



# The Good News Letter

COULSDON METHODIST CHURCH

[www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org)

Facebook: @coulsdonmethodist

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## **From our minister**

Dear Friends,

Many churches have ten newsletters a year - with double issues for July - August and December-January. As I sit down to write this a few days after Christmas - and one day after taking a Circuit Zoom service on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> - I can see why that has advantages.

The month of December did not proceed as we had hoped. Just before December I was encouraging you back to Church as services started again after the national lockdown. In the event we held just two in-person in-Church services - one from our District Chair and one from me - before the move into Tier 4 and new concerns about a variant of the Covid-19 virus. (That as we have all heard seems to spread more rapidly; so hopes are very much concentrated on the vaccine.) The new tier was introduced just before our evening "Candlelit Christmas celebration" - an alternative Carol Service with most people not allowed to sing. Many of us had gathered for the alternative Zoom Carol Sing in the morning - and that gave us opportunity to decide how we should proceed for that evening and beyond. So although we are not forbidden to meet as in the lockdowns, we have decided that we should not risk our largely elderly congregation being exposed to the virus unnecessarily. For now Church worship will be by alternative online methods.

This is a decision we took with considerable sadness - it is difficult to be a church welcoming everyone with the doors closed. We have a solid core of people who are holding together - but there are many of you I am missing. Roll on the time when we are all vaccinated and can meet normally - and sing! Just when that will be is unclear at present. (We can report that one Church member has had the first dose of the vaccine; there may be others.)

January begins a new year - but it's clear that not everything will change with the disappearance of that "annus horribilis" 2020. For now we must do all we can to keep each other safe - and to support those in particular need. Worship will continue for those with Zoom access.

We will start the New Year with the Annual Covenant Service - an important time of recommitment - but this year without Holy Communion. Other services are expected to proceed as advertised - Jim will give you a list in this Good Newsletter. If there are changes, they will be in our weekly notices. (These can be sent by email to anyone who wants them.)

I close with best wishes for the New Year of 2021. Let us hope it brings better news for the country and the world.

With love and prayers

**Stephen**

## **A prayer for a new year**

The District Chairs hope that 2021 will be a year of healing and new opportunities for the communities that we serve. When we make our Covenant promises we are reminded that we continue to have faith in God, in both the good times and the challenging times; and we commit ourselves to remain faithful, as God remains faithful to us. As the writer to the Thessalonians reminds us, we are to rejoice always,

to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for us all.

So as we go forward together in love, faith and fellowship, here is a prayer of praise that we might use in this New Year.

**Creator God**, we praise you  
for this New Year,  
for opportunities to worship, together or online,  
for this moment in our lives.

Creator God, we praise you  
for all that you have made,  
for all that you have given,  
for all that you have promised.

Redeemer God, we praise you  
for the new life found in Christ,  
for the chance to begin again,  
for the story of salvation.

Redeemer God, we praise you  
for your grace that is without limit,  
for your love which knows no end,  
for your living among us.

Sustainer God, we praise you  
for the gift of your Spirit,  
for the outpouring of your love,  
for the fruits of our relationship with you.

Sustainer God, we praise you  
for your open embrace of all,  
for your infectious joy,  
for your presence in our lives.

**Amen**

*With blessings,  
Micky, Nigel and Jongi  
Chairs of the London District of the Methodist Church*

### **Church diary**

With the church closed at the time of printing, **it is safest to assume that all of the following will take place via Zoom** – Stephen has detailed how to take part, in his letter above. If you receive the weekly Notices by email, double-check what is happening each week. If not, phone a friend who does, or one of the stewards.

If we are able to reopen the church, the existing safety measures will again be in place including being 2 metres apart – plus further restrictions on socialising. Track and Trace registration will take place. Face masks must also be worn and no singing is allowed. Check our church website ([www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org)) for any changes caused by evolving Covid-19 regulations.

<b>Sun 3 Jan.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Covenant service</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Thu 7 Jan.	11.45am	Thursday prayers

<b>Sun 10 Jan.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> ( <i>local arrangements</i> )
Thu 14 Jan.	11.45am	Thursday prayers
<b>Sun 17 Jan.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Rev. Faith Nyota)
Thu 21 Jan.	11.45am	Thursday prayers
<b>Sun 24 Jan.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Thu 28 Jan.	11.45am	Thursday prayers
<b>Sun 31 Jan.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> ( <i>local arrangements</i> )
Thu 4 Feb.	11.45am	Thursday prayers
<b>Sun 7 Feb.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)