

The Wey Forward

Issue 23 March - May 2022



"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

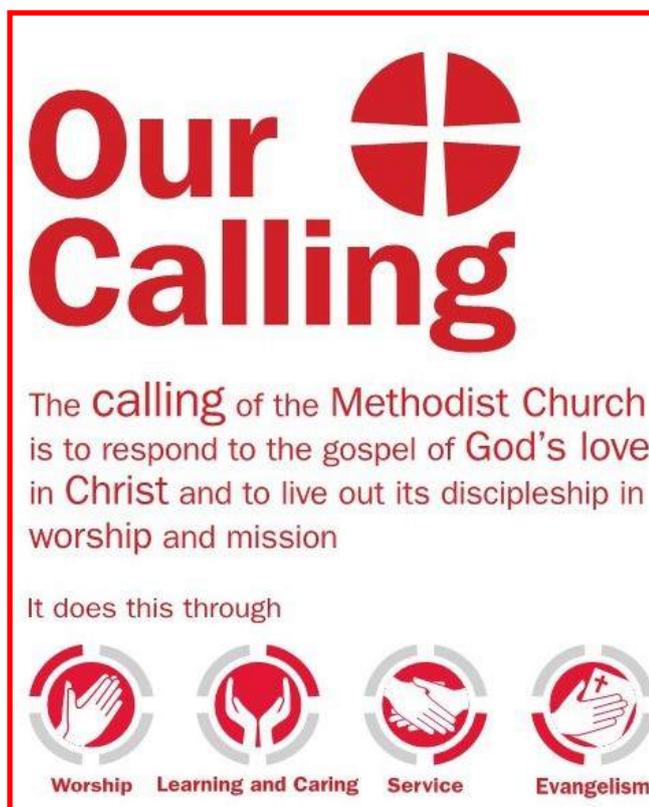
John 1:29

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



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,

Looking ahead to this quarter it is with relief that we welcome the lighter evenings and the promise of spring. Ash Wednesday, 2 March, begins a season of self-denial, self-inspection, and self-discipline. We are invited to share Jesus' desert fast in preparation for Holy Week and Easter. It is a time to revisit the Holy Habits found in Acts, Chapter 2, Verses 42 - 47. Remarkably, Luke uses the word 'enjoyed' in this passage. It seems that the first believers enjoyed being part of the new Christian movement. The last couple of years have been challenging, and I have a feeling that when we rediscover how to enjoy being Methodists, Church Growth will follow.

I recently worshipped with the Woking Chinese Congregation at Trinity. Their growing multi-generational fellowship is impressive, as is their faith and joy despite their experiences of migrating to the UK for a new beginning.

Social scientists speak of the moments when life presents opportunities for new beginnings. The end of the pandemic will eventually create such a moment. Springtime is another opportunity. Spring cleaning is still an annual ritual for many. There is the feeling that we must clean up and de-clutter in order to be ready for Easter. This is a practical exercise, but the spiritual re-appraisal of what we value, or 'treasure', certainly has its place. In our churches there will be activities that will have had their day, and new projects to begin. In our personal walk with God, we may look at the things that fill our diary and our thoughts and ask which priorities need adjusting.

I face the challenge of downsizing, and so I have some serious de-cluttering to do. I need to decide what is trash and what is treasure; what to keep, what to give away and what to throw away; which once-treasured books and objects no longer deserve the space which they occupy and what items I think I cannot do without. This has spiritual implications too. In the final analysis things are only things. It is our faith, our health, and the people we love that are the real treasure to which we must cling.

God bless you,

*Rev Keith C. Beckingham,
Superintendent Minister.*



News from around the Circuit

Addlestone

Three months have passed since the last Circuit newsletter and as a church we feel as if we have moved two steps forward and only one step back – progress! Our main mission objective **to provide Sunday Services with the same message, but presented in a way more suitable for today's society** is moving ahead, meeting our first object to provide such services twice per month. We thank our preachers for their support to make it possible. Effective publicity is our next task.

'Covid is not going away'. 'Just ten years to save the planet'

Two aspects of life we need to deal with as Christians. What more should we do and how best to go about it?

Limited resources restrict our efforts but don't stop them. We still support young Grace in Ecuador, living in a country suffering from the effects of Covid much worse than us.

The need at our local foodbank is greater than ever. We take our monthly contributions from our church to them. It is much appreciated.

One Saturday a month our coffee morning provides a social activity and the donations from it go to the Woking and Sam Beare Hospice.

It's worth remembering Ronald Regan's quote, **'You can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone'**.

Our planet. Well it is not really ours, God expects us to care for it as his stewards on his behalf. A book I received at Christmas was called **Earthshot: How to Save Our Planet**. It opens with an introduction from HRH Prince William. Guidance as to what can and should be done but also how in the last fifty years we have been destroying the planet in so many ways. I have still much to read, but I can certainly recommend it.

Prayer is one aspect of our church life which still needs to be recovered. Prior to Covid and our first church closure we had a weekly Thursday morning prayer meeting attended by a small but regular group of members. It is such an important part of our personal and church life, hopefully we, or combined with other churches, can with or without Zoom restore it back into our lives.

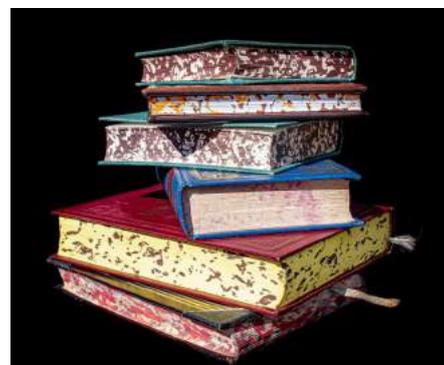
There is much to do and so little time to do it but we must never forget that if God is with us – **God will make a way when there seems to be no way**.

Fred Rowe

Circuit Books of Faith Group

If interested please contact:

Rev J. Allan Taylor on 01483 200464



Byfleet

Unfortunately Covid is still with us restricting Church activities, especially our Christmas celebrations. We were, however, able to decorate the Church with a smaller number of nativity scenes although unable to open to the public as we have done in the past. One very big plus point was that Beth Starkey, a junior member of our Church, made a virtual life sized silhouette of the nativity scene which was displayed in the Church foyer.



Our Gift Day for the York Road Project (a local homelessness charity) held on Sunday 12 December, proved to be a huge success and Mr John Mayne, attending on behalf of the project, showed his appreciation of the generosity of our Church. Once again our Junior Church, although small in number, provided us with an activity regarding the giving of gifts.

On an unhappy note we regret to inform you that Mrs Angela Walker, Communion Steward is moving and, therefore, will be unable to continue with her duties. We wish her well in her new home and welcome Pam Bailey who has offered to take over from Angela

Regarding 2022, we, as a Church, are looking forward with optimism hoping that soon everything will be back to normal. Our Junior Church and our Tuesday Fellowship are both open again after a short break and we have just heard that the Byfleet Parish Day, an event of very long standing and in which our church has been able to participate, is to be resumed on Saturday 16 July after a two year break

Arrangements for our Church Anniversary on Sunday 6 March, which will be led by the District Chairman, Rev David Hinchliffe, are more limited than usual but are in the process of being finalised.

Foodbank

Byfleet Methodist Church has been running an outlet of the Woking Foodbank throughout the pandemic (operating by delivery only during the lockdown period) and continues to support families in the Byfleet, West Byfleet and New Haw area. We enjoy excellent cooperation with Byfleet United Charity, one of our primary referral agencies, who also fund the operation of a Citizen's Advice Woking drop-in service at the church to coincide with the Foodbank opening hours. Our team comprises church and community members and—as well as supplying much needed emergency food supplies - we offer hospitality and a “listening ear” to our clients. The Foodbank also cooperates with the Clothing Bank at Knaphill Methodist Church and the Bedding Bank at Weybridge Methodist Church, offering a comprehensive support package to those in need. We continue to be generously supported by donations from the church family and the congregation of the International Community Church who meet on our premises, as well as the local Byfleet community and businesses.

As we enter a New Year, with the world still in turmoil, may we pray that life will soon be back to normal and we can once again communicate with friends.

God bless you all.

Margery Babb

Artaban

This is an update on the piece I wrote for *The Wey Forward* last year. To re-cap, *Artaban* is a rock musical written by Daphne and two friends based on *The Story of the Other Wise Man* by Henry van Dyke.

Artaban fails to make the journey with his more famous colleagues because he is waylaid helping needy people and gives away his gift of gemstones in the process. Ultimately he learns that, far from failing in his quest, he has achieved all that God could ask of him by the kindness and care he has shown for others.



We were delighted, and somewhat relieved, to be able to stage the showcase production as planned at The Actors' Church in Covent Garden in late November 2021. With a professional cast, director and back stage crew *Artaban* played to audiences of over 100 at each of the three performances. Reactions were overwhelmingly positive – even though the acoustics and pews left something to be desired! Apart from the quality of performance, people seem above all to have caught the uplifting spirit of the story. Sacrifice and redemption, love and light speak to our world today as ever.

It is now twenty years since a friend at Leatherhead church introduced Daphne to the book and so we felt a great sense of achievement to have reached this milestone. But we hope and believe it is not the end. A professional media company has expressed an interest in purchasing the rights to make a film, and potentially an album and stage show to follow. So watch this space!

There is an excellent professionally-produced video taken on our last night. We are planning to arrange a charity evening at Trinity, Woking before Easter to show it and all will be welcome. More information to follow.

David Lander

Cranleigh

As I sit at my computer to compose my usual report from Cranleigh, the wonderful sunshine is reminding me of the Autumn when I last sat down to compose an offering for our circuit magazine: then Harvest was on our mind. Now we look forward to Spring and perhaps, at long last freedom, from infectious diseases and the more usual illnesses that bother us in winter. Sadly, however, many people are still suffering and our prayers are offered for those who are struggling to recover from long-term effects of Covid and Omicron – the latter not quite so severe, as those who have experienced it have confirmed.

However, we have not quite achieved a return to complete normality, though many mid-week activities have re-started (indeed some groups like the Ladies' Wednesday Group have scarcely stopped at all and members are grateful to Hilary Strawson and the Committee for their hard work). Children are well catered for in mid-week, and an Anglican initiative, 'Toddler Praise,' meeting in our premises is very successful. The leader is very experienced and a great singer and instrumentalist and the results she achieves with little ones under 18 months old is extraordinary!

Our small choir only practises before Service on Sunday mornings, but we try to sing at least an introit every Sunday. We managed three items at the Carol Service, which was very pleasing to us – almost back to normality – but we weren't able to do our customary two carol concerts for charity, so sadly our charities will have been short of funds this Christmas. For these we usually recruit helpers! Some of us, however, did join the choir in the Parish Church for their annual Carol Service. I have been involved with this for many years and surprisingly the church was relatively full.

At least, we did manage to organise a market stall to raise money for Christian Aid, a charity which we also supported last Spring, so we did make an effort and we are grateful to all who helped with this. People were relatively generous, knowing it was for charity. We may perhaps organise our usual Christian Aid quiz, which usually raises quite a lot of money, as it is combined with a good supper!

Our long-time church treasurer, who has been isolating for several months because of a long-term health condition, has very efficiently kept our finances just about ticking over and we are very grateful to her, though clearly most organisations have undergone difficulties with 'making ends meet' during these difficult times. Thank you, Stella!

We were very grateful to the Circuit Team, led by Linda Weedon, who organised the visit of the new Superintendent Minister and his wife to our Cranleigh Church – providing an excellent lunch. Thank you too to my colleagues who were present on the day to greet everyone. I was sorry that I caused great consternation on the Sunday afternoon because of the breakdown of my computer!

We hope for better health for all in the Spring, and renewed energy.

Glenda Sewell

Cancellation of Circuit Day Outing to Oxford

For a number of reasons, it has been necessary to cancel the Circuit outing to Oxford which had provisionally been pencilled into the Circuit diary for May this year having been postponed from last September. I apologise for any inconvenience or disappointment caused by this.

James Strawson

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which is marked by an extended bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June, is a chance to celebrate with your whole community.

It's a chance to meet people, to get to know them, to have fun together, to eat together, to laugh together, to celebrate community together.

It's a chance to extend a radical invitation to everyone in the neighbourhood, to include the lonely or isolated, to welcome people who get forgotten about or who don't join in very easily.

It's a chance to build relationships, share and hear stories, tell others you're a Christian, pray for your neighbours, be bold in your faith-sharing.

This is a chance to join in with God's mission on the streets of your community.

Here's the challenge to you:

1. **Get involved in a street party or community event.** Either plan something as a Church or join in with others who are already planning something for the long weekend.

2. **Extend the invitation to everyone.** What can you do to make sure the whole neighbourhood can come along, especially those who are lonely, isolated, or marginalised in some way?

3. **Pray for your community.** The Jubilee weekend is at the same time as Thy Kingdom Come, the period when the whole Church focuses on praying for people to come to faith. When we join in with God's mission, it's essential we're praying about it! How can you pray for this in the lead up as individuals or a team, could you offer prayer at the event, and can you pray together afterwards for the people you've met?

4. **Share your faith.** We take our whole selves out onto the streets in celebration – we don't have to bottle up our faith and leave it safely at home. Community parties are a chance to be bold in our faith sharing. We talk a lot about needing to be better at evangelism, well, when we get to know our neighbours, God will give us opportunities to share our faith. We just need to listen to God, listen to others, and speak up about our experience of faith.

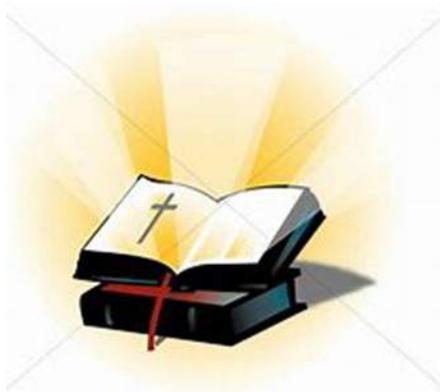
Resources

Visit www.theplatinumjubilee.com to download a Party Planner, liturgy and prayers available for Pentecost Sunday as well as the following resources from ecumenical partners:

- a gift book called Our Faithful Queen
- resources for toddlers, children, schools and young people
- a Jubilee anthem called 'Rise Up and Serve', with Graham Kendrick and Rend Collective



The Big Read



So we have completed the Big Read. How many of you made it all the way through? Did it give comfort as we read regularly throughout the early days of the pandemic and the various lockdowns – situations we never dreamt of when we began back in 2018?

My 'secular' friend stuck with it, completed the read and feels very proud of herself. She believes that everyone should read the bible through once in their life and has encouraged her daughters to undertake the task.

The book of Numbers both frustrates and comforts me. Who counted all these people and how accurate were they? Children will be children so did any of them run from one end of a line to another and get counted twice? We will never know, but for me the verses in Chapter 6, Verses 24 – 26 remain a great comfort and I am always soothed when these words are used as a benediction.

**The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.**

From the New Testament I constantly return to this verse from Philippians Chapter 4, Verse 8. I first became fully aware of this as a school girl and it has remained with me.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.

Thank you for keeping me company.

Linda Weedon

Dial a Prayer



FREE phone lines for prayers, reflections and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to a pastoral message from the President and Vice President:
0808 281 2695

Listen to our Podcast: 0808 281 2478

Prayer updated every Thursday, Presidential message updated every Monday,
Methodist Podcast updated on first and third Thursday of the month.

Please share these numbers locally with people who are not online and may feel very isolated and in need of spiritual comfort.

St Mary's - Eco Church Award



It was an early Christmas gift to hear that St Mary's, Guildford (shared church of Anglicans and Methodists) was awarded a Silver Eco Church Award by A Rocha UK.

To apply for an award, it was necessary to go through a survey together and answer questions on how we were doing in several different areas (Buildings, Land, Worship and Teaching, Lifestyle and Community/Global Engagement).

In some ways, our journey to apply for an Eco Church award was quick once it was decided upon. Our ecogroup formed in October and we were able to smoothly run through the survey and answer most of the questions in one sitting. We also made a list of things to work on and started to immediately implement some easy but hopefully impactful things – namely, adding in some eco news and sharing climate events in our newsletter as well as sharing eco tips to encourage church members in their personal care for the environment. This coincided with the time of COP26 so naturally, there were lots of high profile climate-related issues to talk about and raise awareness of. Our survey was submitted in November and we then had to provide additional information on some categories in December in response to queries on our application. Our scores and answers to the questions merited a Silver Award.

In other ways, our journey to becoming a Silver Eco Church has been part of a longer process of preparation and readiness to be at the point of applying. I am familiar with the Eco Church process, having been involved in the last few churches I was in. Our shared church has had the strong eco-leadership example of Holy Trinity Church and their recent Gold Eco Church status to follow, who were able to provide guidance in our application, support for getting an Eco Church group going, and did a lot of the groundwork within the parish. We share a parish office and buildings with Holy Trinity and several decisions over recycling facilities, land and energy use had already been made. We also share in some of the teaching, worship and mission, so references to creation and the environment already featured in many aspects of church life. Parish walks and churchyard tidy ups at Holy Trinity are open to all. One of our ecogroup had participated in a survey of nature in the churchyard a few years ago, which we were able to submit as evidence of engagement in the Land Category. I was involved in climate justice campaigns for COP26 from my participation in the Young Christian Climate Network. One big investment for the environment was the refurbishment project of the church building which took place a few years ago. The addition of underfloor heating as well as changes made to the doors has contributed significantly to our building saving energy.

The pandemic has also played a part in eco-church considerations. As usual church activities were suspended or moved online, this meant the usage of the building changed, so we had to estimate what yearly bills would come to. It has sometimes been necessary to use Covid-safe hospitality (unfortunately meaning using more disposable items for a time). Engagement with the community and church has had to adapt. St Mary's was chosen to host the Garden of Hope during the summer months of 2020 and many local people were able to make use of our garden space.

continued.....

Whilst working towards and obtaining an Eco Church award is good and commendable, as it provides a good measure of how a church is doing in different areas related to the environment, things don't stop there. What matters most is continuing our efforts to care for the environment and climate in our personal lives and corporate life as a church. We already have some plans to keep improving our witness and work in areas requiring more attention, whilst hoping to sustain our efforts in what we're doing well.

Over the past few years, the climate emergency has become very apparent and is a priority for many, especially young people. Care for the planet is an integral part of mission for all Christians, as it shows love for God and neighbour and is one way to live out the Gospel message. Churches have a role to ensure that they are as eco-friendly as possible and encourage others inside and outside the Church to act for climate justice and live more sustainably. It is good to be part of the Eco Church network as one way of visibly playing our part in this area and knowing we are not alone in our journey and mission, but alongside others.

Annika Mathews

Eco Church - The Background

Eco Church began as an A Rocha UK project in 2016 in partnership with others, offering an environmental award scheme for churches in England and Wales. It has been a huge success, inspiring and assisting churches as they seek to embed creation care throughout the whole of church life. Today, Eco Church is spreading around the world as different A Rocha national organisations and their partners find ways to engage churches in creation care.

As Eco Church spreads around the world, it is taking different forms and sometimes different names in varying contexts. However, at the heart of Eco Church is a unique online survey about how they are caring for God's earth in different areas of their life and work. The answers a church provides earn points towards an Eco Church Award – the more your church does, the more points you get!

As Annika mentions, the survey covers all areas of church life: worship and teaching, management of church buildings (if applicable), management of church land (if applicable), community and global engagement and lifestyle.

If your score doesn't gain you an Eco Church Award straight away then there is no need to worry – the idea is to complete further actions in order to gain the points necessary for an Award. For example, you could use green energy in your church building, plant flowers or vegetables in church grounds, and teach creation care in Sunday School.

There are three levels of Eco Church Award – Bronze, Silver and Gold. Once an Award is confirmed, depending on your country, you may receive a certificate and (optional) plaque from A Rocha UK to mark your achievement.

In the UK, the vision through Eco Church is to create a vast network of churches across England and Wales as local centres of creation care in the community – shining beacons of hope for a brighter environmental future. The scheme is now run in partnership with Christian Aid, The Church of England, The Methodist Church, Tearfund, The United Reformed Church and Allchurches Trust Limited.

For more information visit <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> and Annika has very kindly said she is happy to try and answer any queries you may have— annika.mathews@googlemail.com

Godalming United Church

Sunday services will continue to be streamed and can be accessed at <https://guc.online.church> Recordings (audio and video) are available through our website www.guc.org.uk or, after the service, <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube> Some members are still cautious about returning to face-to-face services, and the online service is now a vital part of our mission and outreach to the local community and beyond.

Life continues to return – cautiously – to normal. At the time of writing we plan to participate in the annual Godalming Churches Together New Year Service – this year hosted by St John's Church Farncombe. So, GUC being closed for morning service that day, our tech-team led by Richard August is hoping to arrange an “outside broadcast” of the occasion.

Since September preparations have been in full swing for the resumption of our New Year pantomime in early February – this year "Dick Whittington" – with parts accommodating our various groups, ranging in age from five to “mature”. Plenty of scope for everyone and good clean fun – and another triumph for Barbara Keene and her team.

This has been particularly poignant for Barbara as for the many years of the pantomime she has been supported by her husband, the indefatigable Malcolm, who sadly died in the autumn. He was a stalwart member of our church and the wider Godalming community – much loved and respected, and greatly missed by all.

At 9pm on Saturday 8 January the Church was asked to make its premises available as an emergency disaster centre following a fire in a small block of flats in Farncombe. Our Church Hall, rooms and kitchen were immediately opened and nine church members came to help staff the centre. Residents of the flats quickly started to be brought in and in the usual way tea and coffee, etc were served. The Church car park and road filled with police and their vehicles, ambulances and disaster management staff. A regional Red Cross disaster recovery vehicle arrived bringing blankets, toiletries etc. and the County Deputy Fire Head arrived. All worked to reassure and give comfort to the evacuated residents.

In the next hours some residents were moved to accommodation elsewhere. The Council brought in camp beds for those who would need to sleep in the Church Hall overnight and the Church staffed the Centre overnight together with staff from the disaster agencies. Breakfast was served on Sunday morning using the Church's comprehensive catering facilities. Morning worship took place as normal but with no access for the congregation into the disaster centre. Emergency workers continued to use the car park. In the course of the morning housing officers worked on temporary rehousing for the residents. By 3pm all residents had been moved and the premises returned to the Church for normal use. Work began on cleaning the kitchen and ventilating the premises. At 7pm the Church cleaner carried out a deep clean of the relevant parts of the premises. The church was privileged to be able to offer this service to the community and we pray for all who were affected by the fire.

Looking ahead, our Lent Appeal this year is for relief in Afghanistan.

For other future events, please visit www.guc.org.uk for a constantly updated rolling calendar.

Nancy Wilks



A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Rev Claire Hargreaves and Helen Belsham (organised by McCabe Pilgrimages)

Monday 9 – Monday 16 May 2022



We are delighted that 26 people have signed up for the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It's not too late to join us but please do so as soon as possible. The good news is that travel to the Holy Land has now resumed and some of the team from McCabe will be visiting Jerusalem in January to experience first hand what it is like to travel there again.

Contact details: helenebelsham@icloud.com 01483 823742 or claire.hargreaves@methodist.org.uk



Godalming: Advent Boxes (kits from URC Shop) assembled and ready to give out to the children who attend the various week-time groups on our premises.

Guildford St Mary's

I was trying to gather some thoughts for this article while we were waiting in the queue to get into Hatchlands Park the other day. It seemed as though we were not the only ones who had decided to walk off some of those chocolates and mince pies we had eaten during the Christmas festivities! While we were waiting, John Lennon's song *Happy Xmas (War is Over)* was playing. I have heard it many times but I was particularly struck by the lyrics "Another year over and a new one just begun." By the time this edition is published we all hope that perhaps the worst of the pandemic might be behind us and we can look ahead with renewed hope and optimism trusting in God who holds all in his hand .

We are all familiar with the saying from little acorns grow mighty oaks. From a brief conversation around an idea for Advent we introduced a pop-up style Christingle cafe. Within two weeks we had a great team in place and had flyers out and about. On the morning while parents enjoyed a cup of coffee and Christmas treats, the children were able to make a Christingle, try their hand at other decorations and had a chance to look at the Christmas pathway with their parents. The event was much appreciated by all who came and we are now planning to run something similar for Candlemas and Easter. The acorn is planted and has sprouted roots and shoots .

We were very encouraged by the attendance at our annual Advent reflection series. We had three inspiring talks which focused on the Christmas Pathway and the series was concluded with a short carol service that attracted several visitors who were just passing by. For many it was the first opportunity to see the improvements at St Mary's. Our wonderful hospitality team came up with a plan that allowed us to enjoy the traditional soup and bread lunch, this was much appreciated by all. It was wonderful so many people were able to see the changes at St Mary's and how they have contributed to the special atmosphere felt within the church . We now look forward to the Lent reflections that start on 3 March.

We have had two further reasons to celebrate recently. As outlined in Annika Matthews' article, St Mary's has been granted an A Rocha Silver Eco Church award and we are all delighted about this. Thank you to all the team who helped make this possible.

We were also delighted to hear that Annika has completed her Worship Leader studies and is now an accredited Worship Leader. Congratulations Annika.

Finally, I began this article with reference to John Lennon's song. The lyrics continue with the words "Let's hope it's a good one without any fear" As 2022 unfolds, let us all pray it is indeed a good year where we can discern more opportunities to share God's love and plant acorns .

Rosemary Lee



Fairtrade Fortnight 2022 (21 February – 6 March)

Fairtrade works with farming co-operatives, businesses, and governments to make trade fair so that producers earn secure and sustainable livelihoods. (Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed *Isaiah chapter 1, verse 17* and, Love your neighbour as yourself *Matthew chapter 22, verse 39*).



FAIRTRADE

The climate crisis is the biggest threat to the livelihoods of millions of small-scale farmers and agricultural workers in low-income countries worldwide. Without a fairer income, farmers and workers are unable to invest in the types of mitigation and adaptation techniques needed to protect the environment, and their businesses. This represents a vicious cycle of poverty in which steps towards environmental protection and decarbonisation are likely to be beyond the reach of those who aren't even able to earn a living income because the price they receive for their produce is far too low.

When thinking of Fairtrade, most people think of bananas, chocolate or tea and coffee, but there are many other Fairtrade products, including gold, wine, clothes, beauty products and flowers. There are over 70,000 people growing, harvesting, packing, and caring for Fairtrade flowers which are traceable to the original farm. Fairtrade certified farms must ensure safe working conditions for their employees. These farms receive a Fairtrade Premium of 10% for every item sold, which allows workers to invest in healthcare, education and other social benefits.

Fairtrade works with flower workers in countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Uganda and Tanzania. Fairtrade flowers are available from Aldi, Asda, Co-op, Lidl, M & S and Moonpig, which may be worth bearing in mind with the approach of Mothering Sunday on 14 March.



(Image from Fairtrade website)

For more information do visit the Fairtrade website at <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

Sally Churchus, Chair of the Association for Church Editors

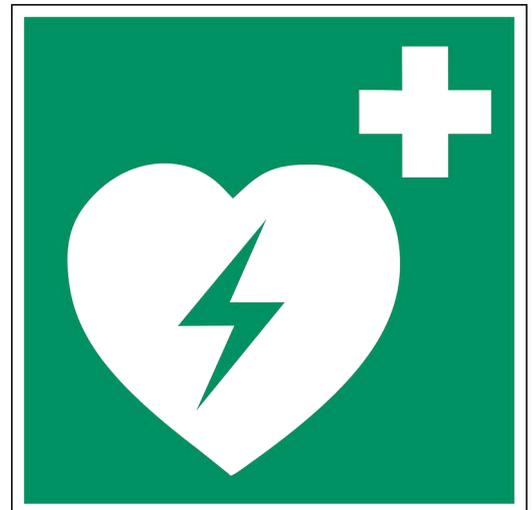
Knaphill

Having restarted Clothes 4 U (our clothing bank) and coffee mornings during the summer months last year, we have been able to continue these so far. Several families were able to find clothing on Saturday 20 November and the coffee morning was a huge success in November. In addition, we had a beautiful Nativity set to raffle, knitted by expert knitter Nellie Ford, a member at KMC. Tickets were also sold at the Christmas Afternoon Tea which took place on Sunday 5 December.

The tea, most ably organised by Helen Chamberlain and Liz Funning, was enormously successful. More than thirty folk enjoyed tasty sandwiches, scones, sausage rolls, mince pies and cakes, all beautifully presented, plus tea and coffee. Crackers were provided and party hats worn, and the Worship Group led Carol singing. Measures were taken to try to make sure the event was as Covid-secure as we could make it and fortunately all went well. However, had the event been scheduled for a couple of weeks later, it would have been very unlikely to go ahead. By then, the Omicron variant had begun to spread widely and so we cancelled our Carol Service and suspended after service refreshments out of safety concerns.

At the time of writing we hope to have a Clothes 4 U session on 15 January and a coffee morning on 22 January, followed by the reintroduction of after service refreshments the following day, but we are monitoring the situation constantly and having to make very short notice decisions about whether to go ahead or not.

Finally, some exciting news about a recent fixture to the side wall of KMC, along the path from Broadway. In 2019, we began fundraising for a defibrillator, the idea having been suggested by two of our members. They were concerned that although there were known to be a number of defibrillators in Knaphill, they were inside buildings (e.g. at the library and Working Men's Club) and therefore only accessible at certain times. The KMC one is key coded and registered with the local ambulance service. In the event of an emergency, at any time, day or night, the ambulance service will issue the code if contacted and the defibrillator case can be opened and the machine used to try to save a life. This is a wonderful facility to be able to provide for the community.



We hope 2022 will see more activities and events return, both at Knaphill and around the Circuit.

Lynda Shore

To Make You Smile

Did you know, the first computer dates back to Adam and Eve? It was an Apple with limited memory, just one byte. And then everything crashed.

What was Moses' wife, Zippora, known as when she threw dinner parties?

"The hostess with the Moses."

Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?

Because Noah was always standing on the deck

Merrow

What another strange quarter (and indeed year) we have lived through. We thought we were through the worst and then along came Omicron. Looking back over articles for the last two years this seems to be the repeated picture. We write about new initiatives and what we hope to achieve over the next three months and then circumstances dramatically change.



What do we say about the coming quarter ? It does not help when “ writer’s block” sets in!

Thanks to the committed hard work of our editor Gillian we have still managed throughout the pandemic to publish our monthly church magazine, *The Voice*, and it has proved a key tool in keeping everyone in touch - and entertained! We have a regular column devoted to Paraprosdokians - “ a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to

reframe or reinterpret the first part....” Our December edition contained the jewel “ Buses stop in bus stations. Trains stop in train stations. On my desk is a work station”. Many a true word.....

What I can write is that we have been able to plan with relative confidence the shape of worship at Merrow for the coming year. As well as Sunday morning services we are continuing with “Alternative Worship” at 6.30pm on the second Sunday of every month, and Holy Communion at the same time on every fourth Sunday and, of course, we would welcome others to join us. On the evening of April 24 the service will hopefully include a commissioning of those people who are joining the Circuit Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, if this is still able to go ahead.

We are also continuing to open the church for Silent Prayer every Wednesday morning from 10am - 11am and many are continuing to derive comfort from this opportunity of peaceful reflection and prayer.

In the last issue of this magazine we said that we had welcomed the use of our premises by the Guildford Holy Word Chinese Church. They all joined us for our Christmas Carol Service with their children delighting us with a magical Nativity play, and we are exploring ways of how we can develop further exciting joint initiatives.

Despite COVID restrictions our facilities continue to be well used by various parties. This month for the first time this will include Guildford Council Councillors who will be holding an open evening surgery in our hall to answer questions and address concerns from members of the local community.

Hugh Bradley



Coffee & Cake at St. Mary's

10.30 – 12 noon

– an opportunity to meet up with friends

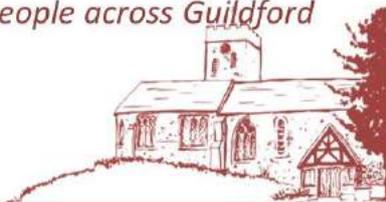
Thursday 27 January:

featuring Emerge: supporting young people at RSCH experiencing emotional & mental health difficulties

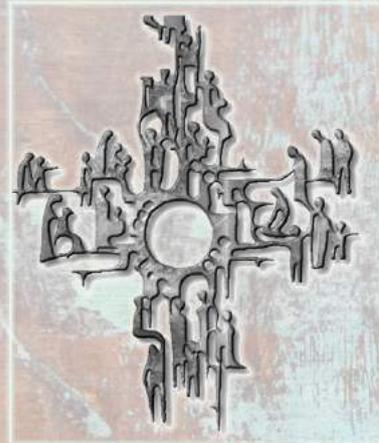
Thursday 24 February:

featuring Matrix Trust: providing a lifeline for vulnerable young people across Guildford

Next Coffee & Cake:
28.4.2022



Practical Aspects of Spirituality



St. Mary's

Quarry Street
Guildford
GU1 3UP

09.20 – 12.30

**Saturday
12 March**

Rosemary Lee
on

Connecting with God

This stand alone Saturday morning session is open to all who want to take their spiritual life deeper.

If you would like to attend please email Richard Fox at rjfox@btinternet.com



night vision ... 'looking at life through a different lens'

St. Mary's
Quarry St
Guildford
GU1 3UP

drop in for
calm, reflection & refreshments
on Fridays 20.30 – 23.00

25 February 25 March
29 April 27 May

A Common Ground initiative

St Michael's, Sheerwater

We are pleased to share that the regeneration works going on around the estate are going to plan, and we look forward to finalising what our own building regeneration works will look like over the coming year. You may know that one of the key goals in our Church Development Plan is to **Grow Younger**, lowering the average age of our congregation by welcoming and nurturing young families (among others). We had some great successes over the past five years, until the regeneration started and the majority of the families were moved off the estate. This year, we will **start afresh**, looking at where we can best help support families on the estate as their numbers increase, both inside and outside of church. We need the support of the Circuit in **prayer, advice, and time**, whichever you can give!

We are currently focusing on our work with children:

Pop-up Café

We welcome up to thirty primary age children and their parents or carers to our hall for healthy snacks, games and a Bible story each Tuesday during term time. Please **keep praying** for our pop-up café, for the safety and wellbeing of the children, and for enough volunteers to staff it. If you can **spare the time** to help occasionally on a Tuesday afternoon from about 3pm to 4.30pm, please contact Tracey at St Michael's office.

Schools outreach

We have good relations with Broadmere Primary Academy and Bishop David Brown School. Gillaine and others go into Broadmere for assemblies, and in the past we provided a listening voice at BDB. We would like to develop these links further. Please **pray for us** to be given more opportunities to visit, not just for assemblies, but to provide other support, such as listening or befriending ministries.

Future Ideas:

Baby and Toddler Group

Because of the close contact we have with a number of families who have moved out of Sheerwater to other parts of Woking, we feel we may have the basis for starting a regular baby and toddler group. This needs planning and resourcing. It will also need helpers, including some of more senior years, to offer a grandmotherly or grandfatherly presence.

How you can help:

- Please **pray for us** as we move forward in planning this.
- Perhaps you can **help with the planning and resourcing** of the group, or you have previously been involved in a similar group and can offer **advice**.
- Can you **spare any time**, perhaps once a month, to come along and be a friendly face?

Children and youth development worker

For some time now we have wanted to appoint someone to help develop our work with children and young people, especially during the week. Outreach to schools and perhaps running midweek groups might be part of their job description. At the moment we do not have the money to support this, so we are considering whether we should look to fund raise or seek sources of grants.

Children's Church

As we hopefully grow over the year and welcome more families into our church community, we will need to be able to offer a Sunday School or children's church. We have activities for any small children to do when they come, and members of the congregation able to sit with them and help them, but we would like to do more. Please **pray for us** to see clearly the way forward on this.

Naomi Belli Borovicka

Stoughton

After celebrating the birth of Jesus at our Christmas services Rev George Quarm led our Covenant service when we gave thanks for all that God has done for us and affirmed our lives relying on the grace of God and trusting in his promises. Even though the Covid pandemic still affects our daily living, by the time we receive this edition of our circuit magazine the new year will have gathered pace and, having already left Christmas celebrations behind, we will be looking to the seasons of Lent and Easter. I have read that Lent encourages us to do what we can, not what we can't. We must continue to do this at Stoughton where our congregation numbers have declined so much over the last two years.

At the beginning of the year we were able to welcome back the Brownie group for their weekly meetings and the nursery group continue with their hiring for four days during the week. It is good to have these community groups with their lively activities sharing our premises.

Stoughton send blessings and good wishes to you all for 2022.

Linda Macbeth

West Horsley

Well, we're not quite back to normal!

We reluctantly cancelled our Carol Praise evening but hopefully, may arrange a Songs of Praise in the summer. We are getting used to the protocols of sanitising, wearing masks and having open windows. These do not seem to have put people off coming to services and we have had some new people joining us.

Socially distanced Thursday coffee mornings, fortnightly Bible Study sessions and refreshments after morning service are all continuing and are appreciated. But, we remember those who do not yet feel able to join with us at present.

We are grateful to all the preachers who take our services week by week. Holly Wadsworth ably led our Carol Service and Rev Peter Hills celebrated with us on Christmas Day. We were joined by some of our church families and were treated to a violin solo by one young family member. Now it is Covenant Service with Rev George Quarm and Easter to look forward to. And, our Chapel Anniversary service on 24 April which Rev Paul Hulme will be celebrating with us. 146 years old!

Did you know that fire engines carry knitted teddy bears in their cabs to offer comfort and support to distressed children encountered in fires and accidents. Well, they do in Surrey anyway. Celia found this out when seeking a good cause for the teddies she knits while watching television. They were warmly welcomed by the staff at the Guildford Fire Station.

Margaret Faulkner



Walton - on - Thames

The start of December saw the conclusion of our “Christian Meditation and Mindfulness” course with a gathered Advent Quiet Day led by Suzette Jones at our Church. The opportunity to start the Festive Season with some contemplative quiet space to step aside from busy lives was very welcome. We came away from the course and Quiet Day with several tools to enrich our spiritual lives.

We had a good Christmas. The church had a new coat of paint at the end of November and looked sparkling for Advent (even though we were not sure if the scaffolding would be down in time!) The painters were a great team and did a splendid job. So now we have a new roof, excellent heating and are ready to go!

Despite the turbulence in the world in December, we managed to hold a gathered candlelit carol service and Zoom it out to those who could not be present. It was slightly shorter than usual but offered a very welcome opportunity for some festive worship within the confines of 9 lessons, 5 carols and 2 worship songs...

The lighting of our Advent candle ring across the five weeks was done by people who were not regular attenders at church. It has encouraged them to come a bit more regularly.

On Christmas Eve, we celebrated Christingle with Rev Julia and Sam Monaghan. Sam got very puffed up being an excellent life size Christingle. Members of our youth group helped by making the Christingles and doing the technical elements, as there was a PowerPoint and a Zoom part to the service. What was also good was that amongst the attendees there were three families each with three generations present!



On Christmas Day we were encouraged to bring a favourite present to the service. What we did not know was that Sam would use these as the basis for the prayers. The resources he had was some gaffer tape (not a present - but nicked from our technical team...), a watch, a Rubik's cube and a family calendar. I wonder what prayers *you* could make from this selection. Sam did a brilliant job.

Moving on into 2022, we had Covenant at the start of January grounding us in our Methodist tradition and reminding us of the promise that has been made to us, celebrating all God has done for us, and affirming that we give our lives and choices to Him.

It has been good to see new shoots at Walton since September. We have had a number of new people join us and they do seem to be coming back. It has been good to get to know them and find out about their backgrounds. Other new shoots have been with *Aspire*, our church magazine. We have a new team working on it and it seems to get thicker each quarter. Many thanks to those wonderful people who are writing the articles.

We are looking forward to our first ecumenical service with our fellow Walton churches and are hoping to join with our ecumenical brothers and sisters for a Lent series with mixed groups as well.

In February we will be having the first wedding at Walton for a long time, congratulations to Kelly and Paul. March will be a busy month as we will have our Gift Day, Church anniversary and AGM. We also hope to run a reflective day on equity, diversity and inclusion and racial justice possibly in April, and as a Church together across the rest of the year, we hope to look at the *Holy Habits* book that was the subject of the last Mission day.

The Stewards at Walton

Weybridge

At Weybridge we are still counting our blessings. As I write, all the church family members remain Covid free and we have continued to worship albeit hidden behind masks.

We enjoyed our Carol service in December and for the first time in over a decade we had eleven different active participants covering everything from opening the service with the Advent liturgy through nine readings and prayers of intercession. We then enjoyed a hot lunch together, following Covid guidelines, to continue the celebration. We also had the privilege of a full church on Christmas morning.

The New Year is a time for new starts: we are attempting to resume the 'Coffee and Chat' sessions once a month – something we had just started when lockdown hit. We hope that this will be an opportunity to grow relationships with some of our newer members.

It was great that former church members who now live abroad (Canada, U.S.A and Egypt) helped in the recent Circuit Prayer vigil. We are still in regular contact with them via the power of WhatsApp and Facebook – social media can be a very useful tool.

Weybridge members continue to provide regular active help at the Weybridge Old folks Club and at the foodbanks.

This year the church will undertake the most extensive project of major repairs seen since we had the kitchen done – oh joy! With a great deal of prayer and God's help we will get through.

God is Good!

Linda Weedon



Super Role Models

Pray like Nehemiah

Obey like Daniel

Lead like Moses

Serve like Martha

Believe like Mary

Fight like David

Educate like Paul

Build like Noah

Love like Jesus

Submitted by Linda Weedon

Mindful FLEXercise at home

During the recent lockdowns, exercise has been one of the ways in which we have kept healthy, both physically and mentally. Thankfully some classes went online, including the FLEXercise class that I attend. Many of us found it helpful to be able to do the class at home, and our teacher Alison Howard has continued with weekly classes via Zoom on Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings.

The classes are recorded (Alison only, not the participants!!) so we can do the class again. At £20 per calendar month it is very reasonable. FLEXercise is suitable for all ages and abilities. If you would like to try it, please do contact Alison at alison.flexercise@gmail.com.

P.S. If I can do it, you definitely can!!

Rev Claire Hargreaves



FLEXERCISE @ home

TIME TO GET MOVING

Weekly classes to do in the comfort of your own home via zoom. You get a link with an email which you just click on to get to the class. Classes are on:

Mondays @ 7.30pm and Tuesdays @ 10.00am

You also get a recording of the class so you can do it again

No special equipment needed, just some space in your home. session is tailored to accommodate limited space

Cost £20 per calendar month

Interested? Email alison.flexercise@gmail.com for information and booking

FLEXercise provides unique classes part exercise, part dance suitable for everyone, tailored to the individuals in the class. It is a winning mix of low impact physical exercises, yoga and movement designed to improve posture, body alignment, mobility and balance, leaving you with more energy and spring in your step.

www.fl-exercise.com

flexible friendly fitness

Trinity, Woking

I thought I'd comment on some of the things that have been going on **despite** Covid.

Foundry Worship



This is informal and contemporary worship, often café style. We are blessed with a very talented band who lead our singing. Whilst Covid has been a challenge – masked and socially distanced doesn't exactly help informality – we do feel we have weathered this storm and are looking forward with excitement. We have a real sense that God is with us. If you're free late on a Sunday afternoon, you would be

assured of a welcome – check our website for details of service dates and times.

ChurchSuite™

This a church management system. It was developed to provide world-leading software to support churches. Today ChurchSuite is trusted by more than 2000 churches. As a result of Covid we have realised that we need to be far more effective in how we administer the church. We therefore rolled-out basic ChurchSuite at the end of last year. We've been so impressed that we want to get some of the more advanced modules working for us as soon as possible. Missionally we see so many opportunities. Anyone else use it? Want to share experiences?

Short Stay School

We wrote about our new relationship with Key Stage 3 pupils (12-13 years of age) at the Surrey Short Stay School in the last issue of The Wey Forward. Over the autumn term the children came on a weekly basis to help with our busy Wednesday morning bookings. They quickly developed a routine of helping set rooms up, make and serve refreshments to guests, and – importantly- more confidently interacting with guests and comfortably chatting with us over cake or a biscuit about everything and nothing.

From October half term, one child started volunteering with the Trinity Toddler group on a Monday morning, another worked on the word processor and created posters, and an article for the church newsletter.

The majority of the children we worked with last term are now back in mainstream education. It is too early to tell how well they will do. We wish them every success. As for this term, we have decided to continue this relationship and now have a new cohort. We look forward to seeing how they develop during their visits with us. .



Short Stay pupil helping with toddler group

continued.....

Messy Fun Church

Messy Church had been a Covid Casualty – until we decided to merge it with our Friday Fun Club! This starts with themed activities, moves into the church to have a time of worship, and ends by having a meal together. All this on a Friday after school! It sounds like a recipe for disaster, but it works. We are seeing more families come along and this is providing a real outreach opportunity.

Well done to our children & family worker Sue for envisaging this, and a lesson for us all as to how the 'unlikely' can work out in this topsy-turvy world we seem to live in.

IMM (Intergenerational Music Making) Gala Concert



This was held in November to raise funds to launch an IMM hub at Trinity. The event was a great success and we look forward to the hub starting as soon as Covid has subsided. The hub will be primarily volunteer led, with Graham Warr the volunteer leader. Which brings us to the take over of the concert by Brian Conley - currently on EastEnders. This was to spring a One Big Thank You surprise on Graham - and the surprise was total.

IMM Together with Music choir singing a composition from a music making session

Many readers will know Graham as a local preacher, but he does so much more. Having noticed Graham's natural rapport with children and adults at the IMM sessions run last year, IMM had been courting Graham for bigger things. When they discovered all that he does, they considered him a worthy nominee for the BBC One Show. The rest, as they say, is history. If you missed the original screening you should be able to find it on BBC iPlayer.



Neighbourhood Party



Trinity has held these regularly for about 35 years. Covid had forced a gap of 2 years. None of us knew whether the old formula would work, so we were delighted at the success of our party in October.

Entertainment was provided by our band, supplemented by some of their operatic singing friends. Taxi drivers, helpers, kitchen

and table hosts did a grand job of keeping our 40 guests fed and comfortable. The only sad note was that we said farewell to Henk Inemeer who has held the helm of the Neighbourhood Party.

Hugh Bowerman

Community Development Missioner

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 24 of The Wey Forward
is midnight 6 April 2022**

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 25 5 July 2022

Issue 26 26 September 2022

Issue 27 16 January 2023

**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 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| March 2022 | | | |
| 21 Feb—6 Mar | | Fairtrade Fortnight | |
| 2 March | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 3 March | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 5 March | tbc | Circuit Mission Supper | Woking |
| 6 March | 10.30am | Church Anniversary Service with Rev David Hincliffe | Byfleet |
| 9 March | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 10 March | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 12 March | 9.20am - 12.30pm | Practical Aspects of Spirituality with Rosemary Lee | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 16 March | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 17 March | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 23 March | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 24 March | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 25 March | 8.30pm - 11pm | Night Vision - Drop in | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 30 March | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 31 March | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| April 2022 | | | |
| 6 April | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 6 April | Midnight | Copy deadline for The Wey Forward (Edition 24) | |
| 7 April | 12.15pm for 12.30pm | Lent Reflections with bread and soup lunch | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 13 April | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 20 April | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 24 April | 10am | Church Anniversary Service with Rev Paul Hulme | West Horsley |
| 27 April | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 29 April | 8.30pm - 11pm | Night Vision - Drop in | St Mary's, Guildford |
| May 2022 (and beyond) | | | |
| 4 May | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 11 May | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 18 May | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 25 May | 10am - 11am | Silent Prayer | Merrow |
| 27 May | 8.30pm - 11pm | Night Vision - Drop in | St Mary's, Guildford |
| 9-16 May 2022 | | Pilgrimage to Holy Land - contact Helen Belsham or Claire Hargreaves | The Holy Land |
| 2 - 5 June | | Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations | |
| 16 July | tbc | Byfleet Parish Day | Byfleet |