

The Wey Forward

Issue 18 December 2020 - February 2021

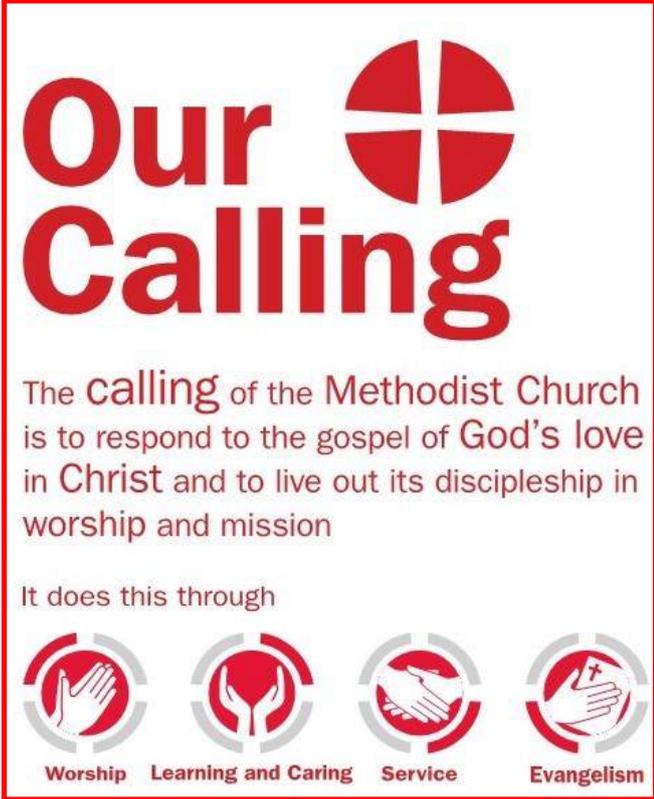


The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit

The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit came into being on 1st September 2016. It was formed by the joining of 13 churches in the Guildford and Woking & Walton-on-Thames circuits. Each church has its own distinctive personality and gifts, and continues to look forward to mutual sharing and support and to responding together to the gospel of God's love in the community and the wider world. (For those not familiar with the term, a "circuit" is an administrative group of Methodist Churches in the same geographical area).

Our churches can be found in :

- * Addlestone
- * Byfleet
- * Cranleigh
- * Godalming
- * Guildford
- * Knaphill
- * Merrow
- * Sheerwater
- * Stoughton
- * Walton-on-Thames
- * West Horsley
- * Weybridge
- * Woking



Our Calling

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission

It does this through

-  **Worship**
-  **Learning and Caring**
-  **Service**
-  **Evangelism**

If you are a visitor or newcomer to the area, or living here and seeking a church for the first time, please use our website - www.veyvalleycircuit.org.uk to find a church that meets your spiritual and pastoral needs. We have included links to the websites of all of our churches in the circuit but you can also contact the Circuit Office for more information. The office is open each weekday morning from 9am to 1pm and Sue Howson, the Circuit Administrator, can be contacted on circuitoffice@veyvalleycircuit.org.uk or 07808 046451.

This quarterly newsletter aims to showcase what is going on around the Circuit, provide relevant information for the forthcoming quarter and offer some thought provoking articles.

Sue Howson

Editor

A Message From Our Superintendent

Dear Friends,

A well-known singer once sang, "If I could turn back time..." If you had known how 2020 was to turn out I wonder if you would have changed how you lived in 2019 and early 2020. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy teaches us not to "awfulize" or "catastrophize", in other words not to predict the worst possible outcome and view it as inevitable. As Jesus said, tomorrow has troubles enough of its own. To be fair, the NHS has not collapsed, and the worst predictions have been confounded. Nevertheless, grief and loss have struck many families and many companies have gone into administration and people are facing financial hardship as we enter the second lockdown of 2020.

How do we get through this and maintain our resilience? You probably have your ideas. Consider the following: every day be grateful for at least 3 things. Every day do at least one thing you enjoy and one thing that makes you feel in control, even if it is something simple. We are advised to keep moving, take a walk or do light gardening or even dusting, as our health permits. Phone a friend. In every situation play Pollyanna's game and find something to be glad about. Think of those facing worse difficulties than you and offer them the love of Christ.

A poster once asked, "Why pray when you can worry" (sic). In our society many people seek help in all sorts of spiritualities, but why not pray? I have been thinking about how different kinds of Christian prayer support our wellbeing. In this Year of Prayer, I offer my thoughts to you.

PRAISE: Reminds us that there is something greater than us. The world does not revolve around me!

INTERCESSION: Reminds us that there are other people whose needs are important. Their problems may be bigger than my own.

PETITION: Reminds us that God in His wisdom, love and power is willing and able to meet our needs, perhaps in a way that has not even occurred to me.

CONFESSION: Reminds us that we could be better. It is not only other people who are not perfect.

ADORATION: Reminds us that in God's loving service there is true freedom.

DEDICATION: Reminds us that there is a greater purpose to life. I am in a covenant relationship with God.

James Montgomery wrote:

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered, or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

I pray that God will continue to watch over you in this uncertain time,
and that you will use this time to develop the holy habit of prayer.

God bless you,

Rev Keith C. Beckingham
Superintendent Minister



Services Around the Circuit

See information about licences for streaming and guidance on technique from CCLI at <https://uk.ccli.com/streaming/> Please check arrangements direct with your church during Lockdown 2

Addlestone	Addlestone is now hosting a monthly virtual zoom service and the church is open for a Holy Communion service every other month; all are joint services with Weybridge. We continue to join Weybridge for all other services. We send hard copies of the Worship at home sheets, prayer guidance and Pastoral letters to our non-internet users. Open for private prayer Saturdays 10.30am – noon.
Byfleet	The Rev David Faulkner produces a weekly video Reflection which is published at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday and can be found at https://bit.ly/DFYTChannel The Superintendent's pastoral letter and other worship material received via the Circuit Office is emailed to all the church family where possible. Otherwise hard copies are hand delivered. Byfleet has agreed to open for private prayer during the lockdown on the Sundays 15 th , 22 nd and 29 th November, between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm.
Cranleigh	Several of our members take part regularly in the St Mary's Sunday morning services via zoom which are very helpful and encouraging. The orders of services for worship at home are also circulated to all members of the congregation.
Godalming	Sunday services at 10.30am with Adam Payne at https://guc.online.church Services are available for viewing later on our website www.guc.org.uk Or YouTube channel bit.ly/GUCYouTube Viewing figures have been very positive and include people watching from across the country.
Guildford	Services each Sunday – a physical presence in church with participation by Zoom each Sunday at 10.30am. Contact Nigel Campion-Smith (nigel.campion-smith@outlook.com) for link and password
Knaphill	Dave Faulkner will be producing a weekly video. The aim will be for publication at 8:00 am on Sunday. Posted in hindsight on the Circuit website but you can find the video on Dave's YouTube channel at https://bit.ly/DFYTChannel Hit 'Subscribe' and then the bell icon next to it, so that you receive instant notifications when a new video is published.
Merrow	No current plans to venture down the path of "on-line public worship". We will continue to publicise on our website and in our weekly News sheet all the exciting initiatives across the circuit and wider which are successfully embracing the new available technologies. Silent Prayer on Wednesdays from 10.00am - 11.00am will continue at least for the duration of the calendar year.
Sheerwater	Zoom services publicised on Facebook, St Michael's Shared Church . Contact Tracey Francis (office@stmichaels sheerwater.org.uk) for link and password.
Stoughton	Asif writes a reflection every week which is emailed to the church family members, as is Keith's weekly pastoral letter. The weekly district service is sent out and so are various other links to watch church services through different Methodist resources. Neil Champion is updating Stoughton's website - putting both Keith's and Asif's letters on the home page along with some of the many links to resources on the circuit, district, UK Methodist and Singing the Faith websites.
Walton	Walton hold a weekly Sunday Tea and Fellowship Zoom meeting at 4pm for their congregation to come together. Open for private prayer each Thursday for 1 hour between 2.00pm and 3.00pm. All are welcome.
West Horsley	Gathered services cancelled during second lockdown.
Weybridge	10.30am Zoom service each Sunday. Contact Weybridgemethodistoffice@gmail.com for link and password.
Woking	Foundry Worship (at 5pm) is on alternate Sundays via Zoom. For Foundry Worship please check with Hugh Bowerman (hugh.bowerman@gmail.com) There is a Junior Church Zoom Sunday service (11.15am) each week. Friday Fun Club has also resumed, in term time, at 6.30pm via Zoom and there is a half term holiday club. Trinity has restarted Bible Investigators on Sundays at 3pm, via Zoom.

Cranleigh Lions Club - Project Wenceslas

Will you be nice and cosy in your home this winter?

How would you feel about helping those that won't be?

Please consider helping Cranleigh Lions to help others by taking part in Project Wenceslas and donating some or, perhaps, all of your Winter Fuel Payment to us.



The Winter Fuel Payment is paid to those born on or before 5 October 1954 and those living in the UK for at least one day during the week of 21-27 September 2020 – this is called the “Qualifying Week”.

This payment is not means-tested, it is tax free and will not affect other benefits. The payment is £200, or £100 each for a couple, and increased to £300 for those born on or before 20 September 1940.

If you are eligible you will usually get the payment automatically. Most payments are made in November and December. You may need to claim it if you have not had it before or if certain conditions apply – details at www.gov.uk. You have until 31 March 2021 to claim for winter 2020-2021.

Cranleigh Lions are asking that if you do not need this money you donate your Winter Fuel Payment, or some of it, to the Cranleigh Lions' Wenceslas Project.

Working in conjunction with the Citizens Advice Bureau, Barnardo's (taking over from SureStart), local churches and other organisations funds will be used to help local people who have problems with their fuel bills. Some even have to choose between heating or eating. Money is not given to individuals – we make payment direct to energy companies or we top up pre-payment cards with cash.

If you would like to help those who are unable to keep warm this winter please consider donating your Winter Fuel Payment or some of it to Cranleigh Lions. We are anticipating even more requests this year due to Covid-19 and as furlough periods come to an end.

If you are a UK tax payer we can also claim Gift Aid on your donation which means we can help more people. Bear in mind that Gift Aided donations can be included on your tax return.

Please see our website <https://www.cranleightlions.org/events/wenceslas/> for more details. Donations can be made here via the website but there are details for cheque payments too.

This will be the seventh year that we have run our Wenceslas Project and so far we have collected almost £18,000.

Thank you

Davy Worsfold Dip PFS

Just to note - similar initiatives are also organised by other Lions Clubs across the Circuit

News from around the Circuit

Addlestone

Two steps forward and one step back. No not a dance, just how it feels when we try to make progress during a pandemic. We opened the church in October for private prayer on Saturday mornings. It was good for it to be seen no longer in a permanent lockdown, but it is a very small beginning. Our first Holy Communion Sunday service is due to take place in December, made possible by Weybridge offering to assist with stewarding to provide the necessary eligible stewards to comply with the guidelines. All this is in the hope that Addlestone avoids being located into 'Tier 2' – the one step back I was referring to. Our faith is so important to us while the end of the restriction is not in sight. I always think of the song - **God will make a way when there seems to be no way.** We all know it still requires us all to contribute to help make it happen but we also know the Lord is there to guide us.

Grace, the 10 year old girl we support through Compassion, lives in a town just in from the west coast of South America. Reports indicate high rates of infections, lack of doctors and medical facilities and its inevitable effect on health conditions generally. Grace's 11th birthday is in December and we are anxious to know how she and her family are coping. Letters from Grace in reply to ours have been quite frequent but we have not heard from her since March. Compassion are trying to get news for us. In the meantime we pray for her and her family. Our appreciation to our church members who support her with their regular donations.

Weybridge invited us to join them at their zoom Sunday Services in September and it is proving a lifeline in enabling us to have an opportunity to attend a weekly service. Church meetings for business and social occasions are able to continue in this new format too. There is still much to learn, the latest is using YouTube to provide our hymn music, but until Covid-19 is under control we are being given the time.

When I look at this photograph and read Addlestone's prayer section in the previous Wey Forward my heart is filled with sadness. With an ageing membership an occasional sad event is inevitable, but to lose within a few weeks a very committed Senior Church Steward, a Church Council member and very involved and regular worshipper, and in addition another Church Steward, whilst recovering from Covid-19 in a care home, all much loved members of our church family, it seems too much to bear. Daphne and Pat are both now free from pain and in the loving arms of their Saviour. Margaret is gradually coming to terms with her new circumstances. Our prayers are for Margaret and for all the family and friends of our much missed church family members.



continued.....



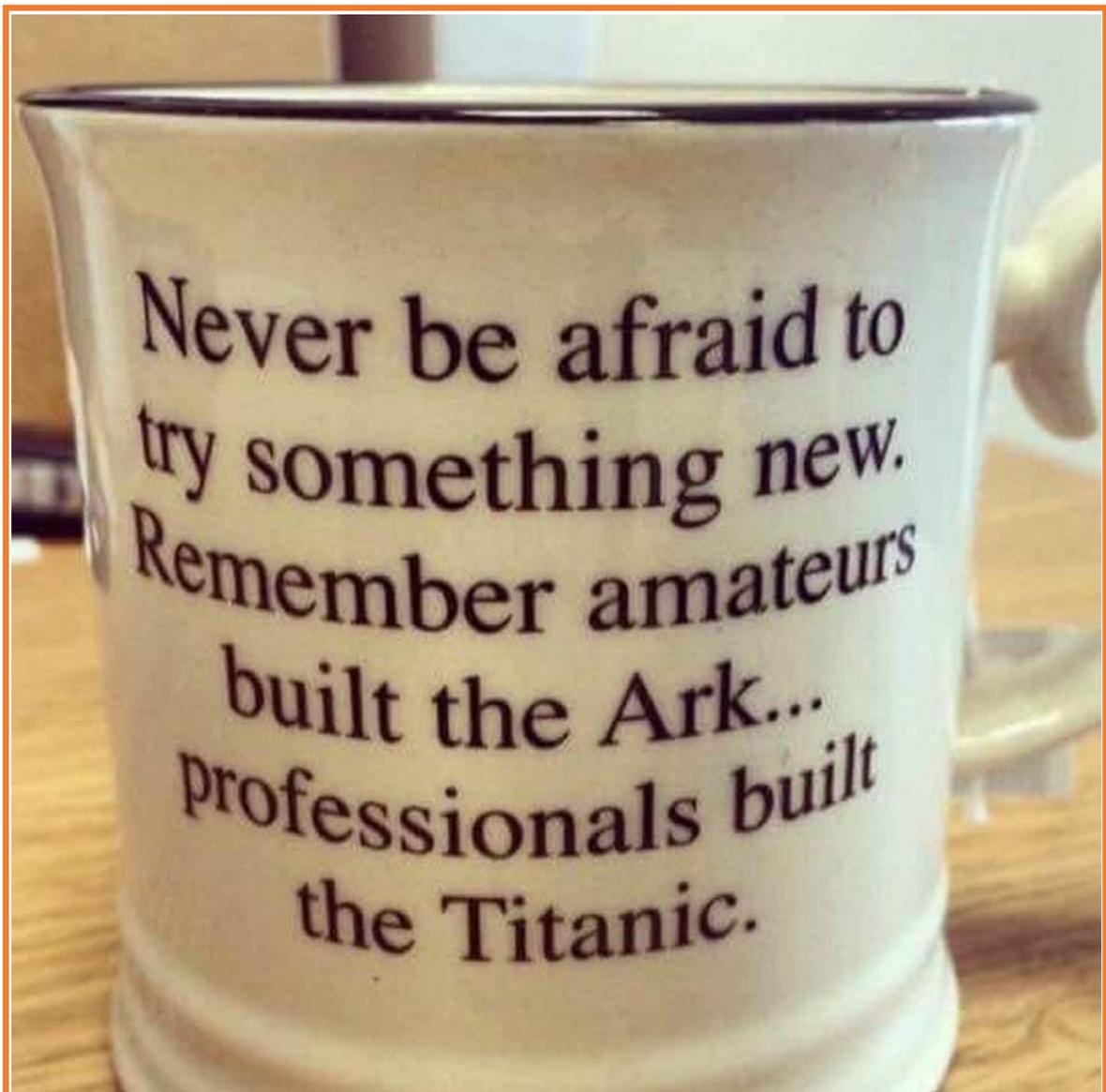
In a much earlier issue of *The Way Forward* we referred to the words of Billy Graham during his 'Tell Scotland' campaign in 1955. Many who attended an event went to the front to commit to a Christian life. Billy Graham told us the next step was for the church to ensure they were ready to receive them. In 2016 in a BBC Hardtalk programme the Anglican Bishop of Nigeria expressed the view that

'We need to find new ways of presenting Jesus Christ in today's society.' Many Methodist churches including Addlestone are attempting to respond to both those pieces of advice, some churches are making progress but it cannot just be left to the churches, the system which the churches are required to follow

needs to change as well as the way preachers are taught to lead the services. The message is the same but the presentation needs to change if vulnerable churches like ours are to survive. God is with us but we need to respond. Long serving Methodists must be prepared to move out of their comfort zone.

We pray for God's guidance as we try to respond.

Fred Rowe



Byfleet

I delayed writing in the hope that I would be able to share with you the confirmed details of special services and other community activities that our church, which is very much at the heart of Byfleet, would be able to participate in and share with the readers of *The Wey Forward*. 'Hoisted by my own petard' seems an appropriate expression here! I've finished up writing as another general lockdown has just been announced! Will it really end on 3 December? Will our church family be able to gather together in person to share the meaning of Advent and the wonders of Christmas Day? Who knows?

My last two letters have been expressions of gratitude for all the wonderful things that life throws at us, including the ability, since the beginning of September, for Byfleet Methodist Church to open our doors for gathered worship each Sunday, mostly with a 'real, live, preacher', and included in which have been three services of Holy Communion. What will happen now? And which, amongst our tenants, will be able to continue to meet on the grounds that they respond to a social need or are educational? Byfleet's involvement in the Woking Foodbank certainly brings home the appalling financial situation that many will find themselves in as jobs are axed and opportunities for finding work are diminished, jobs which enable people to pay the rent/mortgage, 'feed the meter' and put food on the table.

And however difficult it is in the home, how much more worrying must it be for the Government which has responsibility for the whole nation - to balance the books (literally!), as well as protecting the NHS workers and minimising the loss of life. Whatever our political allegiance, surely all we can do is pray to the God of love, mercy and wisdom to guide our political leaders and also to support their families who will see little of them as long hours 'at the office' take them from family life.

And in the midst of all of this Brexit! For better or for worse, the furrow has been ploughed. There will be an outcome. May God guide and support those who are responsible for the complex negotiations that are taking place and which will not be halted by the lockdowns across several of the nations of the EU.

Whatever the outcomes of the next few weeks, we at Byfleet wish you all a blessed and peaceful Christmas, knowing that for so many of our family here and across the Circuit, it will inevitably be a lonely one. Please take care of yourselves, and stay safe and well.

Margaret Watts



Q. What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and ordinary alphabet?
A. The Christmas alphabet has Noel.

Q. How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?
A. Deep pan, crisp and even!

Robert Weighton (1908-2020) – a man of Faith

As part of its tenth anniversary celebrations, the *i* newspaper recently selected four of the people its reporters had interviewed over the last decade. The people selected were an army veteran, a rave DJ, an aid-worker and a centenarian – Bob Weighton. In February 2020 Bob became the oldest person in the world, a record he held for 58 days until his death in May. In the article, Bob's family described him as "an extraordinary man who lived his life interested in, and engaged with, all kinds of people from across the world."

Bob's career was summarised by his grandson, Russell Weighton, in an informative obituary published by the *Guardian* in June. He was born in Kingston-upon-Hull in 1908 to Arthur (a vet) and Eliza. Having undertaken a marine engineering apprenticeship in Wallsend, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, unable to find a job because of the Great Depression, he took up a teaching job in Taiwan and, having spent two years in Tokyo learning Japanese, then taught at a missionary school in Tainan, a city in the south of the country

He met Agnes when undertaking teacher training at Selly Oak College Birmingham and they married in 1937. When they eventually returned to the UK in 1946 (via various roles in Colorado and Canada) they had three children, Peter (who sadly died in 2012), David and Dorothy. They settled into life at Hatch End in Middlesex and Bob became a lecturer in marine engineering at what is now City University. He "retired" in 1973 but remained active in his church and local community in Alton for the next 45 years.

On Advent Sunday 2015, Paul Hulme interviewed Bob (a young at heart and in voice 107 year old still using his workbench in a spare bedroom) during the morning service at Godalming United Church. As with all his Face-to-Face conversations (both at Wesley's Chapel and in Godalming) Paul conducted the interview with characteristic sensitivity, and armed with a carefully researched knowledge of his subject which belied the informality of his interviewing style. Paul began by sketching the societal changes which had taken place during Bob's life: for example, five UK Monarchs, two world wars, the first Atomic bomb dropped on Japan, a man on the moon, the assassination of President John F Kennedy, the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall and 22 UK Prime Ministers.



Left: Bob Weighton pictured on his 112th birthday - 29 March 2020

Bob revealed much about his early family life and career. But the "punch lines" were at the end of the interview when Bob explained that one of the texts from the Bible which had guided him throughout life was St Paul's statement in Philippians Chapter 4, verse 11 that "I have learned to be content with whatever I have". He had also learnt much from working abroad, not least to accept everyone particularly if their background was very different from his own.

To quote from the conclusion of Russell's obituary in The *Guardian* "Bob was a man of faith, wisdom and humility - and also charming and funny."

With thanks to Sue Weighton, Russell Weighton, Paul Hulme and Alan Steele.

James Strawson

Cranleigh

Who would have thought when Covid 19 began last March that we would now be suffering a 'second wave' in November? I think the majority of us thought (like the people at the start of World War I in 1914) that it would be 'over by Christmas'. Sadly, this has not been the case for us in Cranleigh, for the recommendations are still that our church should not re-open for worship, as it is not safe for our mostly elderly congregation to gather together, even with distancing rules in place and hygiene advice followed.

However, have we therefore resigned ourselves to isolated worship at home or joined in 'Songs of Praise' on television? (Nothing wrong with that you might say!) But those more conversant with modern technology than I, decided that there were ways to unite us in worship, not in person exactly, but in mind and spirit. Nigel Campion-Smith from St Mary's, Guildford, along with already practised computer buffs from our own Cranleigh Church, encouraged me to have a go at a virtual service. And not only me! Others preceded me and more came after. Opportunities for chat followed after Sunday morning service, and although it wasn't conversing one-to-one, there was meaningful contact. We met people we hadn't met before, and in this way, we at the south end of this large Circuit could exchange ideas with those further afield. It has been a privilege to meet not only fellow Methodists but also Anglican members of St Mary's ecumenical congregation.

Of our own members, thanks are due to Hilary and James Strawson, who have provided other links for members to follow for activities which could be practised virtually. For example, the ladies' Wednesday Group, which has continued to meet via Zoom, thanks to Hilary and the Committee, has helped alleviate feelings of isolation experienced by many who live on their own. Church business meetings have also been made possible through this modern technology, not only in Cranleigh of course, but also throughout the Circuit.

I mentioned 'over by Christmas' at the start of this article, and our musical colleagues at St Nicolas Parish Church, are looking at the possibility of recording a version of the united Carol Service which we have been involved with over many years, and we hope very much that this Service may take place with recorded carols, sung by a choir drawn from musicians based at the other churches as well as those at the Parish Church and our own Methodist Church. In this way, perhaps, 'over by Christmas' might seem a little more possible – thanks again to the modern technology bringing some semblance of normality back to our lives.

Glenda Sewell

Q. What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?

A. Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer!



The Impact Of Volcanoes On Bible Stories

Over the past few years, in the Walton Methodist Thursday House Group, we have noticed the influence of the natural world on Bible stories, including the impact of volcanoes. The three events described here emphasise the astonishing power of God's creation. During the past five thousand years some 500 volcanoes have erupted and been visible somewhere in the world (this excludes the many seabed eruptions).

Noah's Flood At various times during my working life I was involved in the science and statistics of extreme flood events. From this perspective it appears to me that Noah's flood was most likely to have been caused by deep snow melted rapidly by heavy rain. Snow could have built up during a prolonged cold spell, caused by volcanic dust cooling the atmosphere. In 1991, volcanic dust from a volcano in the Philippines caused a measurable cooling of the world. It would need several volcanoes to erupt at about the same time to cause sufficient snow to accumulate to cause a really major flood. The Bible account implies that flooding was very widespread, so it was unlikely to have been caused by heavy rain alone. Some aspects of Noah's story may be myth, but the flood itself was probably a real event as there are records of major floods from ancient Babylon.

Santorini The largest volcanic explosion of the last few thousand years took place in about 1600BC, at Santorini, when the mountain was blasted into the air. This occurred 110 km north of Crete, destroying most of the advanced Minoan civilization based in that area. Excavations on Santorini are now uncovering an advanced city that was destroyed by that explosion. This appears to confirm the ancient Greek legend of Atlantis, promoted by Plato, which told of the destruction of an advanced civilisation at about that time.

What is likely, is that the explosion caused survivors of the Minoan civilisation to emigrate in waves to safer places, some to the Nile delta in Egypt, where they were known as Hyksos, and some to the coastal area of Canaan where they became known as Philistines. This explains how elite settlers appeared in these places at around that time. The Hyksos were a threat to the native Egyptians, whereas the Philistines, in the Iron Age with blacksmiths, were a threat to the Israelites who were less advanced, being still in the Bronze Age (1 Samuel 13; 20). An analysis of early Philistine DNA has shown that they had links with Europeans.

Mount Sinai Cambridge professor Colin Humphreys presented in 2003 a now widely accepted view that Mount Sinai was an erupting volcano in Midian, in present day Saudi Arabia probably affecting the ancient trade route taken by the Hebrews out of Egypt. Some of the reasons for assuming that Sinai was a volcano were noted in *The Way Forward*, issue 5. In Judges 5;5 most translations say the mountain "*quaked*" or "*shook*". The Hebrew however says that the mountain "*flowed*", which describes a volcanic lava flow. The translators did their best, not realising that Sinai was an erupting volcano.

In many ancient cultures, local erupting volcanoes were called a "*mountain of God*" as in Exodus 3;1. a phrase also used by Greeks, Romans, and Japanese. They went to Mount Sinai following a cloud by day and a fire by night (Exodus 13; 21-22). Jesus is active not only in natural events such as volcanoes, but in all of creation (John 1; 3). The universe was created by him and for him (Col 1; 16) and is sustained by him (Hebrews 1; 3). How great is God's power and love!

Colin Wright

Masks for Moldova

Moldova (which is about the size of Wales) is situated between Ukraine and Romania and is the poorest country in Europe. 'Love & Care for Moldova' is a charity which supports children and families in various ways.



In normal times, I volunteer twice a year to help at 'La Via', a day centre for vulnerable children, some of whom are homeless. As travel to Moldova is no longer possible at the present time, I am making face masks, to support the work of 'La Via' and in particular to help to pay for food parcels to be taken to the children and their families, in place of the daily hot meals the children would normally be given at 'La Via'. The masks, which are made of two layers of cotton and which are reversible and washable, can be made in any colour (Christmas masks are also currently available) at a cost of £3.50 each (including postage) (or £6.00 for two) from Hilary Strawson. Cheques can be made payable to 'Love and Care for Moldova' or please contact Hilary for details if you would like to make a direct bank transfer to 'Love and Care for Moldova'.

For more information please contact me at :

5 Fortune Drive, Cranleigh, GU6 8DH

strawsonhilary@gmail.com Tel. 01483 276075 Mob. 07745350469

Hilary Strawson

Q. What is the most popular carol in the desert?

A. Camel ye Faithful.



Godalming United Church

We continue to “Worship and Serve Together in Christ” in these uncertain times.

Sunday morning worship resumed on 30 August under the now familiar safety procedures. With spaces limited to less than 50 advance booking has been necessary via 01483 860683. There is, at other times, some limited access for private prayer – please phone 01483 420459.

We have been live-streaming the service at 10:30 am, with two options on how to connect: the same platform we have been using during the first lockdown:
<https://guc.online.church> This includes a ‘Chat’ function to allow you to say “Hello”, raise anything that you’d like us to pray for, and so on.

There’s also <https://thesundayservice.gallery.video/godalmingunited> or bit.ly/GUCTV but with no chat available.

The service can also be watched later on our YouTube channel: bit.ly/GUCYouTube Recordings (audio and video) are available through our website www.guc.org.uk



Our new Minister, Rev Adam Payne, is settling into life in Godalming with his wife and two school-age daughters. He was inducted into our church in September in a necessarily restricted service, with United Reformed Church Moderator Rev Clare Downing and Wey Valley Circuit Superintendent Rev Keith Beckingham officiating. The Paynes have moved to us from Basingstoke, where they played an active part in the life of London Street URC. So it was fitting that Basingstoke’s URC Minister, Rev Kay Blackwell, preached the sermon (during which we discovered our new minister’s enthusiasm for Dr Who!). Also participating was Rev David Hinchliffe, Chair of the Methodist South East District. Friends from Basingstoke joined our own congregation in supporting Adam, and a welcome was extended on behalf of the town and Churches Together by our Mayor, Councillor Penny Rivers.

We were delighted to share in our first Communion service for seven months in mid-October. All who wished to participate were issued with an individual “kit” – a neat disposable mini-goblet with double peel-off top, enclosing first the wafer, and then the communion wine.* “Communion-ready-to-go” isn’t the same as the traditional serving of the elements, but is a safe way of sharing the Eucharist at the heart of our Christian tradition.

*https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B005QXG8L6/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o05_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

Looking forward to Christmas it is our plan to hold the following services – all available online:
Carol Service early evening of Sunday 20 December
Christmas Eve Communion late afternoon 24 December
Christmas Day celebration at 10 am

Nancy Wilks



The Merton Prayer

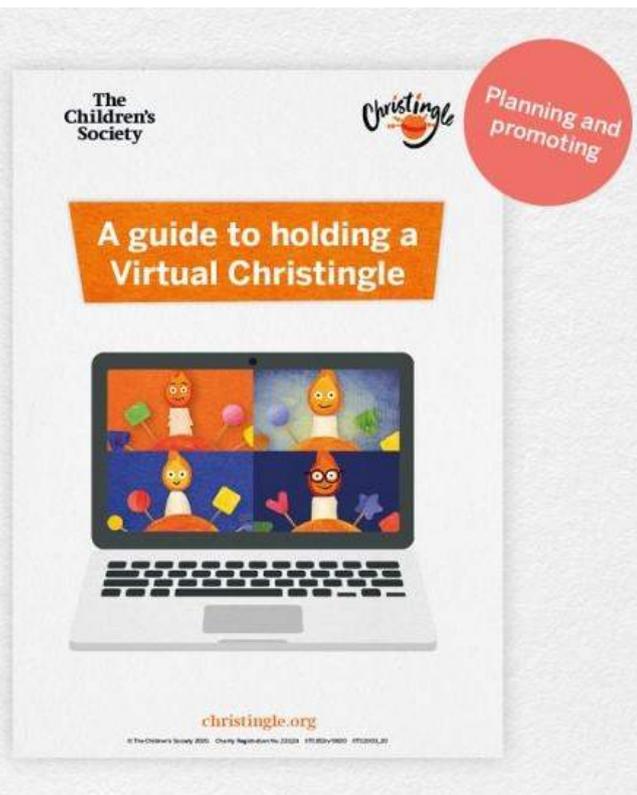
My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Thomas Merton (1915—1968)

Permission to print obtained from the Trustees of the Thomas Merton Legacy Trust.

Thomas Merton was an American Trappist monk, theologian, poet, social activist and scholar of comparative religion. Find out more at merton.org

Virtual Christingle



The Children's Society are offering some great FREE resources for Christingle this year.

Many people may not be able to attend a service in person this year, so help them light up computer screens by holding an online service.

Whether you're a virtual expert or giving it a go for the first time, this guide outlines everything you need to know for holding a Christingle celebration online.

<https://shop.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-to-christingle-virtually-guide.html>

The Children's Society is a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Mission Supper

Save the Date

Saturday 20 March 2021

at
Trinity Woking

The speaker will be
Rev Conrad Hicks

Director of Global Relationships
in the World Relationships Team
of the
Methodist Church



A Song for Covid?

Here are a few song titles that I've thought of which could form the soundtrack to these difficult times. No doubt you can think of more!

It's the end of the world as we know it (and I feel fine), REM, 1987

Stuck in the middle with you, Stealers Wheel, 1972

Fever, Peggy Lee, 1958

Are you lonesome tonight?, Elvis, 1960

I want to break free, Queen, 1984

Get off of my cloud, Rolling Stones, 1965

Parklife, Blur, 1994

Heaven knows I'm miserable now, Smiths, 1984

Don't leave home, Dido, 2003

This town ain't big enough for the both of us, Sparks, 1974

Stayin alive, Bee Gees, 1977

What's going on?, Marvin Gaye, 1971

Every breaking wave, U2, 2014

Here we go again, Ray Charles, 1967

And Keith mentioned, *If I could turn back time*, Cher, 1999

Sue Howson



Guildford St Mary's

It's been a joy to welcome many friends from around the Circuit to the new-look St Mary's since we reopened in September. We were just coming to terms with the strange concept of a comfortably warm church when the latest lockdown was announced, so our wings have been clipped a little.

We are planning to open St Mary's regularly for private prayer as permitted under lockdown. The very moving **good grief?** exhibition by Jacqui Parkinson attracted over 110 visitors just before Lockdown Part 2 and will stay in place for the time being. We hope it will help those suffering a sense of loss in framing their prayers.

Our leaflet welcoming visitors to the church includes a timeline stretching back to early Christian activity in the area around 600 AD and then the construction of the oldest part of St Mary's around 1,000 years ago. Although Guildford Methodist Church moved to St Mary's as much as seven years ago, we're still a tiny part of the building's history. We appreciate the Parish's recognition of GMC's physical heritage by integrating the GMC foundation stone in the floor of St Mary's, displaying our War Memorial and, most prominently, installing to great effect the stained-glass window we brought from Woodbridge Road. (photo on back page).

In such challenging times, there is a reassurance in spending time in a deeply spiritual house of God which has supported the community of Guildford for around a millennium through wars and many other upheavals. Indeed, the rubric of the historic Anglican Prayer Book (a mere youngster at less than 360 years old) specifically addresses the problems of sharing Holy Communion during times of plague or sickness — nothing changes, most importantly God's love for us!

Although much of our focus in recent years has been on improving the building, and we're pleased by the results, the pandemic and lockdown have underscored that the church is its people, not the building, and that maintaining the community is crucial.

Our Advent Reflections will be back but this year on Zoom. These will take place as usual on Thursday lunchtimes but this time you can choose your own lunch as you will have to provide it! We've lined up three excellent speakers with the theme **A Strange Christmas**. We will add some music to the mix and breakout rooms to catch up with each other and discuss the Reflection. As there's no need to travel, we hope that friends from across the Circuit will be able to join in. Email gmc.info@hotmail.co.uk for Zoom joining details. After that we look forward to hosting the virtual Circuit Service on the morning of Sunday 27 December - again Zoom means travel won't be a bar to joining in.

Since September we've been working to combine Zoom worship with physical presence in St Mary's for those able to attend in person; so-called Blended Church. We're aiming to continue making use of the broader range of resources explored during the first period of Lockdown to enhance our worship whilst maintaining key elements of traditional worship which we've all shared before.

Part of our motivation in updating St Mary's was to engage better with the community in Guildford. We've already had requests from other churches to use our facilities and hosted a jazz club event (a sell-out so I can't report on what it was like). Most affirming to me has been Street Angels using St Mary's as their operating base on Friday and Saturday nights. They are really valuing setting out from a church in the heart of the community they seek to serve. Just before Lockdown Part 2 we were able to combine a low-key Night Vision welcoming in visitors with a Street Angels duty. When we get back to normal we hope to operate in a way that overlaps with Street Angels to point people in the direction of St Mary's where we can welcome them.

The pandemic has brought us challenges but also opportunities in worship, outreach and service which we must seek to grasp.

Nigel Campion-Smith

Together at Christmas

- a live, virtual celebration

for the

Wey Valley Circuit

No need to travel, just log in on Zoom

Sunday 27 December

10.30



email gmc.info@hotmail.co.uk for Zoom joining details

Butterflies

During the monthly walks organised by the Walton Methodist Church, many butterflies were seen, especially in warmer sunny weather. In the first of a short series Colin Wright details some that were seen, omitting the Large White, Small White, Green-veined White and Small Tortoiseshell, scarce in Surrey in recent years, and the Painted Lady, which although once a frequently seen migrant, wasn't seen at all.

These insects emphasise the amazing diversity of God's creation, which need a healthy habitat to pass on their beauty to future generations. Reference: "Butterflies of Surrey Revisited", by Ken Willmott and members of Butterfly Conservation Surrey Branch.

Brimstone

These, with the Peacock, are the longest lived of native British butterflies and can be seen on the wing from March through to September. The male is a distinctive lemon-yellow and the female pale greenish-white, rather similar in flight to a large white but with no black spots. The word "butterfly" is thought by some to be derived from the colour of the male (butter). They have often been seen in Surrey as the main foodplant for caterpillars is native buckthorn (eggs laid in April), which is common in many places. We saw some in March 2014 when we went to Newlands Corner and in April 2017 when we went to Sheeples, West Horsley.



Comma

In recent years these have been seen much more often in Surrey than 100 years ago. Their caterpillars eat a variety of foodplants. It is thought that they became more profuse when they changed their favourite foodplant locally to nettles where their eggs are laid singly in the spring. They fly from April to September, being seen most often in July. Their wings have a distinctive ragged outline with a white "c" on the underside of their wing. We saw several on our walks, especially in Bookham Commons.

Gatekeeper

These are usually seen in July and August. In recent years they extended their range to much of suburban south London. Eggs are laid on several foodplants including rye-grass and meadow-grass. Males tend to look very similar to females. We saw Gatekeepers on many of our walks, such as Bookham Commons, Epsom Downs and Desborough Island in the River Thames.



continued.....

Marbled White

We saw a wonderful display of these on the chalk down hillsides when we walked on Box Hill in June 2017. The caterpillars eat red fescue and other grasses, hibernate, then emerge the following June. Once not often seen, the species has become more abundant along the North Downs in recent years, flying in June and July. It is thought to have been reintroduced in that habitat around 1960.



Meadow Brown

In Surrey, these fly from June to September and are widespread, so we have seen many on our walks. Their caterpillars eat a wide variety of grasses, but they are readily confused with Gatekeepers. The Meadow Brown black eyespots have two white spots, whereas the Meadow Browns have just one.

Orange Tip

This flies from March through to June and has been common and widespread through most of Surrey. So we have seen many on our Spring walks. The male was easy to identify with its distinctive orange tips to its wings, whereas the female (without the orange tips) has a striking mottled green underside which distinguishes it from the Small White and Green-veined White. The caterpillars mainly eat Cuckooflower and Garlic Mustard.



More sumptuous butterflies to follow in the next edition.

Colin Wright

Knaphill

For our Harvest Service we collected monetary donations for Whitechapel Mission. At least £518.50 will be going from Knaphill Methodist Church this Autumn (and it is possible other donations have been made directly of which I am not aware). Many thanks to all who have supported the Mission. I have expressed our admiration for the courage and dedication of the director and all his assistants.

Thank you to everyone who supported my litter-pick appeal. My final total for Christian Aid was £1,620 and, of course, I am hugely thankful to everyone, friends and family who supported me.

I also collected at least 20 bags of rubbish in my 20 hours or more of collecting. I would like to be able to say that I hope the area (Knaphill, Brookwood and St Johns/Hook Heath) is a bit cleaner and tidier as a result of my efforts, but the rate at which people throw litter down is so high that any benefit is soon undone. The council refuse collectors are unsung heroes. Without their sterling work, sustained throughout lockdown and the ongoing crisis, we would be drowning in rubbish.

Thank you to everyone who has helped me to achieve such a fantastic result.

Lynda Shore



Methodist Homes (MHA)

Thanks to the generosity of those attending the Welcome Service for Sam Funnell and the Harvest Festival just over £790 has been sent to MHA.

MHA is the largest charity care provider for older people in the UK, offering some of the highest quality care, accommodation and support services throughout Britain. Their mission is to inspire the best care and wellbeing at every stage of later life.

For more details and to donate direct please visit their website at:

<https://www.mha.org.uk/about/>



Bookshelf

A selection of general interest books on topical themes. Amazon prices (as at the beginning of November) are listed to which p & p needs to be added. Kindle editions are significantly cheaper. Subject to 'lockdown restrictions' being eased, these books are available at good booksellers (e.g. Waterstones) and WH Smith, usually at discounted prices They are also often sold in Supermarkets again at a significant discount.

Captain Tom – Tomorrow will be a good day, Michael Joseph/Penguin Random House, 2020 (386pp) Amazon £10. The autobiography of Captain Sir Tom Moore. "Through a century filled with drama and great change I've always looked on the bright side. I've lived through triumph and tragedy and yet I am still here, so I can only believe that tomorrow will be a good day".

A Life on Our Planet, David Attenborough, Witness Books/Penguin Random House, 2020 (266pp) Amazon £10. Sir David's Witness Statement and Vision for the Future. "To restore stability to our planet we must restore its biodiversity, the very thing we have removed. It is the only way out of the crisis we ourselves have created".

Dear NHS – 100 stories to say Thank You, ed Adam Kay, Orion Publishing Group, 2020 (406pp) Amazon £9. A unique collection of personal stories from a wide range of contributors including Paul McCartney, Stephen Fry, Dawn French, Jamie Oliver, David Jason, Michael Palin, Emma Thompson and many more. All profits are shared between NHS Charities Together and the Lullaby Trust which supports parents bereaved of babies and young children. Put your feet up by the fire and enjoy this delightful book on Boxing Day!

The Prime Ministers, Steve Richards, Atlantic Books, 2020 (593pp) pbk Amazon £8.19. Reflections on leadership from Harold Wilson to Boris Johnson, to whom 40 pages are devoted. Full of anecdote and analysis, and drawing on thirty years of reporting from Westminster, this is an impressive account of the ten most recent holders of the highest office in the land as "Prime Minister & First Lord of the Treasury".

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse, Charlie Mackesy, Ebury Press, 2019 (160pp) Amazon £8. A captivating work of art and a wonderful window into the human heart. The stories of these unlikely friends and their life lessons which have been recreated by children in schools and hung in hospital wards thousands of times. Add a copy to a Christmas stocking for a child or grandchild and then ask to borrow it back so that you can indulge in a nostalgic return to a world akin to the hundred acre wood inhabited in the 1920s by Winnie The Pooh and his friends!

Dear Life, Rachel Clarke, Little Brown, 2020 (315pp) pbk Amazon £7.95. "A beautiful book about life, death and the price of love, which made me think about stuff I feared in a new and better way". (Rachel Clarke, a former current affairs journalist who retrained as a doctor, and now specialises in palliative care for the NHS, was featured in one of Keith Beckingham's autumn pastoral letters.)

My Garden World, Monty Don, Two Roads/John Murray Press, 2020 (405pp) Amazon £12. This is Monty's personal journey through the natural year season by season, observed from the immediate world around him. The book includes nine photos of Nigel and Nellie - irresistible!

If you would like to share a "Book Note" for the next issue of "The Wey Forward" please send your note (max of 50 words) to James Strawson by **12 January 2021** - strawsons@hotmail.com

James Strawson

Rev J Allan Taylor

20 years' service as a hospital chaplain

Allan Taylor's retirement from the role of part-time Free Church Chaplain at the Royal Surrey County Hospital in September marked the conclusion of some 20 years' work as a hospital chaplain (14 years at the Royal Surrey and 6 years in a similar role in Ashton-under-Lyne). Looking back on his time in the role Allan writes –



I have delighted in meeting members of so many different churches and, as Free Church Chaplain, it has been a pleasure to minister alongside Anglican and Catholic colleagues. There is a buzz about places of comings and goings, like airports and railway stations, and hospitals are places of ultimate comings and goings. It has been a real privilege to be part of the busy life of the Royal Surrey, haunting the wards during the day – 'loitering with intent' – and responding to call-outs during the night. Called to baptise a very premature and tiny baby in the middle of the night, it was later discovered that the family were Catholics. The baby thrived so somewhere there is a Catholic boy who was baptised by a Methodist minister!

At a conservative estimate, during my time as chaplain I must have met at least 9000 diverse and interesting men and women I would not otherwise have met. Some of them were kind enough to say I helped them, but the vast majority disappeared into the night and by the natural order of things I never saw them again.

Inevitably, during the last 20 years there have been a multitude of changes in the NHS. I would say that many of the healthcare professions, including chaplaincy, have become more professional: regular statutory and mandatory training is now prescribed even for part-time chaplains!

Congratulating Allan on his retirement in September, Keith Beckingham wrote 'I am sure Allan's caring work has been much appreciated, as are his continuing contributions to the life of the circuit. It has been good for the circuit to have a link with the pastoral work at the hospital and I know that this has been especially appreciated by members of the circuit who, for whatever reason, have found themselves as in-patients. We all wish Allan well as he reaches this milestone.'

Allan will continue as circuit tutor, and as a member of the circuit meeting and a number of its committees. With Helen Belsham, he also runs a small informal discussion group, which meets fortnightly (at present via Zoom) to study religious books. For details, please contact Allan on his personal email jat.hoschap@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 07708 573661.

James Strawson

Merrow

Initial Risk Assessments Carried Out	TICK
Council Zoom Meeting	TICK
COVID-19 Steering Group established	TICK
One Way System Drawn up	TICK
Sanitising stations set up	TICK
Church seating rearranged to ensure two metre social distancing	TICK
Track and Trace Desk introduced	TICK
Spare Masks sourced	TICK
COVID signage displayed	TICK
NHS QR Code downloaded	TICK
Booking In System set up	TICK
Guidance notes issued to Stewards and Worshippers	TICK
Agree Plan	TICK
OPEN DOORS	DOUBLE TICK !!

P.S. National Lockdown just announced **CROSS**

We finally opened our doors for Sunday Worship on 18 October and what a joyous service it was, led by Rosemary Lee, with the Church seating the maximum number now allowed under our new Covid protocols.

We also began opening in September for Silent Prayer every Wednesday morning from 10.00 am to 11.00 am. We had fourteen people join us for the first Wednesday. Numbers have reduced since then to single figures but we have determined to continue with the initiative for, as I was recently reminded, Matthew 18:20 promises “ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them.”

Our members have not only greatly missed the opportunity to worship together each Sunday during these troubled times but also have always previously enjoyed the fellowship of our monthly Charity Coffee and Cake mornings. So, having successfully employed Zoom for our Council Meetings, in October we ventured down the path of a Zoom Virtual Coffee Morning in aid of the Bible Society. It was a great success with seventeen “attendees” enjoying catching up with each other with a good natter and a home brewed cup of coffee and it raised £495 for the Charity so I would imagine you can look out for more of these in the Spring!

We are back publishing monthly editions of our church magazine The Voice online and we have had many comments as to what a great varied read it is. If you have not caught up with this yet please do download a copy from our website. (also to be found in the Publications section of the Circuit website).

As I write this at the end of October no one knows what the immediate future holds. A “ ping” news alert has just informed me that about 570,000 people were believed to have the virus in England last week. All I can say is that here at Merrow we are very well prepared to deal with any eventuality and are still hopeful that when you read this we will be finalising the details for our Carol Service “with a difference” on the morning of Sunday 20 December and our service of worship on Christmas morning.

Hugh Bradley





Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Tackling Loneliness Digitally

Help The British Red Cross Tackle Loneliness Digitally

Our new Tackling Loneliness Digitally programme funded by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) focuses on helping those who are at greater risk of experiencing loneliness and isolation as a result of the Coronavirus crisis. Groups identified as needing greater support include young people, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, the digitally excluded, refugees, people seeking asylum and other vulnerable migrants, people at risk of loneliness due to health issues and older people.

We have created some brand new resources as part of this programme, designed to help build confidence, coping skills and connections. Please share these with your networks or with anyone who you feel might find them useful.

New online resources to help empower people who may be feeling lonely and provide them with tools and advice on how to reach out during lockdown. These are free and there are resources for both [adults](#) and [children and young people](#)

The Kind Place is a new [6-part podcast](#) series featuring people who are experiencing loneliness getting together to discuss what it actually means to be lonely; what it feels like, how it comes about, and what they're doing to get through it.

Support line for anyone finding it hard to cope, or is worried, lonely or anxious. The British Red Cross has free and confidential coronavirus support line on **0808 196 3651** where friendly volunteers are available, 7 days a week from 10am to 6pm. For those who don't speak English, translators are available and people can email SupportLine@redcross.org.uk if they prefer.

New Loneliness Digital Classrooms where participants can explore how it might feel to be lonely or isolated and learn skills to help others who may be experiencing loneliness. There are two sessions available, one for 10-19 year olds and one for adults aged 19+. Email RedCrossEducation@redcross.org.uk or call 0344 412 2734 to book a place.

Hard copy wellbeing packs are available to order for those who can't access online resources, if you would like some packs to distribute you can submit your request via our online forms – we have packs for both [adults](#) and [children and young people](#)

Our Refugee Services (DigitalCommunitiesRSRFL@redcross.org.uk) and [Connecting Communities](#) sites can also help people to get connected via devices and data (*Subject to criteria, location and availability until 18th December 2020).

Please share the resources with your networks (using #LetsTalkLoneliness on social media platforms) and assets from our social media toolkit
thesocialpresskit.com/british-red-cross

Supporting



St Michael's, Sheerwater

Lockdown has been something of a roller-coaster for the members of St Michael's, Sheerwater. Back in May, we received a call telling us that, from 1 June 2021, there would be no further funding for the Bishop's Mission Order (which I lead) from the Diocese of Guildford and so my post would come to an end along with the BMO after 5 years. I was heart-broken. I have never doubted my call to this wonderful community-minded shared church which punches above its weight in so many areas.

I guess we've all experienced that sudden screeching of brakes, the unexpected change of direction and the emotions that go along with being out of control. Perhaps we should have expected it, but we didn't and, for a while at least, we went into shock. Sheerwater is, in many ways, a resilient place – it has to be – and so, as we prayed and considered our options, determination drove us forward. None of us at St Michael's had doubted that God has been with us on our BMO journey to date: We've seen the congregation double in size twice over (and, yes, decimated again by the Regeneration but doesn't that make us a sending Church?) We've watched our new pop up café grow from 0-45 in just half a term, providing food and fun where it is most needed (before Covid closed us and the fun now gets delivered in a paper bag each week). We had no musicians when I arrived (oh, how I hated that tablet!) but within 6 months we had a pianist and now a small band. Conversations about our leaky roof and tired building somehow ended up in Ray Morgan's office with an offer to explore rebuilding St Michael's as part of the Regeneration so that we could house the Maybury and Sheerwater Community Trust (MASCOT) the charity St Michael's and St Paul's oversee, in our new community building. We hadn't seen that coming!

Each time we prayed consistently for something we believed was in our vision, in God's plan for this place, it emerged, somehow, but this was different. How does a church on an estate that's being demolished, in a place described as 'deprived' raise £150k in 5 months, when churches all around have had their income slashed through Covid closures? I had to ask myself the obvious, uncomfortable question: did I get this wrong? Is this not what God had planned? So we committed ourselves to ongoing prayer, to listening to God, and began the process of asking the local Deanery and Circuit churches for help.

To begin with, offers of help were given but no money. Then gradually a trickle of pledges began. Individuals can move faster than churches and it wasn't long before we had something like £40k pledged from friends for the 5 year period. My oldest friend and professional artist, Nikki, offered to paint a body of work along the canal to sell 50/50 for us and before long, we'd got a virtual art exhibition up on our website with lots of different artists doing a fabulous trade.

(<https://stmichaelssheerwater.org.uk/event/new-artists-live/>)



continued.....

Then the church pledges began to come in and the news that the Circuit were considering substantial support. The night of the Circuit meeting was more tense than any election night as we waited for the results of the vote to come in. When I finally got the message that confirmed the hugely generous pledge of £50k over the next 5 years, the pledge that took us over the line, I literally yelled at the top of my voice and pumped the air in joy before gathering anyone lurking on the church Whatsapp onto Zoom for Night Prayer and thankfulness. Thanks to God for doing what was beyond our imagining and thanks to you, churches and individuals who together released all that we needed and more. 'More?' you say. Yes, more. We had scaled back everything we could think of. We had put in a budget that was as basic as we could manage but it looks as though we will be able to put back in what we had cut out.

I believe that God has a particular heart for those who find themselves on the edges of things; marginalised by accident of birth, health or education. I believe that God has a particular heart for Sheerwater and longs to see faith fed and community grown here. I believe God has given us a clear vision of how we might play our part in God's plans and I am deeply, deeply grateful, that you, my siblings in Christ, have seen that too and got behind us. Thank you and thanks be to God.

Gillaine Holland

Stoughton

We almost made it! Risk Assessments, sanitisers and seat bookings in place we had planned to re-open on 1 November with Rev Allan Taylor leading our worship and then we received the email with advice from the District that churches that had not yet re-opened should not do so. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and perhaps we should have re-opened earlier but Allan had been going to take the Church Anniversary service in June which was cancelled and as he was planned at Stoughton for 1 November it seemed appropriate to target that date for re-opening. This disappointment is, however, nothing compared to the sufferings of so many people in our world during most of this year and the saying 'count your blessings' comes to mind.

Thank you to Merrow for offering seats at their services to folk at Stoughton and a hope for Christmas and the new year that we can gather together again in our homes and re-open all our churches.

Linda Macbeth



Walton - on - Thames

At Walton, we have been working hard to keep in touch with friends and family through lots of different methods. Phone calls, WhatsApp and Zoom have been some of the favourites. Since the middle of September, we have been opening the church for prayer on Thursday afternoons. This has provided a time of peace for those who enter, and has been a good way to show Walton that we are still here and praying for them.

The Covid team was set up in July and they have worked hard to ensure that the church buildings are as safe as they can be. Through their work, it has been possible to open the church not just for prayer but also for communion.

Communion is at the heart of our faith. The fact that we have not been able to take part in communion for six months has been extremely hard. We can take part in online services; however, we cannot take part in communion online. Our first one was on 27 September and now we hope to have one on the first Sunday of every month from December onwards. With the help of the church council, we have also been looking at opening for other services. With prayer and praise, we are working towards this.



We have had many Zoom sessions on Sunday afternoons and it has been good to have people joining us from many different parts of the country. These Zooms have enabled one of our younger members to take on some of the technology for it, and it has been good that people can phone in and listen as well. It has also been good that people, who might not have been able to get to Walton to preach, have been able to take the fellowship part of our Sunday afternoons. It has also allowed us to find out about other forms of worship, and see some the alternative hymns, that are around on YouTube.



On Saturday mornings, we used to meet as a prayer group and now we do it on WhatsApp, so others can join in the prayers. During the time of lockdown this has been a great blessing not just to the group praying but to many others who have been prayed for. We should never underestimate the power of prayer especially in these sombre days

Jeannette Curtis

West Horsley

We were very pleased to re-open our chapel at West Horsley for worship at the beginning of September. It was great to get back and able to worship again in a sacred space, and we had a good start with the first service being led by Allan Taylor. Bob and Heather Spackman took on the onerous requirements of the guidelines and safeguarding conditions, spacing out the chairs, installing sanitation points, a one way system and providing ventilation. We can only seat 13 people, but so far this has not been a problem. Understandably, some of our own members are not yet ready to return and we have been pleased to be joined by some friends from Merrow before their services resumed. But, with a new lockdown starting this week, who knows when we will be able to continue?

Margaret Faulkner

Walton Methodist Players

Well, our optimism was misplaced and we are unable to present our play in September 2020.

However Walton Methodist Players are still busy rehearsing (via Zoom) with the hope of delivering our production in March 2021!

The cast are now word perfect but have no idea of their movements around the stage so still work to do.

Meanwhile

Save the new dates!

11 - 13 March 2021

11TH—13TH MARCH AT 7:30PM

Walton Methodist Players Present



Tickets: £12

Walton Methodist Church Hall
Terrace Road, Walton-on-Thames
KT12 2SR

Visit waltonmethodist.com/wmp



The Christmas jumper my kids gave me last year kept picking up static electricity.

I took it back and exchanged it for another one – free of charge.

Weybridge

Well what can we say? Our services have continued through the summer in conjunction with Addlestone over Zoom.

The users of the church premises are mostly back although unfortunately the support groups who historically used our premises do not feel able to resume face to face sessions.

On 18 October we opened the church for the first time since March to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the church building with a communion service led by Rev Claire Hargreaves. The church was as full as it could be in current times and it was lovely to worship together. The organ, played by Mark Hargreaves, filled the church with joyful music and we listened to two splendid Wesley hymns via the medium of YouTube. We welcomed friends from Addlestone to this service.

Unfortunately this celebration coincided with Elmbridge going into Tier 2 and the Chair of District's letter requesting us to consider carefully whether to close whilst in Tier 2. Weybridge decided to close but events have overtaken us anyway and we are all in lockdown. We pray that the restrictions are lifted in time for Addlestone to host a Communion service on 13 December.

Church members continue to work at the Food Bank. The Woking depot is moving from Sheerwater to Knaphill in mid-November and it promises to be more comfortable and luxurious than the current site. Sadly the demand has risen again

The Weybridge Old Folks Club has been unable to meet although we are trying to keep in touch with all the members. The annual Christmas lunch cannot take place but we are organising Christmas hampers to be delivered to everyone instead.

Christmas will be different this year, or rather the way we celebrate it will be different this year; luckily the wonderful gift of the baby in the manger is unchanging and that wonderful message, personified in the words of Charles Wesley, remains:

Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, however different it may be, and a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

We pray that everyone around the circuit is safe and well and continues to be so.

Until we are able to meet again.....

Prayers from all at Weybridge

Linda Weedon



A Note to Contributors

It is our practice to publish each edition of The Wey Forward, in its pdf format, on the Circuit website. The Wey Forward is an important source of information about the life of the Circuit and what is going on in each of the churches across it. We want to share it with others.

However, we recognise that some contributors may be uncomfortable with a mention on the internet. We will be happy to omit names and any other personal details in any future issue if requested to do so. Please advise at the time of submitting the copy.

A Message from the Editor

I hope you have found the latest edition of 'The Wey Forward' both interesting and useful. Thank-you to everyone who contributed to the articles. As always, it has been a real pleasure to receive and read each item as I put the newsletter together.

If you would find a large print version of the magazine useful then please let me know and I can arrange that for you.

We would like the focus of the magazine to be a forward looking one. So as you plan your events, bear in mind that the rest of the circuit would love to know about them.

**The deadline for Issue 19 of The Wey Forward
is midnight 18 January 2021**

Submissions to the newsletter are accepted at any time but we can only guarantee a submission **will be considered** for a particular issue if it is received by the corresponding deadline listed below. Pop them in your diaries now.

Issue 20 6 April 2021

Issue 21 6 July 2021

Issue 22 27 September 2021

Issue 23 17 January 2022

**Please send your items (and photos) to
weyforward@weyvalleycircuit.org.uk**

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sue Howson

Diary Dates

Date	Time	Event	Venue
December 2020 (and beyond)			
27 December	10.30am	Circuit Service (blended service from St Mary's)	Via Zoom
til 31 December		Virtual Art Exhibition https://stmichaelssheerwater.org.uk/event/new-artists-live/	On Line
11-13 March	7.30pm	Walton Methodist Players "I'll Get My Man"	Walton
5 June 2021	10am - 3pm	Advanced Safeguarding Course	Woking



The stained-glass window from Woodbridge Road reinstalled at St Mary's