

From the Methodist Website:

“As we deal with the practicalities of protecting people from coronavirus we continue to remember Our Calling to care for the other whilst always being mindful that is that our call is always to respond to the good news in Jesus. We are a people of hope we need to declare and model good news in these difficult times.”

Revd Paul Wood, Interim Director of the Ministries Team

“Our Calling is to respond in love and service to the needs of our communities. We are grateful to our sisters and brothers around the world who hold us in prayer as we hold them. We should not be afraid *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”* [2 Timothy 1:7](#).

Head of Mission, Jude Levermore

But there are many things in the current situation for which we can give thanks:

Many of us are spending more time with immediate family, are meeting our neighbours more, even if it is limited to meetings on doorsteps or over fences, and many are having more contact with distant family by technological means because time has been freed up where other activities are not taking place.

Our Circuit services have accessed people who even in normal times would not be able to attend church and people who have moved elsewhere. I remember Deacon Pru appearing in the chat for Kan's farewell service. To have been present at a normal service would have involved many hours of travel!



Circuit Prayer Diary

October 2020

Talk of a Harvest Moon on the television, details of an online Harvest Service on Facebook and website, pictures of a bountiful parsley crop. The month definitely began in the Harvest Season.

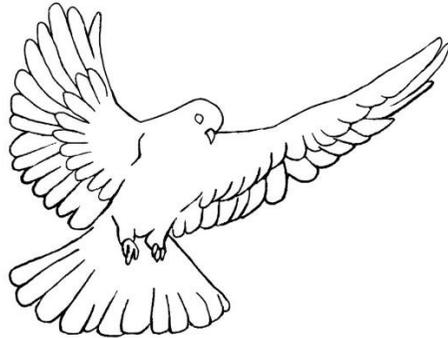
Many of us have done more in our gardens because, even if we have been working we have been working from home or have had more time at home where evening and weekend activities have been curtailed. We have harvested our own crops, some of us for the first time ever!

There have been many changes in our lives, and adjustments have to be made as situations change.

One change, quite unexpectedly, seems to be a growing awareness of how our actions can affect the planet. Though our energy use at home may be higher if we are working or schooling from home, that it more than offset by massive reduction in overall vehicle fuel use. In between discussions of Covid we hear of our own screens being reached by both David Attenborough and Prince William working separately and together to increase awareness of what we can do to help. We hear too of massive steps being taken by China to reduce their environmental impact.

As we are now in the half term season, Covid levels are rising, and though local numbers are currently low they are on the increase. Allowing the schools to return is being used by some as a possible reason. Hardly anyone seems to remember warnings that as the cold weather moved in cases were likely to increase.

Many are unable to do their normal jobs because of restrictions and depending on their individual settings may be suffering serious hardship as a result.



There are many who need our prayers at the present time:

One of the biggest current pressures many people are facing is financial hardship.

Businesses have closed, others have laid off staff because lack of custom or restrictions on customer numbers because of social distancing. Others again may be working vastly reduced hours.

For many though, mental health and wellbeing is the biggest challenge.

Many who had been shielding throughout lockdown are now allowed to go out and to socialize, but realise that they are at additional risk by mixing.

Many are simply afraid of going out because of the infection risk.

Particularly where people are living on their own this can lead to extreme loneliness. Some of us are able to keep in touch easily through social media and tools such as Zoom, but it is often those most in need who need our prayers and support most because they don't have access.

Others are kept away from direct contact with loved ones in nursing homes. Others again cannot mix because of positive test results. Many children in the Swale area found themselves isolating for at least part of half term because of positive cases within their bubble at school.

Though currently there is some visiting allowed in hospital there are still additional precautions and restrictions.

(There is a really interesting article in Connexion magazine in the current issue about Rev Lynda Cooke's work as a chaplain at Medway Hospital in Covid times).

Help us to remember all these groups and those with other needs in our prayers.