

Dear friends,

Sunday 10 October

- 9.30 am **Worship at North Hillingdon (with Holy Communion)** led by the Revd Ken Kingston
11.00 am **Worship at Hayes End (with Holy Communion)** led by the Revd Ken Kingston
11.00 am **Worship at Hayes** led by Professor Samuel Kow Arthur

On Sunday 10 October we also celebrate together with Philip Woods as he is welcomed and admitted as a local preacher in the circuit. The service takes place at the Lighthouse Centre in South Ruislip (HA4 0NL) at 4.00 pm.

Sunday 17 October

- 9.30 am **Worship at North Hillingdon** led by Angela Lount
11.00 am **Worship at Hayes End** led by members of the congregation
11.00 am **Worship at Hayes (with Holy Communion)** led by the Revd Ken Kingston

For those still unsure about returning to 'face-to-face' worship, you can join Ruislip Manor who stream their service (www.youtube.com/channel/UCjLbCitLuwAJL2wYdzK57EQ) and Christ Church as they share their service on Facebook (www.facebook.com/christchurchuxbridge).

Please continue to take care and stay safe.

Rev Ken

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Does God change?

I love autumn as the colours of the leaves on the trees turn from green to golden oranges and browns. It is a time of change. Change means different things to different people, whether it is someone on public transport for whom All change, means it is time to get off, or a new parent where changing time means something very different.

And in the last 18 months, there have been so many changes thrust upon us by Covid-19. It has meant being unable to do things or having to do things very differently.

But throughout that time we have clung on to a God who does not change. A Father who is a rock in the raging storm, a constant and a peace in our troubled seas.

Because God is there. God does not change. We give thanks for (and to) a God whose presence never deserts us, whose mercy is unquenchable, whose compassion is neverending, whose love will let us go.

The psalmist put it beautifully writing:
*God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth
should change,
though the mountains shake in the
heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble
with its tumult.* (Psalm 46:1-3)

God does not and will never change. But that doesn't mean that God is against change. Rather, it is the exact opposite. Because so much of the Bible is about change. Whether it is the story of the Israelite slaves leaving Egypt in the Book of Exodus and journeying to the Promised Land. And there is God speaking through the Old Testament prophets calling people back to obedience and a relationship with their heavenly Father.

And when you get to the Gospels and the New Testament, every page is about change.

The miracles are about change (water into wine, hungry into being fed, sickness into healing), Jesus' whole ministry and life is about sharing the good news of God's love and grace and the offer of a changed relationship between God and God's people, God's own sons and daughters. God is not just passionate for change, God's yearning and desire for us and the world is about transformation as we become the people God's wants us to be, and God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

Zacchaeus is a good example. Here was a tax collector who made his money out of other people by fiddling their taxes so they paid him more. He met Jesus from the top of a sycamore tree. And Jesus invited himself to stay in Zaccheus' house.

Jesus accepted Zaccheus as he was, a swindler and a thief. But that did not stop Jesus loving and caring for him. With that love and grace, Zacchaeus declared that he was going to give half of all he owned to the poor, and to pay back four times the money to those he had cheated. Zacchaeus was a changed and transformed man.

All this change is very Methodist. John Wesley wrote and preached about Christian Perfection which takes a lifetime. Put very simply, it is becoming more perfect – becoming more Christlike. Change and transformation.

But we do not and can not change by ourselves. It is by the grace of God and the gift of God's Holy Spirit.

God is with us:

- God behind us** – inspiring change
- God before us** – leading us in change
- God beside us** – supporting and guiding us through change

A God whose love and grace never changes, but whose love and grace can change and transform us, the church and the world.

Lord Jesus,
thank you for your never-changing love and neverending grace on which we can rely.
Thank you for accepting us as we are,
but seeing the best in us and what we can be.
Help us to be open to your Spirit and power that we can be changed and transformed to be the people you want us to be – more like you. Amen.

Sundays on the BBC

8.10 am Sunday Worship **BBC Radio 4**
Search me O God and know my heart - A service for World Mental Health Day, with counsellor and psychotherapist Major Richard Gaudion and the International Staff Songsters of the Salvation Army.

1.15 pm Songs of Praise **BBC 1**
Faith in Coventry - Coventry is this year's City of Culture and host to Faith, a 24-hour live event bringing together the city's different religions. Learn more about this as well as discover why Coventry Cathedral is the ideal setting to explore how Christians and other religions experience faith, both as individuals and as communities.

'To serve the present age'

*To serve the present age,
my calling to fulfil,
O may it all my powers engage
to do my Master's will.*



This remains as true today as when Charles Wesley wrote these words in a hymn over 250 years ago.

Next week there will be meetings across the circuit, to explore and discuss how our Methodist churches and the circuit together can "serve the present age". They begin at 7.30pm and last for about two hours.

Monday 11 October at North Harrow (HA2 6EQ)
Tuesday 12 October at Eastcote (HA5 2QU)
Wednesday 13 October on Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/94982197752?pwd=TIIGSmhwKzJQNvNmZXZyZXJ0VWx6dz09>
Thursday 14 October at North Hillingdon (UB10 9FB)

Obviously, the meeting nearest to us is at North Hillingdon, but you are welcome to any of them.

People have asked if there can be a meeting during the day, so one has been arranged for Monday 18 October starting at 10.30 am at The Lighthouse Centre in South Ruislip (HA4 0NL).

If you come to one church meeting this year, please make it this one. And together we can listen to God and each other to discover how we can shape the future of the circuit and churches to become what God wants us to be.
To start you thinking, there is a booklet giving some ideas and examples.