

## Daily readings:

### Sunday 1 November

Monday 2 November  
Tuesday 3 November  
Wednesday 4 November  
Thursday 5 November  
Friday 6 November  
Saturday 7 November

### Matthew 5:1-12

Genesis 12:1-9  
Genesis 17:1-10  
Genesis 18:1-13  
Genesis 19:15-29  
Genesis 21:5-20  
Genesis 22:1-19

### Psalm 34:1-10, 22

Psalm 13  
Psalm 15  
Psalm 16  
Psalm 17:1-8  
Psalm 18:1-19  
Psalm 19

### Sunday 8 November

Monday 9 November  
Tuesday 10 November  
Wednesday 11 November  
Thursday 12 November  
Friday 13 November  
Saturday 14 November

### Matthew 25:1-13

Genesis 23:1-19  
Genesis 24:1-9, 62-67  
Genesis 27:1-5a, 15-29  
Genesis 28:10-22  
Genesis 32:22-32  
Genesis 37:3-28

### Psalm 70

Psalm 20  
Psalm 21:1-7  
Psalm 22:1-18  
Psalm 22:19-31  
Psalm 23  
Psalm 24

### Sunday 15 November

Monday 16 November  
Tuesday 17 November  
Wednesday 18 November  
Thursday 19 November  
Friday 20 November  
Saturday 21 November

### Matthew 25:14-30

Genesis 41:53-42:6  
Genesis 11:1-34  
Genesis 45:1-5  
Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30  
Genesis 49:1-10  
Genesis 37:3-28

### Psalm 90

Psalm 25:1-7  
Psalm 25:8-22  
Psalm 26  
Psalm 27  
Psalm 28:1-2, 6-9  
Psalm 29

### Sunday 22 November

Monday 23 November  
Tuesday 24 November  
Wednesday 25 November  
Thursday 26 November  
Friday 27 November  
Saturday 28 November

### Matthew 25:31-46

Daniel 1:1-6, 8-20  
Daniel 2:31-45  
Daniel 5:1-28  
Daniel 6:6-23  
Daniel 7:1-14  
Daniel 7:15-27

### Psalm 95

Psalm 30  
Psalm 31:1-8  
Psalm 31:9-24  
Psalm 32  
Psalm 33:1-12  
Psalm 33:13-22

### Sunday 29 November

Monday 30 November  
Tuesday 1 December  
Wednesday 2 December  
Thursday 3 December  
Friday 4 December  
Saturday 5 December

### Mark 13:24-27

John 1:35-42  
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10  
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8  
1 Thessalonians 2:9-13  
1 Thessalonians 3:1-5  
1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

### Psalm 80

Psalm 27  
Psalm 34:1-10  
Psalm 34:11-22  
Psalm 34:5-12  
Psalm 39  
Psalm 42

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(During the time of the coronavirus the office is closed to visitors—please do not post urgent items for the time being. Donations by cheque will be collected regularly.)

# Goodrington Methodist Church

# Together



November 2020 issue

Hello Everyone!

It is very important that you should understand this: The prophets' messages in the Bible did not come from their own ideas. That never happens. None of the prophets' messages came because any person wanted to say something. Instead, God's Holy Spirit caused people to speak words that came from God.

(2 Peter 1:20-21, *Easy English Bible*, <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible/easy/>)

I think it is fair to say that most Christians believe that Christian belief and practice are shaped and informed by the Bible but the general authority of the Scriptures is much easier to agree upon than scriptural interpretation. The death of John Wesley (1791) was followed by at least half a century of division in the Methodist movement but, in 1932, Methodism's three largest bodies, the Wesleyan Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the United Methodist Church, were ready to reunite. Nevertheless, the new church needed a formula of words that would bring the different strands of Methodism together and promote unity and stability to the new 'Methodist Church of Great Britain'. Consequently, the *Methodist Deed of Union* (1932) says that 'the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures' is the 'supreme rule of faith and practice'. There has been a tendency to use the expression 'Divine revelation' to imply that though the Bible contains 'Divine revelation' it does so only in general terms and that it is, therefore, the 'Divine revelation' as distinct from the Bible that is the 'supreme rule of faith and practice'. According to this view, parts of the Bible that are regarded as culturally conditioned can be disregarded and the authority of Scripture is thereby relativized. More traditional thought maintains that such a notion would have been foreign to Wesley, who was content to be shown that a doctrine, belief or practice was correct by the 'plain proof of Scripture'. In his preaching, Wesley said he was declaring what he found 'in the Book'.

In the spirit of the Reformation and the seventeenth century Anglicans, Wesley accepted the central place of Holy Scripture in establishing Christian faith and practice. Nevertheless, he realised that it was impossible to come to the Bible without tools to help both in its understanding and application. Often Wesley turned to what is commonly called 'tradition' but is better named 'Christian antiquity'. 'Tradition' simply suggests 'what we have always thought or done' but Christian antiquity goes back to the historic creeds and the writings of the Early Church Fathers. There is no definitive list of these 'Fathers' but they are the theologians who helped shape the creeds. The eighteenth century was a time of scientific revolution and the development of a notion of 'reason' – this is sometimes termed 'The Enlightenment'. The Scientific discoveries (of Galileo, Copernicus, Newton) were read alongside more ancient philosophical work (Plato, Aristotle). Wesley believed that faith would be reasonable in essence but that reason as a tool was still subordinate to Scripture.

Wesley was also concerned that faith should be lively and active. He therefore spoke of 'experience' though by this he did not mean 'life's experience' but what we might call

'evangelical experience' that is the experience that mainly comes from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as mediated by the Holy Spirit.

The great American Methodist scholar, Albert Outler, described Wesley's emphasis on Scripture, Christian antiquity, reason and evangelical experience as the 'Wesleyan' or 'Epworth quadrilateral', though he later regretted this geometric metaphor as it implies that Wesley gave each the same measure of authority. In Wesleyan thought, it is the *interpretation* of Scripture, and not Scripture itself, that is evaluated by the tests Christian antiquity, reason and evangelical experience. When I was in college, Revd Dr Donald English illustrated this with reference to a child's mobile – which in those days meant something that hung above an infant's cot or bed and had rotating objects around a central cord (one of our girls had a set of rabbits) rather than a portable telephone! The mobile only works properly when all the elements are balanced and rotating properly.

In every generation, Christian people have had to respond to questions that arise directly out of the Bible (these are normally what we call doctrinal questions – e.g. the Trinity, who Jesus is and why Jesus died, the work of the Holy Spirit) and questions that arise out of society (these are normally what we call ethical questions – e.g. slavery, abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia). There is no doubt that the pace of change in modern society is quickening all the time. Consequently, issues arise today that would have been unknown to previous generations. In some ways we live in exciting times but in other ways they are very challenging and demanding.

As we face challenging and demanding times we need, if I may quote Revd Dr Donald English again, to live with one foot in the world of the New Testament and one foot in the world of today. That can sometimes mean taking the strain! It's important that Christians engage thoughtfully with the world around us – which, of course, is made up of the people around us, in our families, in our neighbourhoods, in our schools, colleges and workplaces, in society in general, nationally and internationally. It's important that Christians engage thoughtfully with the Bible – we could almost say that the need is growing as fast as the world is changing as fewer and fewer people have any knowledge at all about the Bible or the Christian faith.

Please may I encourage you to have a systematic plan of reading the Bible? You do not have to read chapter after chapter each day (unless you really want to!) but is helpful to have a scheme where you read 10-20 verses each day asking these questions: what does the Bible say; what does the Bible mean; what does the Bible mean to us today? Many of our members are using the Bible reading plan on our monthly newsletters. I am grateful too for those who have given positive feedback about the weekly sermon and Bible notes, *Finding the Way*. Several of our members are also reading a little booklet of Bible reading notes each day – the most popular of these is *Lucas on Life Every Day*. To do these properly would take a minimum of 15 minutes each day – so not so long when you think about it! If you would like to order the notes for next year they are £3.25 for two months – however, as a special offer within our church community, if you send a stamped addressed envelope into the circuit office (A5 or the size of a birthday card), we will send you the November to December copy free of charge as a sample and you can decide whether to order for next year!

God bless

*John Haley*

Minister

### **Online Worship: Sunday mornings at 11.00 am (or at any time through the week!)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MCHWevents/videos>

Among the many Sunday services available online, one of highest quality comes from *Methodist Central Hall, Westminster*. There's always a warm welcome from Revd Tony Miles (superintendent minister), Revd Lansford Penn-Timity (from Sierra Leone) and Deacon Ali McMillan. The service always includes a good blend of Methodist hymns and worship songs. Countdown to the morning service begins at 10.55 am on Sunday mornings and although it is preparation for worship it is also one of the best parts! Have a look and see why. An excellent sermon was given by Revd Hugh Osgood on Sunday 16 August (playtime after 38:50). There is also a puppet feature *Hymn & Her*, for an especially good one see Sunday 11 October (playtime after 19.00). On Sunday 18 October there were greetings from the Mwandi Hospital in Zambia—a cause that Goodrington Methodists have supported (playtime after 1:04:30).

### **Online Bible Study (Don't worry about the long addresses—use the YouTube search facility)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/EverydayChurchLondon>

A quick search in YouTube to *Everyday Church* will bring you to the right page. Here you will find some excellent Bible study presentations. Do try them and let us know what you think through the circuit office. Some of us have already been reading books in Phil Moore's excellent series *Straight to the Heart: 60 Bite-Sized Insights* which are now available on many of the books of the Bible. These are available at about £8.00 (it depends how newly they have been published) and if you would like to order one delivered to your own front-door, please do so through the circuit office. Don't be afraid to ask for advice.

### ***Start Again: Rebooting our Lives on the Wisdom of Genesis***

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=everyday+church+start+again](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=everyday+church+start+again)

Our Tuesdays Together group on Tuesday evenings is looking at this series of Bible studies by Phil Moore but you do not have to join us on Tuesday evenings (though you would be very welcome) to follow these 10 minute studies. There are five presentations each week and they are excellent. They are delivered in a lively and engaging style and, even more importantly, the content is informative and relevant.

### ***How I met your mother (Genesis 2:18-25)***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjin-7cGqpA>

This excellent exploration of the roles of male and female, how they complement each other, all grounded in Bible exposition is interesting for Christians (and those who would like to more about the Christian understanding of humanity) of all ages.

### ***Zoom Bible study***

We are getting used to the technology in our Tuesday evening *Zoom* Bible study. *Zoom* is not that difficult and it is free for users. If you would like to join but need help with *Zoom*, please contact us in the circuit office. Once you have *Zoom* please contact us through the office for the access codes if you don't have them. We're discussing the questions from the *Start Again* series (3 November 6.1; 10 November 7.1; 17 November 8.1; 24 November 9.1—if the series continues that long!). [There is no *Zoom* Bible study on 27 October.]

### ***Online Daily Reflections***

<https://www.youtube.com/user/stevecornwall>

Former President of the Methodist Conference, Revd Steven Wild, continues his *Daily Reflections* on the Sermon on the Mount. These three minutes are shared around the world from Steve's home at Truro, Cornwall. If you have not yet joined Steve, he is worth joining!