



Sunday 28th March
Palm Sunday

Connecting church family within the Market Drayton Circuit; Market Drayton, Ashley and Hinstock, during the restrictions of Covid-19

Market Drayton Methodist Circuit Newsletter

Notices

PRAISE@4 ZOOM is online on this afternoon (28th March). Sure to be great fun but from the comfort of your own home. Please book for your family/child(ren) at mdmc.org.uk/calendar. You can download the activity pack from the booking page of the website or collect it in person. The Zoom link will be emailed to you directly in advance of the event. Tell your friends!!

BABY NEWS! Huge congratulations to Matt & Cathy Baker on the birth of their daughter, and sister to Luke, Alice Audrey Juliet, on Wednesday. Please pray for them in this new chapter of their lives.

MAUNDY THURSDAY DEVOTIONS

Hopefully you have received (either by email or post) a pdf copy of 'A Maundy Thursday Act of Worship' at home. Full details, with music, and more copies can be found online at mdmc.org.uk/maundy. This can be done individually or with those you live with—children can be included too. It requires just a little preparation, so take a look at the sheet well in advance. If you would

like a paper copy, please contact Al Savill at the contact details at the bottom of the sheet.

MDC CHURCH SERVICES

Ashley Methodist Church will restart services in church on Easter Sunday (4th April) and on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month for April & May. Church will also be open for private prayer on Thursdays, 11am-12pm and on Good Friday 12–1pm. Please book on AMC website for the service on Easter Sunday (ashleymethodist.co.uk).

MDMC services start today (28th March) and every Sunday after that. Everyone is very welcome—although booking will again be required online or by phone to ensure adequate social distanced seating! Booking is now open on the MDMC website mdmc.org.uk/calendar

EASTER SERVICES

at the Anglican Churches around Ashley are as follows. Sunday 28th March, 9.30am Palm Sunday (St John's, Ashley) Maundy Thursday, 7pm Communion Service (St Mary's, Mucklestone) Good Friday Devotion, 2 - 3pm followed by distribution of communion (Ashley Parish Church) Easter Day, 9.30am – Celebration of Communion (Ashley Parish Church) Please contact the churches directly if you want to attend, or let Margaret Maxwell know (01630 673952).

MD CIRCUIT WORSHIP

ONLINE

First streaming at 10.30am on Sundays, then always available
⇒ mdmc.org.uk
⇒ ashleymethodist.co.uk
⇒ YouTube – search MDMC

Weekly Zoom Prayer Thursdays, 7.30-8pm

Meeting ID: 771 3865 0306
Passcode: i10m9R

IN CHURCH

MDMC

10.30am every
Sunday

Please book in by the Friday:
Phone: 01630 655957 and leave a message with your name and a contact number and the names of those in your group/bubble who will also attend.

Internet: mdmc.org.uk/calendar

Ashley MC

10.30am 3rd Sunday
of the month

OTHER ONLINE WORSHIP

Truro Methodist Church

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2XL8XC12GnrsFtWUJlbdww>

Wesley's Chapel London

Live Streams at 11am Sundays
www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA

PHONE WORSHIP

0808 2812514

Free Methodist church Dial-a-prayer

0808 281 2478

Free Methodist Church Dial-the-news (both updated on a Thursday)



If you would like to contribute to this weekly Newsletter, please send items by [Wednesdays](mailto:Wednesdays@mdmc.org.uk) to Al Savill
Email: notices@mdmc.org.uk. Tel: 07966295413. Please send testimonies, prayers, news, notices, activities etc.

The Beauty of the Cross

Isaiah 53: 1-12

Mark 15: 1-39

A Prayer to Start

Lord, we seek to recognise your presence, knowing that you are always with us. When we consider your great sacrifice and the degradation you suffered as the beautiful, incarnate One, we are overwhelmed by your love outpoured. Open our eyes to the extreme cost of your surrender, so that we might hold tight to the hand of promise today. Amen



To the King of glory and light, all praises

To the only giver of life, our maker
The gates are open wide: We worship you

Come see what love has done, amazing
He bought us with his blood, our saviour
The cross has overcome, we worship you

*Shout hosanna, Jesus he saves
Shout hosanna He rose from the grave
Come and lift him up, hosanna*

Now let the lost be found, Forgiven
Death could not hold him down, He's risen
So let the saints cry out 'We worship you,

The same power that rolled the stone away
The same power alive in us today
King Jesus we call upon your name
No other name, (x2)

*Shout hosanna, Jesus he saves
Shout hosanna He rose from the grave
Come and lift him up, hosanna*

Brett Younker, Kristian Stanfill, Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash

This passage in Mark's Gospel begins with one Roman Officer asking Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Yet it ends with another Roman officer declaring, "This man truly was the Son of God!" Sandwiched between is Pilate's reluctance to give in to the leading priests' accusations. Pilate still wanting to release this 'King of the Jews' but the leading priests who Mark said 'had arrested Jesus out of envy,' stirred up the crowd so that they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!' As we read Mark's account, we are taken with the injustice of it all. In exchange for a good man was the release of a revolutionary murderer who Mark names, Barabbas. It is not lost on us that the meaning of *Barabbas* is *Son of the Father*. As one *Son of the Father* is released, another *Son of the Father* is crucified.

By all accounts, this is not a *fair trade*. I am reminded of the song by Hillsong, "A Beautiful Exchange." In the lyrics are the words, '(Jesus) "you gave your life in a beautiful exchange." Of course, Mark's Gospel portrays Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion as anything but beautiful.

We see the same lack of beauty in Chapter 53 of Isaiah. In verse 2, we read "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him." Yet in the very ugliness and scandal of the cross, Jesus gave us the most beautiful gift of all. He bore our sins so that we might be counted righteous. This is the beautiful

exchange. We give him our filthy rags, and he clothes us with beauty and wonder. Do you wonder what Jesus thinks about the cruelty of the cross now?

Holy Week is a time to reflect not only on the cruelty of the cross but the beauty too. I am back to where we started that by all accounts this was not a *fair trade*. Yet, for you and me, it is a beautiful exchange. Perhaps, Jesus believes it to be so! Jesus said to his disciples, "You will weep and mourn over what is going to happen to me, but the world will rejoice. You will grieve, but your grief will suddenly turn to wonderful joy" (John 16:20).

What do you think is the beauty of the cross? I think the beauty of the cross is found in the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, His Son. I believe the beauty of the cross is Jesus. Are you like the first Roman Officer (Pilate) still asking if Jesus is really the King of the Jews? Or are your exclamations more like the other Roman officer, "This man truly was the Son of God."

Materials by Heather Wilson (The Methodist Church)

Activity

Make space this week to sit down with a pen and paper or some simple craft materials. Sketch or make the cross in whatever form or style, ask the Holy Spirit to inspire you – whether it is basic or complex. Write words or prayers in or around your cross, if you wish.

Prayer

Almighty God, as we stand at the foot of the cross of your Son, teach us to see and know his love for us, that with humility, love and joy we may place at his feet all that we have and all that we are, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

#niteblessings

May you discover God makes beautiful things out of what is broken. May you lay your life at the foot of the Cross, and find that pearls of purpose are formed from the grit of our frailty. May you wait on God's intervention. God sees all that is happening around you

Malcolm Duncan