

Facebook Live Service
Wimpole Road Methodist
Sunday 29th March 2020

Good morning everyone. It is great to be able to share worship with you again. I want us to start but sharing in a prayer to focus us and calm us as we come together.

Let us pray.

Breathe in The Love of God
Breathe out and give to God your fears

Breathe in our hope in Christ
Breathe out and give to God our anxieties

Breathe in the strength of the Holy Spirit
Breathe out and give to God all that we cannot control

Today with people around the world, we gather to worship,
surrounded by the presence of God. Amen

Wayne Grewcock - Vine at Home / twelvebaskets

The Government guidance seems to be changing every day and it certainly has again this week. Monday it was made clear that we couldn't return to use the Church building until things improve, and we are all sad about that, but we are definitely really glad that we managed to start last week inside Wimpole Road.

We can't get the flyers out we wanted to, but on our Facebook page you will be able to contact us, on the noticeboard outside Church there are contact details too.

If you need us we are here. Do call, our offer of help and support made last week stands. We are part of this great New Town community and will always be.

A week or so ago I met someone in one of the shops in our community who wanted to talk to me. I was wearing my collar and said he didn't believe in God at all, but wanted to know why God

had brought this thing upon us. Lots of people are saying similar things - these are just four 'theories' I have encountered this week:

- Ralph Drollinger a Preacher who teaches Bible study to President Trump's cabinet said this week that Gay people and environmentalists are two reasons for God igniting wrath through Covid19 to hurt the world.
- Covid19 was sent by God because China wasn't listening to him.
- Covid19 was designed in a laboratory to change the world order and punish some nations.
- Covid19 was sent by God to get our attention - turning off sport, closing pubs restaurants and entertainment. So now are you going to listen to him?

Seriously! This morning I want us to talk comments like that and acknowledge they are utter stinking rotten lies. Each of those lies is founded in a really terrible understand of who God is.

When life is upsetting and chaotic like it is now it is vital that we remember God is good and great. God is not vicious wrathful or unkind, unloving or judgemental. God is not vengeful or hateful. God isn't punishing you or anyone. I think is so important to remember that God is love and love will win!

When people say God is punishing humanity and sending Coronavirus to do it, or any variation of that nonsense it is vital to be able to say - We don't believe in that kind of God!.
When atheists rage about why they don't believe in God - I always respond by saying I don't believe in that God either.

It is easy to understand why a person could jump to that those kind of ideas but God is not like that indeed they reverse is true, Jesus said in Matthew 5:45

he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous

God is not evil. If that was the case I and the folk at Wimpole Road wouldn't be worshipping at all.

So where is God now?

Today is the last Sunday of Lent before we remember Holy Week and Easter; the Christian story about how God stood with us in pain and suffering, Jesus choosing to sacrifice himself instead of resorting to violence. Jesus lived like we do and was executed because of the radical love he was offering.

And because of the faithfulness of Jesus we can know today that we are loved right here and right now.

God is with us but of course we are brave enough to say, I don't know when we don't know; and I don't know why Covid19 has caused so much panic suffering and death across the world.

I don't know why bad things happen to good people BUT I do know that God loves me and you

I do know that the sun rises and sets and will rise again

I do know that God loves all people and will always love

So instead of focusing on that question 'is God behind this' - look forward. We cannot affect the past but we can always change the way we are and will be.

Prayer time

Please bow your heads and keep a moment of silence.

In the silence think of your family and friends

Think of those you know who are struggling in these lock down days - give us a love for life here in our new pattern of living

Remember those who are sick, at home, in care homes, in hospital - God give them peace in their struggles and help them to know you are holding them tight

We remember those still at work especially those care for others and those working in shops or for the council

Loving God come sing your song of love over us. In Jesus name we pray Amen.

Finish with a Blessings from the Northumbria Community morning prayer service

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you,
wherever He may send you.*

*May He guide you through the wilderness,
protect you through the storm.*

*May He bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders He has shown you.*

*May He bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.*

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Joe

Revd Joseph Neil Adams

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