



Shirley Methodist Church Notices

Sunday 13 September 2020



Eldon Ave, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8SD Website: www.shirleymeth.org.uk

Minister: Revd. Soon Cheol Choi Lay Ministry: Bennie Harms

PRAYER CHAIN

Please contact us if you would like someone, or yourself, to be prayed for by members of our Prayer Chain. Names are only taken with the consent of the person concerned and stay on the chain for a week. You can get in touch with your Pastoral Link or contact Mrs Elizabeth Smart on 020 8681 0057 or visit our website and complete the 'contact us' form. Thank you.



We pray by Elizabeth Smart

For Beth Fairbairn, Carole and Bob Schad's granddaughter. We pray for all the family who are supporting her parents Samantha, James and her brother Fergus and for the medical staff at John Radcliffe Hospital.

We also remember Danuta Plummer, Eunice Mutongerwa and Akos and Elliott Abadoo and all who are convalescing following hospital treatment.

For those who mourn the loss of loved ones.

We hold in prayer our children and young people and their families as they begin to return to their schools and workplace that they will stay safe.

We give thanks that we were able to worship in Church last week and share Holy Communion together.

We pray for Revd Choi and Sarah and Lay Pastor Bennie and Jenny who are finding new ways of ministering to the Church family during the current restrictions.

We remember in our prayers the Hall Grange family as they too find new ways to care for each other - for the residents and their families and for the staff.

We also pray for the Staff and volunteers of the Wilderness Project and for Marco Galli who is now the Volunteer Co-ordinator and plans Green Care activities for the residents.



Sunday Worship in Church: to help keep us safe as we return to worship we have a system of 'pre-registering'.

If you are planning to attend church, please pre-register either by **email** smc2020kate@gmail.com or phone **Fran Byard** on 020 8405 3222 (please leave a message on her answerphone – giving

your name and say how many in your family are planning to come). Fran will be coordinating the replies.

Many people are still unable to gather in a church or chapel to worship. We hold in our prayers those who are fearful of returning, those who are housebound; those who have to continue to shield. May they know that they are remembered in our prayers.

THE GUILD IS BACK!

On **Thursday, 17 September** at 8pm the Guild will meet in the main hall. Our superintendent minister, Stephen Day, will be our speaker. His talk, 'Life and Ministry in South Africa' promises to be most interesting and will also serve us the opportunity of getting to know Stephen - Shirley narrowly missed out on a chance for that as he was due to take our morning service when shut down struck.

Please enter the main hall through the door that directly leads to it from the car park and bring your mask. Hope to see you there.

Ruth Tayler

An invitation to a **time for Prayer Fellowship**, 9.15am on Saturday 19 September at Shirley Methodist Church.



Shrublands Food Bank

Donated goods can be delivered to the shop: 7 Broom Road, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8NG on Mondays 09:00 – 12:00 or Thursdays 12:00 – 15:00, or popped into the collection box at the Shirley CO- OP

on Wickham Road. **Please make sure donations have a shelf life of at least six months.** Contact Mrs Beverley Warner, Shrublands Trust Manager on 020 3441 7887 for more information.

If you would like any information included in this newsletter, please forward to RUTH DODOO by 9pm on **Wednesdays** by phone: 020 87771987 or email: ruthdodo@outlook.com

Reflection and prayers by Revd Choi

In this gospel reading, Jesus gives us a clear idea of what 'forgiveness' is all about, using a parable of 'unforgiving servant'. In this parable, however, there are some points we can hardly understand.

Firstly, somehow we cannot understand the huge amount of debt this servant owed. Jesus said, he owed 10 thousand talents, which would come up about 10 million pounds today. It seems to be exaggerated in some way. But, the point Jesus wants to make is that he owed the money he could not pay back, whatever he would do. Nevertheless, when he was asked to pay back, he begged his king, saying 'Be patient with me. I will pay back everything'. However, surprisingly, the king cancelled all his debt. The gracious king knew that he couldn't pay back at all whatever he would do. So, he cancelled it. What the servant wanted was for the king to be patient with him. This is the point which needs our attention.

The Greek word he used here 'for being patient' was '*makrothumason*', that means 'extension of the due date' or 'delaying'.

That means if some more days were given, he would pay it back.

But, the king's response was completely different. He cancelled it all. It's an unbelievable, unexpected gift.

Then, after being freed from the king, when he met one of his colleagues who owed him 100 denarii, we see him never showing any mercy on him. 100 denarii would be equivalent to about 10 pounds today. It was just a little money, compared to the money he owed the king. Then, why did he so meanly ask him of paying back, despite the fact that he was given the great mercy? How can we understand his behaviour? How on earth could he behave like this? But, if we look at what he begged for and what he was given, I think we may be able to find a clue. Actually, what he asked for was some more days, the extension of the due date, saying 'Be patient'. But, surprisingly and unexpectedly, his debt was cancelled. Taking pity on him, the king graciously cancelled all his debt.

Here, the problem was that he might have understood the cancellation of his debt in his head, but couldn't accept it or make it his own in heart. So, despite the cancellation of his big, big debt, he was trying to get the money back from his colleague, in order to pay back his debt. Although he was free from the debt, in his mind he was still in debt.

But, in a sense, I don't think he is the only one who has this kind of mentality, if we think of ourselves. As this parable implies, our sins were forgiven already at the time when we began to have faith in Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to pay all our debts. So, we are not under the pressure of any debt. But, I wonder how well we are aware of it, and so how much we are grateful for this free gift which was given to us, even when we didn't deserve it at all. If we can fully accept this free gift, then, we are to understand Jesus' answer to Peter's question: How many times should we forgive? What Jesus said was if you are still counting how many times you've forgiven someone, you are not really forgiving them at all, but simply postponing revenge. Seventy times seven? It's a joke. What he means is actually 'don't even think of counting; just do it! That's his answer.

FORGIVE

Reading: Matthew 18.21-35

21 Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. **23** "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. **24** When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; **25** and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. **26** So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' **27** And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. **28** But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' **29** Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' **30** But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. **31** When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. **32** Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. **33** Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' **34** And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. **35** So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Prayer

Lord, teach us to forgive without pompously keeping score; without counting continually.

Teach us to forgive as we live – day by day; perpetually; always.

We each have our own ongoing story; help us to listen to the circumstances of others, as we hope others will listen to us.

Teach us to take our historical rights and wrongs; to transform them in this present moment, into growth for the future.

Teach us to forgive as you forgive; to forgive our brothers and sisters from our hearts.