

Dear friends,



Alleluia! Christ is risen  
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

I wonder how the Easter season is finding you, as we are offered a great fifty days of celebration and mystery, continuing our journey into resurrection life. My focus this year has been on the ordinary backdrop to the extraordinary events of incarnation and resurrection, the ways in which God-with-us brings life, death and new life into sharp focus. Prompted by the preaching of another, and picking up my Lenten theme of ‘the little things’, I have been thinking with congregations in Holy Week and Easter about the call to tend a tiny flame of hope, even in the face of the huge challenges facing us, globally, locally and personally. So, I’m curious, what helps or might help you to hold on to an attitude of hopefulness as these days unfold? You might even like to offer some responses to Wesley for the blog...

This month there a few practical matters to bring to your attention again...

The Circuit podcast in its current form will take a break on the next plan. This is to allow us to pause, review the format and content we are offering, and plot a way forward for the next period of time. We may try out different approaches over the summer – so do look out for links on the weekly mailing.

While we are thinking about worship, we need to let you know that our next preaching plan has been very challenging to make, and you will notice that there are an increased number of local arrangements. We know how challenging this can sometime be for local churches. If the leadership of your local church invites you to be involved in leading worship on one of these Sundays, please do consider giving it a go – maybe you might even offer to join in before you are asked! Lots of resources are available and there is support and encouragement from the Circuit team. Being part of a team creating space for yourself and others to encounter God in music, scripture and prayer, though serious and important, can also be immensely rewarding and enjoyable.

Finally, this year Bible Month invites us to reflect on the book of Isaiah. As a Circuit we will be encouraging churches and preachers to use the material provided, which invites us to take a thematic approach to the book over four weeks – ‘tough love’, ‘light to the world’, ‘faithful servant’ and ‘a new world’. We expect this to run in June and early July. A small group (meeting on Zoom) is also picking up the challenge of **reading all sixty-six chapters together, beginning on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, and meeting fortnightly until August 9<sup>th</sup>**. These meetings will be around an hour to an hour and a quarter, and will include reading a portion of text aloud and sharing some conversation about what we have discovered in our reading. **If you would like to join in**, please contact me ([jolightowler@gmail.com](mailto:jolightowler@gmail.com); 07528 359341) for more details.

Peace, Jo