



**Kempston East
Methodist
Church
Newsletter
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Praying the Prayer of Forgiveness:

Numbers 12:13, 'O God, heal her, I pray.'

These six words are Moses' prayer for his sister Miriam. They tell us a lot about Moses and a lot about prayer. For some time Miriam and her brother Aaron had been simmering with anger against Moses. They protested that he had married a Cushite woman (v.1), but the real cause of their animosity was jealousy. 'Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?' (v.2). Don't we have a ministry as well? Hasn't God also spoken through us? Why does everyone look to Moses? Why are we overlooked?

Jealousy is a powerful and deadly emotion. God had given ministries and honour to Miriam (Exod. 15:20,21) and Aaron had become the chief priest (Num. 3:1-3), but neither of them were satisfied with that. It looks as if Miriam fomented and took the lead in criticising Moses. Suddenly the Lord intervened (v.4). He called Moses, Aaron and Miriam together and defended His servant Moses. Moses is faithful in all my house! (v.7)

Whereas the Lord had often spoken to other prophets in dreams and visions, He speaks to Moses 'mouth to mouth' (v.8). How dare Aaron and Miriam question Moses whom the Lord called 'my servant' (v.8). Having so strongly defended Moses and rebuked his critics, the Lord departed and then the divine judgement fell. Suddenly Miriam, the leader of the conspiracy, was struck down with the dreaded leprosy. Aaron immediately cried out to Moses, confessing his own and his sister's sin and foolishness (vv. 11,12). Then Moses demonstrated why the Lord honoured him so highly. He expressed no anger, no vindictiveness, no spirit of 'settling scores' against his brother and sister. In spite of their antagonism and jealousy, Moses loved them both and 'cried to the Lord' on behalf of Miriam.

He prayed one of the shortest prayers found in the Bible. 'O God, heal her, I pray' (v.13). He was grieved and full of compassion to see his sister so terribly afflicted. The prayer was prompted by the love that forgives, the love that overlooks what others have done to us, the love that wants God's best for them. And only God's grace can make us like that. The prayer is so short, so simple, so direct, so personal. 'O God, heal her, I pray.' And God heard and answered. As a warning to others who might challenge Moses' authority, Miriam was quarantined for seven days, then fully healed and restored (vv.14, 15). How does this incident help us in our prayer life?

First, true prayer is born in compassion. The lips express the deep feelings of the heart.

Second, God will not hear our prayers if our hearts are not right with him and with one another. While we cherish resentments and grudges, our praying is powerless.

Third, while there are many times when prayer needs to be persistent, there are also times when it is a simple, deep cry from the heart.

From this week's Methodist News Feed

Covid Day of Reflection

Sunday 9 March 2025 is a Day of Reflection across the UK, marking five years since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is an opportunity to come together to remember people who lost their lives since the pandemic began and to honour the tireless work and acts of kindness shown during this unprecedented time.



The Revd Helen Cameron, President of the Methodist Conference, shares a prayer to mark the anniversary.

Holy God, you are worthy of all praise, in times of sorrow and loss as well as in times of joy and celebration.

As we recall and mark 5 years since the outbreak of the Covid pandemic in the UK we hold before you

All who died, often without contact with those they loved most dearly

All who mourned under restriction and limits

All who died in care homes, those who gave birth alone and all those who lost their jobs and livelihoods.

We give you thanks for the selfless care of so many in the NHS and care sectors and local services who supported and upheld us at great cost to themselves.

We thank you for all we have learned as a consequence of all that was endured; the importance of relationships, the value of touch and face to face contact, and access to green spaces and fresh air.

We pray for all those who live with the impact of long covid, for children and young people whose lives were impacted in so many ways, and for local churches.

Hold us in your love and care, God of love, now and forever.

Amen

As the residents and staff in care homes suffered more than many during COVID, Sam Monaghan, Chief Executive of Methodist Homes (MHA), shares [this reflection](#) on the long-term impact of the pandemic.

With the 5th anniversary of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic still in mind,, Jonathan Hustler, Secretary of the Methodist Conference, considers how the Methodist Church responded to the pandemic and the changes that it accelerated – click [here](#).

Time for the Great Daffodil Appeal



Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will once again be holding their annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life.

And one chance for you to help fund care that makes that possible. Care that protects someone's dignity – instead of leaving them to die alone or in avoidable pain. This Great Daffodil Appeal is that chance.

Every five minutes, someone dies without the support they need. But by donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can change that – and help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the illness.

Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

Whether it's taking part in a fundraising challenge, organising an event including bake sales, charity walks or concerts or volunteering your time to collect donations, every penny will help Marie Curie deliver quality care to those who need it most.

The Great Daffodil Appeal only happens once a year. This is your chance to make it count. For information and to donate visit: [Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil](https://mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil)

Gratitude for our Mothers

Gratitude is a large part of Mothering Sunday (which is on March 30th). So, this month why not spend a few moments thinking back, and ask yourself this:

What quality or wisdom did your mother bestow on you in childhood, for which you are most grateful now?

Many of you responded to my request for how you met. Maybe you'd like to send me (Geoff) your answers to the above question, and I will publish them (with just your first name).⁴

Join with us in praying for our Circuit through Lent

March

- 5 - Kempston East
- 6 - Kempston West
- 7 - Stewartby
- 8 - Wootton
- 10 - Rev Michael Giles - superintendent minister
- 11 - GCMC Ampthill
- 12 - GCMC Clophill
- 13 - GCMC Flitwick
- 14 - Haynes
- 15 - Lidlington
- 17 - Rev Silas Wood - deputy superintendent minister
- 18 - Beeston
- 19 - Henlow
- 20 - Langford
- 21 - Sandy
- 22 - Shefford
- 24 - Trinity Biggleswade
- 25 - Upper Caldecote
- 26 - Rev Leslie Noon - circuit minister
- 27 - London Road
- 28 - Park Road
- 29 - Priors
- 31 - Putnoe Heights

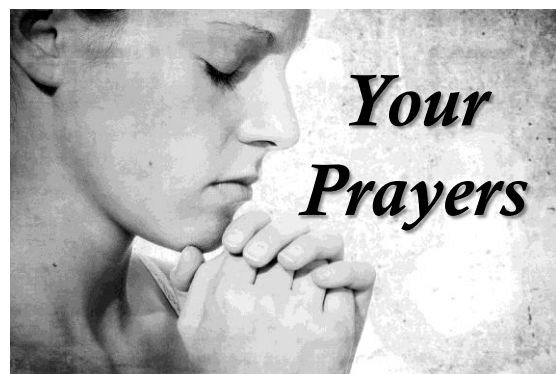
April

- 1 - Rev Chris Sandy - circuit minister
- 2 - Cardington
- 3 - Clapham
- 4 - Oakley
- 5 - Sharnbrook
- 7 - Willington
- 8 - Rev Paulette Tedd - circuit minister
- 9 - Stephanie Field - Circuit manager & safeguarding officer
- 10 - Dami Obajemu - Circuit finance officer
- 11 - Jane McVey - Co-ordinating circuit steward
- 12 - Michael Carr - Circuit steward
- 14 - Nick Guy - Circuit steward
- 15 - Phil Timms - Circuit steward
- 16 - Christina Sawkins - Circuit steward





Our Church Family



Please remember in your prayers the following people:

- Norma A being well looked after in Anjulita Court
- Sunita who is unwell
- Izzy on the death of her Grandad
- Members of our church who are facing life or death situations

This Week at Kempston East

Tuesday Mar 11 th	10.30am	Tuesday Bible Study Group begin their Lent Course in the New School Hall (see below)
	2.00pm	Tibbs Dementia meets in the New School Hall
Wednesday Mar 12 th	11.30am-1.30pm	Open House meets in the Beginners Room
	2.30pm	Guild meets in the New School Hall for a Devotional Afternoon led by Rev Andrea Maffei, Vicar of the Church of the Transfiguration, Kempston

Tuesday Lent Course

The Weekly Lent Course starts on Tuesday 11th March at 10.30am in the Lounge. Course material "Hope in Hard Places" a study guide from Embrace the Middle East is provided. All are welcome. Contact Marjorie Stevens : marjorie.cotton@btinternet.com
Marjorie and Barbara Tipping will share leading the course.

Some people think reconciliation is a soft option, that it means papering over the cracks. But the biblical meaning means looking facts in the face, and it can be very costly; it cost God the death of His own Son. - *Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

WORSHIP AT EAST

Our morning Service at 10.30am this week will be led by our minister, Rev Michael Giles, and will include Holy Communion

Unfortunately, our usual live-streaming will be unavailable this week although the normal audio recording of the service will still be produced.

Future Services at Kempston East

Sunday March 16 th	10.30am	Geoff Talbot
Sunday March 23 rd	10.30am	Rev Michael Giles
Sunday March 30 th	10.30am	Brian Addington (Mothering Sunday)

Top of the World Watch List for 2025

Where in the world is it most dangerous to be a Christian?

The answer is found in the recently published World Watch List. It is Open Doors' annual ranking of the top 50 countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution.

This year it is North Korea. Again.

For North Korea has been Number One on the World Watch List almost every year since 2002. In North Korea, if they discover you are a Christian, you could be simply killed on the spot. At the very least, you will be sent to a horrendous labour camp and treated as a political criminal. Very few survive.

The main threat is the dictatorial paranoia of Kim Jong-un. The Kims demand total worship of themselves, and recognising any deity outside of the Kim family is seen as a threat. The country's Communist and post-Communist stance backs their position, making it impossible to gather for worship or prayer. Even secret worship is an enormous risk.

Yet even at this level of persecution, there are still as many as 400,000 believers left in North Korea. They make up about 1.5 per cent of the population.

And, through **secret networks outside the country, Open Doors' secret workers are able to help around 100,000 North Korean believers by providing vital food and aid, shelter and discipleship training for North Korean refugees at safe houses in China, and training through radio broadcasting from outside the country.**

Book of the Week

Jesus Listens for Lent and Easter – Prayers for the Season by Sarah Young, Thomas Nelson, £17.99



This inspirational devotional prayer book for Lent and Easter will be helpful for anyone looking for peace and forgiveness, and for any families want to cultivate a tradition of Lenten prayers and devotions together.

It has prayers, reflections, and Bible verses based on Jesus' life, as well as stunning spring and Easter season illustrations.

This season of remembering Christ's death and resurrection will help you understand how prayer connects you to God, helps you seek forgiveness, and brings you the inexpressible joy and freedom of knowing that Christ has risen!

Kempston Musical Society and Ouse Valley Singers

present The Passion of the Christ

The events leading up to Easter in words and music

on Saturday 5th April at 7.30pm
in St Mary's Church, Felmersham

Narrator: Ernest Carwithen

Accompanist: Derrick Robinson

Conductor: Janet Welsh

There will be a retiring collection in aid of St Mary's Church

If you have any prayer requests, thanks and, indeed, any other items and news that you would like to go into the weekly newsletter then please email these to Geoff Talbot (geofftal1@outlook.com) as soon as possible and ideally by the previous Wednesday. If you know of someone who would like to receive this emailed newsletter could you please send their email address to richard.ward4@btinternet.com. Equally, if you would like to be removed from the distribution list, please also let Richard Ward know.