

**Warwick Methodist Church**  
**Keeping in Contact During Covid-19**  
**Number 21 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Dear Friends,

This week brings a hotch-potch of news, thoughts and changes.

First of all, an early Happy Birthday to Gordon Hemming, who will be 90 years young on 11<sup>th</sup> July. We hope that your family manage to rustle up some celebrations for you, Gordon, although we can't quite believe you have reached that milestone. You seem to have taken a leaf out of Ron Brisby's book – Ron has recently started joining the After Service Coffee via Zoom on Sunday mornings, and told us a couple of weeks ago that he walks a mile and a half along the lanes round Cedar Lodge before breakfast, and the same again later in the day. That must be the secret to a long and healthy life!

Speaking of Cedar Lodge – I wonder if you saw the extensive piece about MHA on News Night a couple of weeks ago? It talked about the situation in care homes during the pandemic – in MHA's case, they never ran out of PPE because the various homes shifted supplies between themselves as and when needed. Cedar Lodge has thankfully remained free of Covid, and all staff and residents are now being tested weekly as part of a pilot project. It has been amazing to witness the dedication and hard work of the staff, and the ways they have sought to support residents and families while they have not been allowed to visit. If you know of someone looking for a care placement, either for respite or longer term, Cedar Lodge (nursing and dementia care), Cedar Lawn in Stratford and Homewood (residential care) all have space.

Now for some changes on the church leadership team. We say a big Thank You to Cynthia Webb and Denise Godfrey as they both step down as stewards after giving sterling service; we say Welcome to Anne Oliver and Julie Barr, who are joining the stewards' team (these appointments will need to be confirmed retrospectively by the Church Council, when we are able to hold one.) The team which is looking after church life during lockdown therefore now comprises: Christine Fell, Trevor Blades, Anne Oliver, Julie Barr, David Witham, Ian Meddoms and myself. Although we are not quite ready to announce them, there are also some changes coming to our pastoral visiting team – watch this space!

David and I have completed several more jigsaws since Noah's Ark, but have just embarked on a new one – a poster celebrating the centenary of Waterloo Station in 1948. It is a tricky one because the top and bottom pictures are the same, but different. One is



set in 1948, the other in 1848. There are people in the same positions and poses – but dressed differently. Some aspects of the picture, such as the clock faces, are completely identical. The saving grace there is that the two halves of the picture are slightly offset – if you try to put part of the face of the top left hand clock into the bottom left hand clock, it doesn't quite fit, so you know you've got it wrong.

What about our life of faith? Life during lockdown is very different – but some things are the same. Other things... well, we may try to put them into the picture, but they don't quite seem to fit any more. When that happens, you can do one of two things. You can force them in, and pretend you've got it right. Or you can admit the error, take the wrong piece out, and carry on looking until you find the right one. And

you know the right one when you find it – it slips easily into place, and you have no doubt. It's like that when you find the right way of expressing or exploring your faith – it just fits.

When it comes to what kind of practices fit our faith, there is no single right answer, because we are all different. For one person, what fits may be sitting quietly in the garden simply resting in the awareness of God's presence; for another, it may be singing hymns at the top of their voices; for another, it might be reading, discussion and intellectual endeavour; for another, their faith lives most strongly through their actions and relationships. While we can't do what we are used to doing, we can mourn and lament; but we can also explore different paths. We can ask ourselves – what is permanent? What is true? What is meaningful.

The heart of the Gospel is love – God's love, which created and continues to create, and inspires us to love in our turn. The fashions may change – but God is eternal. A faith which is true, a spirituality which is worthwhile, brings us into contact with all that God is. When we are touched by that, we know that we have found the missing piece.

Keep safe; keep caring; keep praying.  
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