

January 2021

To members and friends of the North Yorkshire Coast Methodist Circuit,
from Rev Graham Morgan, superintendent minister

Those of you who received and read my Christmas message will realise that we are now in that long hard winter that I made reference to.

I was so looking forward to sharing the Covenant Service in our worship at the beginning of this new year. Sadly, even before the announcement of the new lockdown, it became necessary to make the recommendation that our churches do not hold Sunday services on church premises for the foreseeable future.

Whilst the government says that places of worship can open for worship during the lockdown, some of you may be wondering why the CLT has recommended that we do not hold services.

The district Superintendents in consultation with our Chair, Rev Leslie Newton, have agreed that, as far as it is possible, we should be of one mind and have a common approach across our district concerning worship at this time

That we are currently in national lockdown means that we are on the highest of alerts for the spread of Covid-19.

Whilst our churches are relatively safe places, the virus spreads when people gather.

Many of our congregations and those who make it possible for services to take place, including preachers, are in the vulnerable category. We must play our part in helping to keep those who are vulnerable safe.

By not opening, we are also giving a positive message to the wider community that we must all play our part in doing all that we can to resist the transmission of the virus.

Whilst we may not be meeting to renew our covenant in church, we can all take time to reflect upon and to pray the Covenant Prayer. To this end I offer a copy of the prayer in its modern form for your personal reflection and commitment.

*I am no longer my own but yours.
Your will, not mine, be done in all things,
Wherever you may place me,
in all that I do
and in all that I may endure;
when there is work for me
and when there is none;
when I am troubled
and when I am at peace.
Your will be done
when I am valued
and when I am disregarded;
when I find fulfilment
and when it is lacking;
when I have all things,*

*I willingly offer
all I have and am
to serve you,
as and where you choose.*

*Glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.
May it be so for ever.
Let this covenant now made on earth
be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.*

In these days the covenant prayer has taken on a much deeper meaning and I shall be returning to it in my own personal devotions in the coming year. May God help us all to make and to keep our covenant throughout the year ahead,

Referring once again to my Christmas message, I mentioned my belief that this long hard winter would be followed by a warm spring and a glorious summer! I seriously believe that if the nation behaves sensibly and as the vaccination is rolled out, once the restrictions begin to lift, they will do so once and for all.

We will sing together again, we will shake hands, hug and eat together. We will laugh and have fun.

In the meantime, online worship continues, we shall keep in touch via newsletters and telephone calls, meetings will take place via zoom.

If you are finding things particularly difficult at this time, pick up the phone, give your minister a call. We are here to listen, to offer prayer, to remind you that you are not alone. If you are in need of help with your shopping, perhaps this is something that we can help sort out.

I conclude this letter with my favourite verse of scripture

“If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”
1 John 4:12

This verse is my prayer for the church, for our circuit and individual churches, that through our love for one another, God will reside in us and through us and we will know the completeness of his love.

With my love and prayers,
Graham