



The closure of our church buildings for worship, meetings and hospitality due to Covid-19 restrictions has brought their use into focus. Giles Frazer, in one of his "Thoughts for the Day", said that "church buildings ought to be treated as little more than rain shelters". However, he does go on to say "For some, church buildings are an expression of the rootedness of the incarnation... Where it all goes wrong is when those who are so caught up in the running of church buildings forget about the purpose for which the place was built". The Revd Dr Raj Bharat Patta, in his article for the Connexion, says "We, as a Church, are called to become community hubs where vulnerable people can find a welcoming space and hospitality." While churches have been open for foodbanks and free fridges, they can only distribute the food rather than offer traditional hospitality.

In the absence of a building, we have looked to other ways of being able to worship and Zoom, YouTube, television and radio have provided that traditional Sunday worship. However, what is missing is that community and hospitality. It has also challenged us to consider what we mean by sacred space and the omnipresence of God. We know that the church is its people and not a building. During this lockdown we have had to find ways of strengthening our faith outside of a church building and away from congregational worship. We know that all space is sacred, as God is everywhere, so we have been able to find our own special place, which is sacred to us, so that we can feel nearer to God, be it in our homes, garden or a particular spot on a walk.

Which moves us on to this season of Lent. We have reached the Fourth Sunday (Laetare Sunday, after the opening words of the introit to the Catholic Mass – 'Rejoice O Jerusalem'). The liturgical colour is rose, lighter than the violet for the other Sundays of Lent. This marks a break in the period of penance to allow for celebration and to remind us of joy. It is also Mothering Sunday and the day when simnel cakes are consumed. As we come to terms with the Covid pandemic it is also a reminder that there can be times of joy and celebration during this period of austerity in the kindness of neighbours and of strangers.

Nigel Hardwick, *District Policy Consultation Rep. and CLT*



LENT 4 March 14
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3. 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 12:1-8

For Mothering Sunday

Dear Jesus we thank you for
Mothers everywhere
For all who care for us
day by day,
Let us not forget that
you were a child
And your mother was Mary.

We say thank you for Mums
across the world
And in our country too,
Although we may not say it,
We think you are the best.

So let us give grateful thanks
And let our voices be heard
For all the Mums and Grans
On this very special day. Amen

Hannah Middleton 2005
mothersunion.org

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Photo: thespruceeats.com

A JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

11- 17 March adapted from a Roots Lent calendar www.rootsontheweb.com

During ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, ensure that contacting others is done in a safe way.

THURSDAY

Ask God to help your belief to grow stronger.

SATURDAY

Think differently: challenge yourself to do something new!

FRIDAY

Think about those who are in hospital – pray that they will be strengthened.

SUNDAY

Raise some money for charity during this week.

14 March Sunday
I am thirsty.
John 19.28

TUESDAY

Read a newspaper. Pray for any situations that trouble you.

MONDAY

Be grateful for all that you have – try not to waste anything.

WEDNESDAY

Look at a charity website (e.g. Tearfund, Oxfam) and pray for their current work.

District Ordinands Testimony Service

is taking place next Sunday evening at 18:00. This is for Deacon Nigel Perrott in the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit. Nigel was due to be ordained last summer but this has been delayed until this June.

The link is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3ZpSDJQEFM>

Hospital Chaplaincy

and introducing Rev Rosie Coles



Hello, my name is Rosie, and I am a Methodist minister. Although I live in Scarborough, I am stationed in the Ryedale Circuit in what the Methodist Church describes as 'an appointment outside the control of the Church'.

As I have not had chance to meet most of you, Peter has asked me to write a little about my work as a part-time chaplain at Scarborough Hospital. For most of last year I was unable to work due to vulnerable family members, however the coming of the vaccines has meant I have been able to return to chaplaincy.

Scarborough hospital is part of the York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which is also responsible for York and Bridlington hospitals. All three hospitals have chapels on site. The chaplaincy team operates across all the hospitals, with two full-time chaplains in York, one in Scarborough, and several part-time chaplains on both sites. Through a mixture of on site and on call, chaplaincy is available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day for patients and members of staff. The team is ecumenical and interfaith.

I can only speak for Scarborough hospital as I have not worked at York, but before the pandemic the weekly Friday lunchtime communion service was important for both patients and staff, but is not possible at the present time. However, the requests for pastoral support, listening, prayers, teaching, family support and baptisms continue, as does the need for being available for staff across all areas of the hospital.

The chaplaincy team takes referrals from patients, staff, relatives, friends and clergy. If you know someone has been admitted to hospital and you think they would like to see a chaplain, please phone the relevant hospital and ask to speak to the chaplain. If there is no-one in the office at the time, you can leave a message and someone will phone you back. If a chaplaincy visit is needed urgently, please let switchboard know.

Patients and relatives tell us that they find the chaplaincy service of real help during their time in hospital. For those of us who work in this field, we find it an immense privilege to be alongside people during difficult times when spiritual sustenance and comfort are often of great value.

Rev. Rosie Coles

Scarborough Hospital Chapel



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<https://www.ryedalemethodist.org.uk/events.html>
For further information and service material for Sundays



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