily posts to keep you and others encouraged during this difficult time. There's a post on 1 July from the Leicester Council of Faiths with a call for unity during this extended lockdown period in our city.