



TOGETHER

NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk

Faith through prayer

Article by Jeff Proctor of Sutton on Trent Methodist Church

I suppose it is reasonable to assume that as individuals we will conduct our prayers in different ways and styles. Some will have the ability to use fine and righteous words that ring around the heavens in a majestic and stylistic manner, words just flowing off the tongue. A Rolls Royce of a prayer you might say. Some may be a little like me, less of a Rolls and more of an old banger when it comes to our daily devotions. Continuing with my analogy, it can be a little difficult some mornings getting the engine to start and to reluctantly admit to ourselves that maybe it could do with 'tuning up'.

A problem in my own case is that my prayer life can lack consistency, either feast or famine. Days or weeks can go by without consistent prayer and then something will probably happen. By consistent, I mean setting aside a specific time to go to God in prayer rather than fitting him in when we find it convenient. We learn of a tragedy, or hear a profound sermon in church. Something will come along that leads us into prayer. We engross ourselves in prayer, dealing with the situation that jolted us originally but after a while our life's journey continues but unfortunately, our prayers don't.

Our prayers can lack honesty, as we wonder if they can actually make a difference. Who am I to tell God anything if he knows all and controls everything? If that is true, why would Jesus have recourse to pray. Prayer to Jesus was his source of strength. It was a way of life to him, turning to prayer in every crisis no matter how great or small. There was no situation, or difficulty for him that would not yield to the power of prayer. Jesus prayed with a fervent passion because he knew who he was talking to, so they were powerful and not to be taken lightly. We witness this passion numerous times in the Gospels, culminating when he hung on the cross praying to his Father to maintain his spirit right to the very end.

In Mark , we read of a father with a sick child who was in need of a miracle offering a prayer to Jesus out of absolute desperation. 'If you can do anything for him, please have pity on us and help us.' Not a confident, or strong prayer was it? No, and certainly not a Rolls Royce, it has more of the old banger about it but nonetheless an honest old banger, an appeal to Jesus born out of a yearning to see the end of his son's suffering. So what led Jesus to cast out the spirit and heal the boy? Remembering that all prayers begin as a yearning, an honest appeal. As unremarkable as this was it was his prayer. It is the response from Jesus that is remarkable. The power is not in the quality of the prayer itself, the power is in the one who hears it. Jesus responded not to the eloquence of the man but to the pain of the man, to the honest prayer of a hurting man.

Since God is moved more by our hurt than by our eloquence, he responded, for that is what Fathers do.

We do not need to know when people are praying for us, or even who they are. It is sufficient to know¹ that God will respond to those he knows who are hurting.



Glimpses of Glory²³⁻²⁻²²

Circuit Service Message | Luke 9:28-36 | Rev Nathan Falla

Have you ever had such an amazing experience that you have never wanted it to end? A holiday that has been all that you have ever wanted it to be, a family occasion that brings out the best in everyone, an act of worship that enabled you to engage, hear and respond to God, where you were lost in wonder, love and praise? A truly mountain top experience that you have wanted to press the pause button so that you can hold on to a moment forever? The disciples are a bit like this in our reading today.

The events of the Transfiguration that moment of transformation when the glory of God is revealed and the three disciples; Peter, James and John gain a glimpse of Jesus in glory is truly awesome. It is no coincidence that Matthew, Mark and Luke in their accounts place this immediately after Jesus speaks of his death for the first time.

Commentators have seen the Transfiguration as a critical moment where Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and the cross is confirmed. Just as at the start of Jesus' ministry when he was baptised there was the voice from heaven so at this important junction we have the voice from heaven! The three disciples see the glory of God on the mountain top with Moses and Elijah, and will see God's glory on the hill of Calvary with the two robbers either side of Jesus.

Jesus withdraws to a quiet place with Peter & John, there is nothing unusual in that, Jesus models for us the need to re-charge our batteries and ensure that we are focussed on God. But what is unusual, is the transformation of Jesus' appearance, the appearance of Moses and Elijah (representing the law and the prophets), and the conversation they had with Jesus about his death.

This was a holy time, a time of great encounter, and though Peter and John were really tired they stayed awake for the duration. I wonder if they thought they were dreaming? Unsurprisingly Peter wants to hold onto this precious moment and suggests making three tents but then they are enveloped in a cloud and hear the voice from heaven, "this is my son, my chosen, listen to him."

I wonder, are we listening to God, are we trying to live on a mountain top when God is calling us to the valleys? It is wonderful to have mountaintop experiences of God, but God is also to be found in the everyday, in the pain and frustrations of life and these are times of transformation too.

Today in the church calendar we reach a junction, behind us is Christmas and Epiphany before us is the journey of Lent and in this place we are reminded of the glory of God. God's glory seen

1. Online Service

This week (27th February) our online circuit service will be led by Nathan Falla.

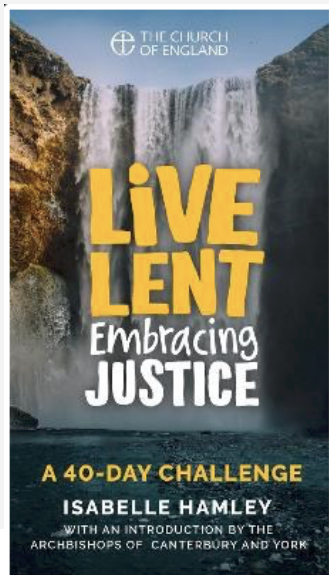
Find it on the 'Newark and Southwell Methodist Circuit' YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit>) why not invite a friend to watch it with you and share the link with them on your social media or by email! (Also available to watch back at any time).

2. 'Zoom' Opportunities

If you're feeling isolated, are not ready to be face to face yet, or can't, but are happy to meet on Zoom, there is a weekly coffee time at 3pm on a Monday run by Charles Street but open to all, email Mel Watson for more details: mellwatson42@gmail.com.

There is also still a weekly Zoom fellowship called 'The Gathering' which is part of Southwell Methodist Church and run by Philip and Francine Holmes. You'd be most welcome, contact Philip to connect:

For your Lent Course Booklet follow this [LINK](#) or get in touch (peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk).
For more study group or course details see below.



on the mountain top but we cannot live life on a mountain top! We have to come back down and live in the everyday.

The Revd Ruth Gee, in her presidential year 2013-14 encouraged the Methodist Church to see glimpses of God's glory, in the everyday. In her opening Conference address, she said:

“Waiting expectantly to glimpse the glory of God means waiting expectantly wherever we are and whatever the circumstances. This recognition of the presence of God is at the heart of mission and of evangelism which are surely about enabling people to recognise God already present with them, about introducing them to Jesus, about being the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

The calling of a church which waits expectantly for glimpses of God's glory is no easy calling. This is the calling to stand alongside people in pain and suffering and to offer something of the love of Christ. This is the calling to recognise the presence of God in the mundane and the ordinary and to help others to find God there as well.

This is the call to recognise and respond to injustice. This is the call to challenge cruelty, indifference and violence as contrary to the will of God. This is the call to do everything we can to ensure that our places are safe places for children and the vulnerable, in the name of Jesus who welcomed the children and reached out to the marginalised.

This is the call to wait expectantly for glimpses of the glory of God even in our weakness. This is the call to follow the wounded and vulnerable Saviour knowing that we too may find ourselves wounded and vulnerable and finding glimpses of God's glory, even there.”

Where do we see glimpses of God's glory? Where do we see God at work? Are we joining in?

The transfiguration was a moment of transformation. Today what in us needs to be transformed, what needs to be transfigured in the dazzling glory of God the light of God that illumines the dark places of our lives that we may truly glimpse and know the glory and love of God.

Are we seeing as God would have us see? Are we hearing as God would have us hear? Are we loving as God would have us love? Are we acting as God would have us act?

The disciples were told not to speak of what they had seen but we need to be bold in being witnesses of God's glory, making God's glory known through our actions and our lives. That the world may know God's love, and be transfigured and transformed. Amen.

Prayers for others

It's easy to see God's glory
on the mountain top,
but we live in a world full of valleys.

May we see your glory in the lives
of those who live in the valley of poverty:
poverty sustained by systems flawed by
economic injustice,
poverty that tears families apart

May we see your glory in the lives
of those who live in the valley of conflict;
conflict that rips communities apart,
conflict that scars and maims
long after the guns are silent.

May we see your glory in the lives
of those who live in the valley of the
shadow of death,
where loved ones are desperately ill,
where someone close has been taken from
us.

May we see your glory
in the lives of those live in the shadow of ill
health, where the future is uncertain
and decisions have to be made,
where pain and infirmity make life so
difficult.

May we see your glory in the lives
of those who live in the valley of
discrimination,
discrimination that excludes,
discrimination that despises and demeans.

Loving God,
you showed your glory
on the mountain top and on the cross,
give us the vision to see your glory
everywhere and give us the courage to
bear witness to it for the glory of your
name. **Amen.**

EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN

If you would like to join a prayer chain and receive prayer requests or to submit a prayer request (with permission of the recipient) please get in touch with Colin Beckett colin1244@gmail.com. It is for those of any church or none!

Songs included in this week's online worship

Jesus is the name we honour (StF354/SoF870) [LINK](#)

Open the eyes of my heart (StF451/SOF1490) [LINK](#)

Purify me heart (StF508/SOF475) [LINK](#)

Swiftly pass the clouds of glory (StF260) [LINK](#)

For YouTube songs click the LINK

Discussion Questions

Church is best done together but we know that this isn't always possible - particularly if you're housebound, isolated or even shielding. But why contact a friend and arrange to watch the church service online or read the newsletter simultaneously and get in touch by telephone afterwards to talk about it. Below are some questions that might help you to reflect together!

1. Have you had a mountain top experience that you just did not want to end? Can you describe it?
2. Where have you been surprised to see glimpses of God?
3. Where can you see God's transformation at work?
4. How might you show God's glory and love through your actions and your life?
5. What change may need to happen in you for this to be a reality?

In-person worship across the circuit during the next four weeks...

March - May 2022		6th Mar 1st of Lent	13th Mar 2nd of Lent	20th Mar 3rd of Lent	27th Mar 4th of Lent Mothering Sunday
Balderton	8:30 am				
	10:30 am	Hardy	Bates HC	LA	Bates
	6:00 pm				Bates 4:00 pm
Charles Street	8:30 AM				
	10:30 am	Hart HC	West	Falla	Mathews
	6:00 pm	Ward	Falla HC	Bates	Falla
Collingham	10:45 am	Hucknall T / HC	Dalby	Hart	LA
Elston	10:45 am			Hibberts HC / 2pm	Ward T
Hope Community	10:30 am	Winnington at B'gate	Falla Breakfast at H'ville / 9am	A Trowbridge at B'gate	Falla HC / at H'ville
Long Bennington	10:30 am	Bates HC	K Trowbridge	Pearce	Gibson
North End	6:00 pm	Hart	Bates	Hibberts	Ward
North Muskham	10:30 am		Morley HC		Winnington
	2:00 pm	Hibberts Café		Falla Café	
Southwell	10:30 am	Hibberts HC	LA	Hibberts	Hibberts
	Other	Bates 4pm	Hibberts PicC / 2pm	Hucknall HC / 4pm	Hibberts Fringe / 6pm
Sutton-on-Trent	10:30 am	Adams	Hibberts Breakfast / 9am	Bates HC	US at Parish Church / 4pm

For full detail of service across the circuit March to May 2022 visit the circuit website:

www.newarkandsouthwellmethodist.org.uk

Join us this lent as we explore the theme 'Embracing Justice'

"This lent we are called to reflect on the injustices of the world and ask what God is calling us to do about them. Over forty days, we step into God's work in the here and now - and in doing so we move from brokenness towards wholeness."



The Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Mondays: 7:45pm for an 8pm start, Zoom. Led by Rev Peter Hibberts. (Contact for details.)

Tuesdays: 2pm, Southwell Methodist Church Welcome Area, Led by Geoff Ayers

Tuesdays or Wednesdays (tbc): 1:45pm for a 2pm start, North Muskham Methodist Church Cafe. Led by Rev Peter Hibberts and Sue Twemlow. (Contact for details.)

Also accessible by as daily devotional: booklet (pre-order), App, email or web.

Contact Rev Peter Hibberts: peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk

Or for more information see <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livelent-2022-church-resources-embracing-justice>