

The Magazine for Fulneck and Gomersal Moravian Churches



January 2021

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Minister's Letter

In normal times, there would not be a magazine produced in January. But we are not living in normal times. When we were preparing the December magazine, we had no idea what the January diary would look like, and we are also continuing to provide weekly worship material, so here is the extra January edition.

A new year is always a time of hope and anticipation. This year is no exception, although the hope and anticipation are different to usual. We enter 2021 with most of the country in lockdown, and with a tough few months ahead of us. But we have the hope of the vaccination programme, which may start to turn things around by Easter. There is also the anticipation of seeing family, having holidays, and all the other things that happen in a normal year. We don't know when this will be possible, but we hope that by the summer we will be able to get back to some normality. It is not going to happen straight away, but we know that things will get better over the coming year.

The pandemic has raised a lot of questions. How and where did the virus begin? Why did it spread so far and so fast? Could we have done better and what can we learn? And for some people, there may be deeper questions about why it has to happen at all and what part God plays. I don't believe that God has sent the virus to punish us or to test us, because that is not what a loving God does. I agree with the theologian Catherine Keller from the Drew Theological School in the United States, who wrote an open letter in which she said the following:

"...In this crisis, God may well be calling us all to account, holding us responsible for the wellbeing of our world. It doesn't mean God willed this crisis to happen — or any of the horrors and holocausts of history. It means that nothing happens apart from God, because God isn't something that exists apart from the world: the world is a part of God, and God participates in each part of the world. God feels and suffers it all — with us."

(<https://medium.com/@drewtheological/a-letter-from->

catherine-keller-1930029c4914)

In the face of loss and suffering our first response may be simply to lament, and there is nothing wrong with that, as is shown in many places in the Old Testament. But God can use all our experiences, whether good or bad, to teach and inspire us. The message of Jesus is that God is with us, and we are invited to play our part in creating a better, more caring, more just world — what he called the Kingdom of God. I believe that we have seen signs of the kingdom in some of the ways that individuals and communities have responded to the pandemic. That is the hope that I cling on to at times like these.

Br Michael Newman



Yorkshire District of the Moravian Church

Fellowship Morning

Saturday 16th January at 10am
on Zoom (contact your minister for the link)

Caring for Those Who Care



with Br Jared Stephens, Minister of the
Ballinderry and Cliftonville congregations

In Essentials: Unity; In Non-Essentials: Liberty; In All Things: Love

Fulneck News and Notices

Virtual Coffee Morning: Friday 8th January, 10.30am on Zoom

We will be holding another virtual Coffee Morning in January. Please contact Br Newman (email address on front page) for the link. We hope that you can join us.



Bible Book Club. Thursday 21st January, 2.00pm on Zoom

We are continuing to look at the minor prophets in the Old Testament. This month's books are Haggai & Malachi. If you would like a copy of the notes, please ask Br Newman.

Toy Appeal. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Toy Appeal, and to Sr Chris Porter for taking the toys to the Crypt.



Facebook Daily Photos.

Through Advent we had our Advent Windows. During the twelve days of Christmas we had different nativity scenes. It would be good to carry on putting an uplifting photo on the Fulneck Moravian Church Facebook page each day through the winter months, so we are asking people to contribute photos of their favourite Yorkshire views. Please send them to Br Newman.

FULNECK ADVENT WINDOWS

Thanks to all who decorated a window during Advent. It was much appreciated by those walking through the settlement as well as on Facebook. We raised **£224** for St George's Crypt.

The carol singing arranged by the residents of Oakdene Close raised over **£300** also for the Crypt.

Gomersal News and Notices

Wellbeing Wednesdays

Julian Meeting: Wednesday 13th January, 10.30am on Zoom

We continue to meet every month for a time of quiet contemplation.



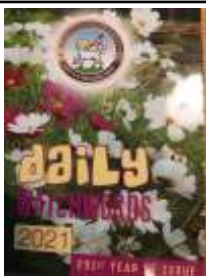
Virtual Coffee Morning: Wednesday 20th January, 10.30am on Zoom

As we are not able to meet in person for most of our regular Wellbeing activities, you are invited to a virtual coffee morning on the third Wednesday of the month. If you would like to join us, please send Br Newman an email (address on front page) and he will send you a link to the Zoom meeting. If you need guidance on using Zoom, he can also send some instructions. We hope that you can join us.

Christmas Quiz

Thanks to everyone who filled in a quiz sheet, and a big thank you to Br and Sr Smith for putting the quiz together. We will let you know the results as soon as possible.

General Notices



Daily Watchwords 2021

These have been received from Church House and cost £6. Please speak to Br Newman if you would like a copy.

Old Mobile Phones Appeal.

You may have read about the World Mission Society's appeal in the November Moravian Messenger. When we can open for services again, both Fulneck and Gomersal will have boxes for you to put your old mobile phones in to be recycled and to support Moravian Missions. Please remove SIM cards first. Thank you.

Calendar

****The following events are based on both congregations being in Tier 3/4 restrictions. If we are moved into Tier 2, physical services and other activities will be able to resume with social distancing measures in place.****

January

Sunday 10 th		Ful & Gom	Family Worship on YouTube
Wednesday 13 th	10.30am	Gomersal	Julian Meeting on Zoom
	7.15pm	Fulneck	Church Committee on Zoom
Saturday 16 th	10.00am	District	Fellowship Morning on Zoom
Sunday 17 th		Ful & Gom	Family Worship on YouTube
Tuesday 19 th	7.30pm	Gomersal	Church Committee on Zoom
Wednesday 20 th	10.30am	Gomersal	Wellbeing Coffee Morning on Zoom
Thursday 21 st	2.00pm	Fulneck	Bible Book Club on Zoom
Sunday 24 th		Ful & Gom	Family Worship on YouTube
Wednesday 27 th	2.00pm	Fulneck	Outreach Meeting on Zoom
Sunday 31 st		Ful & Gom	Family Worship on YouTube

February

Sunday 7 th		Ful & Gom	Family Worship on YouTube
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Materials for Worshipping at Home

Sunday 10th January

Reading: Mark 1: 4-11

Notes

John's clothes and the place where he is preaching make him look and sound a bit like the Old Testament prophet, Elijah. But John says that he is not him; he is preparing the way for the one who is to come – Jesus. To most people watching, the action Mark describes probably looked like nothing much. But this was a hinge point in human history: Jesus was pledging himself to his life's calling, and it was as if the universe itself was responding to this deep-down change.

Hymn (MHB 166)

Come, Holy Spirit, like a dove descending,
Rest Thou upon us while we meet to pray;
Show us the Saviour, His great love revealing;
Lead us to Him, the Life, the Truth, the Way.

Come, Holy Spirit, every cloud dispelling;
Fill us with gladness, through the Master's Name:
Bring to our memory words that He hath spoken;
Then shall our tongues His wondrous grace proclaim.

Come, Holy Spirit, sent from God the Father,
Thou Friend and Teacher, Comforter and Guide;
Our thoughts directing, keep us close to Jesus,
And in our hearts for evermore abide.

Prayer

Loving God, you have given us a world to care for and people to love. Keep us mindful of what you call us to do and not to neglect your creation or our fellow human beings. Help us to make new beginnings for ourselves and for others – in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sunday 17th January

Reading: John 1: 43-51

Notes

This is a story of two people encountering Jesus. Rather than try to persuade Nathanael that Jesus is the Messiah by clever arguments, Philip simply invites Nathanael to 'Come and see'. Some of us are like Philip and ready to follow straight away, while some of us are like Nathanael – full of questions and needing to see and hear for ourselves. Are you more like Philip or Nathanael, or somewhere in between?

Hymn (MHB 173)

Jesus calls us: o'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea
day by day his sweet voice soundeth,
saying, 'Christian, follow me';

As of old apostles heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home, and toil, and kindred,
leaving all for his dear sake.

Jesus calls us; by thy mercies,
Saviour, make us hear thy call,
give our hearts to thy obedience,
serve and love thee best of all.

Prayer

Dear God, help us to help others to come to you, to see you, and to hear you. Amen.

Sunday 24th January

Reading: Mark 1: 14-20

Notes

It is tempting to think that there must be a backstory here. Had the fishermen met Jesus before, and were just waiting for the nod to become his disciples? Had they been searching for the Messiah for some time? Mark sticks to the centre-point of the action: there came a moment when Jesus said, 'Follow me,' and they did.

Hymn (MHB 246)

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, that when it is stormy all around us, your love is changeless. Thank you, Lord, that although we are broken people, your love is changeless. Thank you, Lord, that your compassion overwhelms us, and your love is changeless. Amen.

Sunday 31st January

Reading: Mark 1: 21-28

Notes

Jesus astonished people by the authority of his teaching. Mark does not tell us what Jesus taught, but it is clear that it had a great impact on those who heard him. As did his healing of a man with an 'unclean spirit'. This was something new and convincing. By his teaching and his actions, he revealed that he was – and is – is the 'Holy One of God'.

Hymn (MHB 434)

When to our world the Saviour came
the sick and helpless heard his Name,
and in their weakness longed to see
the healing Christ of Galilee.

That good physician! Night and day
the people thronged about his way;
and wonder ran from soul to soul,
'The touch of Christ has made us whole!'

His sovereign purpose still remains
who rose in power, and lives and reigns;
till every tongue confess his praise,
the healing Christ of all our days.

Timothy Dudley-Smith © Oxford University Press, CCL Licence No. 270121

Prayer

Great God, your arms are wide open in welcome. Father God, we are your children and your family. Creator God, we thank you for the wonderful world. Shepherd God, we are your sheep and you care for us. God of many names, we have many names, too, and you love us all. Thank you. Amen.