Since we were asked to close our Church doors we’ve all been working very hard to provide alternative ways to worship, share prayers and continue our social events. We’ve all had to learn new skills and improve others in a short period of time and we have risen to the challenge and for that we are truly grateful.

We’re going to shine a spot light on each Circuit to share what’s taking place. If we have missed anything please do let Sam Roberts, Communications Officer know at Comms@sheffieldmethodist.org. We will continue to share as many stories as we can.

Doncaster Circuit

In the Doncaster Circuit great efforts are being made to enable a wide variety of church members to take part in online worship. Daily Devotions are live at 8am each day led by the ministry team and some local preachers on the [Doncaster Circuit youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=doncaster+methodist+circuit).

<https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=doncaster+methodist+circuit>

At TKCC (The Kings Cross Church) Revd. Jon Bellfield explains, “It’s important to maintain a family feel so we’ve shortened sermons, we still celebrate birthdays and each week we are are learning new skills as we produce online worship. Our Junior Church and bible studies have been moved online to Zoom and we are offering extended sessions. Our Iranian pastor Afsaneh has been communicating, mainly online for the past three years, offering teachings and Bible study to around 80 Farsi speakers in our District and in Hull but many 100’s more globally.”

Here is TKCC’s youtube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+king%27s+cross+church+hexthorpe>

Priory Place

On a Sunday morning at 11am you can join Priory Place on Facebook and at 11.30am Café Church begins on Zoom.

<https://www.facebook.com/PrioryMC/>

Schools Co-ordinator for Doncaster Circuit Aimee Roddam, is working with local schools to create Open the Book and Godly Play resources which can be shared by the schools as part of their home learning packs for pupils. She is also sharing a weekly bible reading and reflection for children as part of worship in the Circuit. Watch out on the [Doncaster Circuit youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=doncaster+methodist+circuit) for Godly Play resources for everyone.

SMC (Sprotbrough)

Is offering online worship at 10am on a Sunday
[www.sprotmethchurch.co.uk/welcome.htm](http://www.sprotmethchurch.co.uk/welcome.htm)

SMC’s Worship Leader Matt Beckingham is part of the team who have created a virtual choir - National Methodist Choir for Great Britain. Over 1,000 people from around the world have signed up to take part in the online choir. So far, they have released two songs (In Christ Alone and 10,000 Reasons) and there are plans for more. Visit <https://nmcgb.org/> to find out more and to listen to the songs.

Barnsley Circuit

You can find Barnsley Circuit online @

<https://www.facebook.com/BarnsleyMethodist/>

<https://www.barnsleymethodist.org.uk/>

“Our church buildings may be closed but the worship and work of our Circuit continues. God is very much alive and active in Barnsley” explains Dawn Webster. She tells us all about how Worship is being delivered within the Circuit:

“We now have a circuit facebook page (as well as our website). Each week one of our ministers will lead us in a 30 -35 minute pre- recorded act of worship to include a couple of hymns, prayers, bible reading and a short sermon. We also include members of our congregation to share the readings. Having the service online means our congregations can share in this at times which are suitable to them (and even watch it twice if they wish)

“One of our larger chapels have decided to go a step further and have chosen to deliver a service via Facebook in realtime, for those who want to feel the sense of community. This enables people to comment & share as the service progresses, helping people to feel and see they are not alone as they worship.

“The service itself is still pre-recorded (& includes the sermon from one of our ministers in the circuit). One of the members takes control and posts the links to the you tube clips along with a few comments to guide us along.

“This takes the form of a full service, including a children’s spot with craft for people to join in. (having been told earlier what is needed for the craft).

“The service is also e mailed out to everyone (just in case they are not on Facebook) with links to the you tube clips – again this is available to use at a time suitable to our members.

“Those of our members who are not on social media/ computers delivered the service in print each week.

“God is certainly alive & active in Barnsley as more and more people become “friends” of our Facebook page and share in the worship that is on offer at this time. Long may online worship continue! (as well as in our church buildings)”

**Coffee Mornings**

“In these challenging days we are all grateful to be able to make these connections with each other and nurture our friendships” explains Eddie and Elizabeth Hambleton. They have organised a weekly coffee morning via Zoom.

 “We meet at 10am every Tuesday for about an hour. There are generally about 30 people from across the chapels in the North East Church.

“It’s so good to 'see' friends and also to get to know each other better, the conversation flows freely and everyone enjoys the chatter.

“What we talk about varies, sometimes we are sharing recipes and admitting we are all eating too much cake! We also enjoy teasing each other and sharing anecdotes about the activities and experiences of the previous week. There are some serious times too, when we share concerns about others and request prayers for those in need.

“It really is a special time as we enjoy fellowship together.  In these challenging days we are all grateful to be able to make these connections with each other and nurture our friendships.”

**Young People**

Youth Worker Kirstie Hall, explains how it’s important to stay connected to the young people within the Circuit.

She said: “When lockdown hit, we were anxious as a group of leaders that we would still want to support and nurture the young people that we had contact with.

“We developed a weekly pattern of online bible study and games nights. Once a week, as we would in none lockdown times, we meet via Zoom, to discuss some of the big issues the young people are facing in their lives and look at what the church and the bible has to say about these. Also, once a week, we host a games night for the young people. We have played a whole host of games including virtual escape rooms, quizzes, bingo to name a few.

“We've also kept in touch with them by sending things through the post such as Easter gifts and 'seeds of hope' (sunflower seeds for them to plant and as they watch them grow to think of hope filled futures!).

“Finally, each day we set a challenge for them to do through our Facebook page, this hopefully gives them something to do in those boredom moments!”

**Alpha**

Richard Caley explains how he and his wife Debs have found taking part in Alpha online and signing up to be course leaders.

He said: “We are both enjoying our time on-line and were keen to engage for a second time in Alpha. Previously Deb and I attended our circuit church and really enjoyed the fellowship. The meal together was great, then the film followed by breakout sessions. It is personally my third Alpha and each one brings new insight and revelations within our own Christian journeys.

“The Zoom meetings bring their own variation to the Alpha experience. People seem more relaxed within their home environment and more able to talk about their own life experiences. We have had a few technical issues with confusion over the signing on process. The sound has been problematic as zoom does not handle multiple conversations as well as one would wish. Music is not transmitted well unless you specifically manage the advanced audio settings. It is difficult to intervene and ask members to change any settings during the Alpha session especially as some are new to video conferencing technology. Background noise from individual homes can disrupt collective listening but by the third session meeting production quality improved through good leadership and technical experience. The main improvements were brought about by everyone watching the video before the meeting started, the host muting everyone whilst in the large group format and using a hand sign if participants wished to contribute. We are using the software breakout room facility, where we are in smaller groups of four or five, which now makes it possible to have our microphones unmuted for general discussion of the course questions.

“Both Debs and I love the quality and content of the films especially as they will appeal to a wide age range. They are a wonderful medium for introducing Christ to those who have little knowledge of the gospels. I have been so impressed that I wanted to investigate more resources on the Alpha course website so I could introduce my step-daughter to the material whilst she is in lockdown hundreds of miles away. I set myself up as a course leader so I could introduce my friends and colleagues to the course material and fully investigate the website. I’m convinced that Alpha is a wonderful way to introduce Christ to others, especially as the world has discovered a new way of communicating that could bring Jesus into their homes with a powerful clarity of understanding sowing the seeds for a deep and personal relationship with God.”