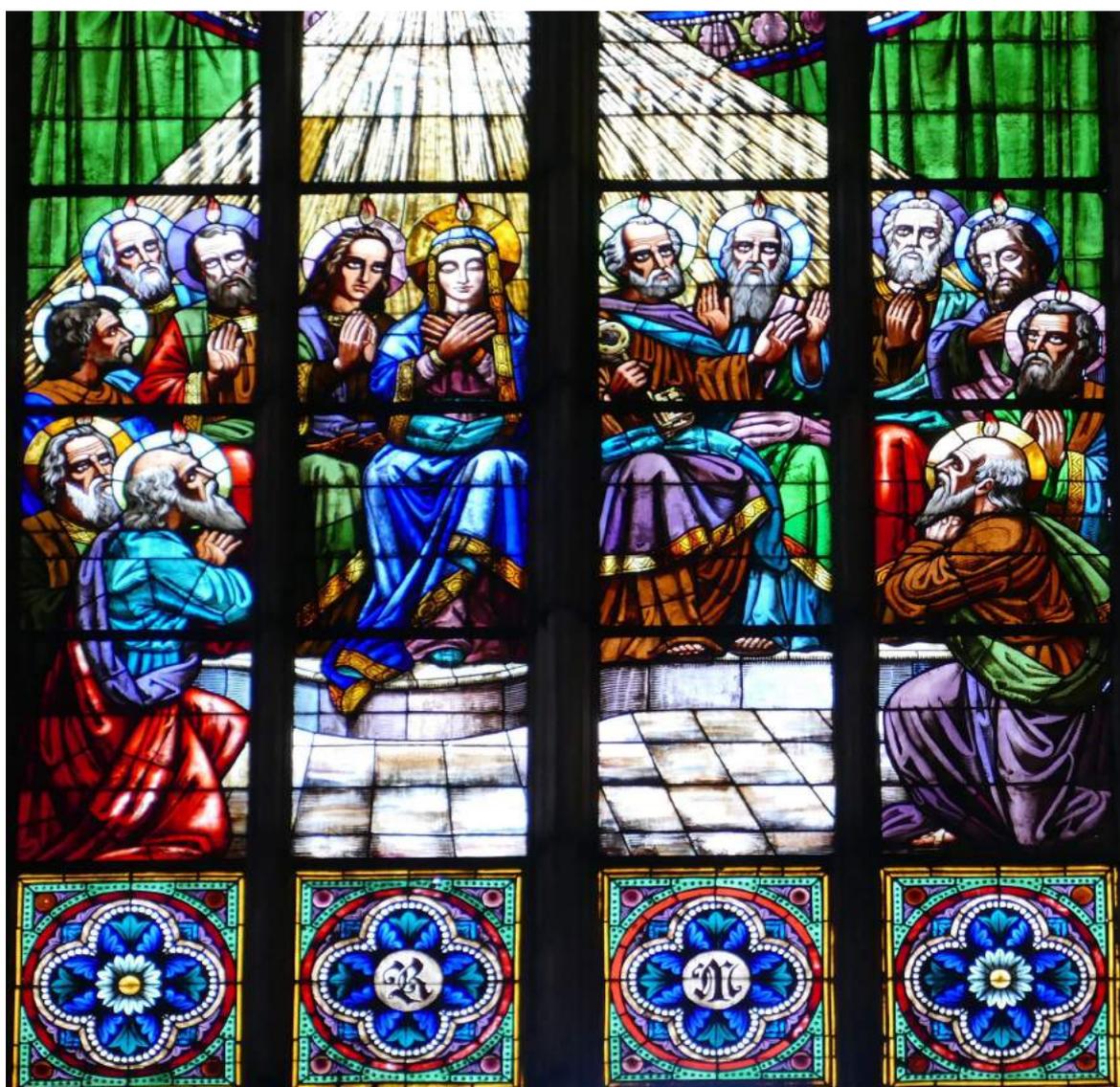


The Wey Forward

Issue 24 June - August 2022



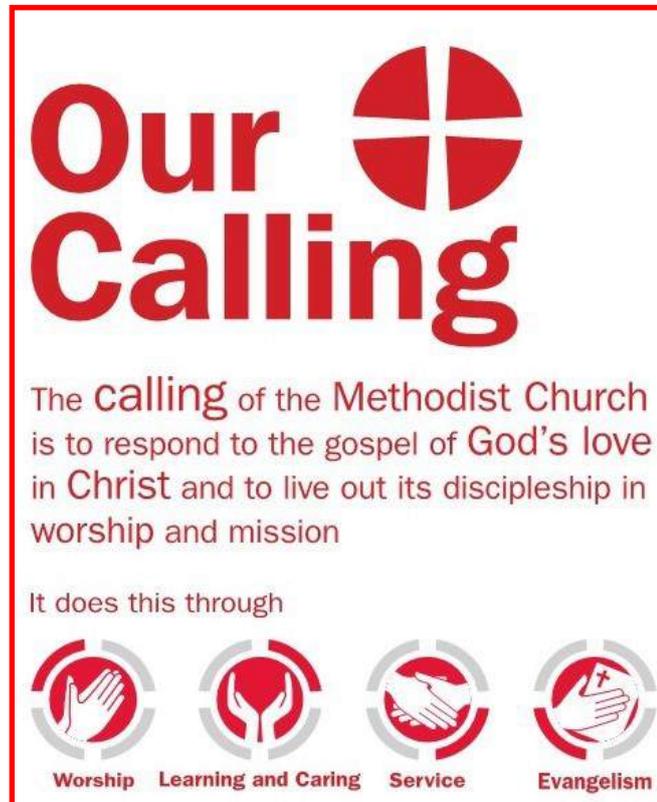
“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” Acts 4:31

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@weyvalleycircuit.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,

Grace has been defined as being when we get what we don't deserve, and we don't get what we do deserve. God, in His grace enables us to turn to Christ as Saviour, blots out our sin by the sacrifice of Jesus and so we do not receive the judgement we rightly deserve. We can by repentance and faith receive God's blessings of forgiveness, reconciliation with God, adoption as children of God, sanctification (holiness of heart and life) and the hope of eternal life. Thus, the Christian Way involves us not getting what we deserve and instead receiving the loving blessings of God that we could never deserve.

My awareness of my vocation began when I was very young, probably still in junior school. I entered training as a Salvation Army Officer in 1973. I was commissioned and ordained as a Lieutenant at the age of 21 and sent in charge of Salford Corps. Promoted to captain, I married Lieutenant Hilary Day after my second appointment, and we were sent to Bolton Daubhill, then Rome and then Malvern. After leaving the Salvation Army I worked in Leytonstone for the then Shaftesbury Society in a Mission that was originally a Ragged School. As always, I was supported in this work by Hilary. At this time, I started attending a midweek Healing Service at the Leytonstone High Road Methodist Church and formed a good relationship with the superintendent minister who was kind enough to invite me to be a visiting preacher on the circuit plan. The first Methodist church I preached in was in Wanstead. In this simple way began a process which resulted in my going to the then Swinton Circuit (in the city of Salford) as a probationer minister in 1987, and I was accepted into full connexion at the Leicester Conference and ordained at Peterborough on 25th June 1989.

Now as I approach the prospect of letting go of active ministry it is natural to reflect on the journey on which God has taken Hilary and me – and our family. We have been truly itinerant, having served in five Methodist Districts. This has given us the great privilege of meeting many good Christian people and communities. I have worked with at least nine District Chairs and many ordained and lay colleagues whose fellowship I have valued. The Methodist Church has changed in many ways since 1987, but then so have I!

I do thank God for my time in Guildford as Superintendent of the Wey Valley Circuit which has given me many new experiences of ministry and enabled me to meet yet more faithful Christian people. And I especially thank all our friends in the circuit for their fellowship which Hilary and I have been pleased to share.

'And now the end is near', but I do hope not to reach 'the final curtain' for some time to come, and not before enjoying time with Hilary on the south coast and walks in the New Forest! But looking back, I especially thank God for His grace, through which Hilary and I have received countless blessings above and beyond what we deserve.

My prayers and good wishes will remain with the circuit under the leadership of Rev Dr Paul Glass as Superintendent Minister.

God bless you,

Rev Keith C. Beckingham
Superintendent Minister



News from around the Circuit

Addlestone

**KINDNESS
WILL KEEP US
TOGETHER**

These words received in a card from the British Red Cross. Their equivalent words to the words well known to us to **Love our neighbour as ourselves.**

We may have fewer members but we ensure our members, family and friends and even strangers, 'our neighbours', will continue to receive our kindness and love.

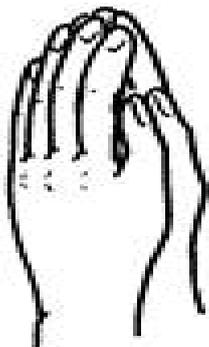
Simple acts of kindness, like making a phone call to a neighbour who is vulnerable or donating to your local food bank, could make a huge difference to someone.

Providing help and support to our community is restricted by our small membership but we are always trying to find new ways to help. Once a month our Saturday Coffee Morning includes a session of 'fun bingo' and any donations given go to the Woking and Sam Beare Hospice for their 25th Anniversary. Their banner will be flying, come and join us for the fun, tea/coffee and cake. Dates will be advertised but it's usually the third Saturday of the month at 10.30am.



An unexpected phone call came from the Woking and Runnymede 'Home Start' charity, who help young mothers. They were looking for a location in Addlestone to meet, chat and have refreshments once a week. Their visit to us satisfied them that our coffee lounge was just the place they were looking for. I'm pleased to report that their first meeting with us was on 10 March.

Our contributions to the local foodbank also continues at a time when the need has never been greater.



When Nazanin Radcliffe had served three years of her imprisonment she was in the news and that is when we started praying for her at our Thursday Prayer Meetings. Periodically we kept in touch with her circumstances through news bulletins and we started praying again regularly at our weekly Zoom prayer meetings. It is a very good example of not giving up, and how God will answer our prayers in his own time. It was wonderful news when we heard of her release. Thanks be to God.

Our informal services have been established as a twice monthly. We hope they may be particularly suited to visitors, especially those who may not regularly attend a church but whose circumstances cause them to feel the need. Our screen presentation and choice of hymns is proving very popular and the support from our preachers is very encouraging. We pray that with God's guidance we will be presenting Jesus Christ in a way more suited to today's society and the circumstances they face.

Fred Rowe

Byfleet

Our road to gradual recovery from the pandemic consists of a variety of small steps which we hope will continue, but we do have some highlights to mention as well. Perhaps the biggest was when Rev Dr David Hinchliffe, the Chairman of our District came to lead our Church Anniversary. David had been one of our circuit ministers but as he pointed out it was 11 years since he had last led a service in our church. We had a fine Holy Communion service and we were also able to return to a bit more normality by following it with a church lunch which gave our members the opportunity to meet and talk informally with David. The pandemic had stopped all our regular community lunches but we decided that the time had come to test the waters with a limited attendance. We feel it worked very well and hope to start regular lunches again.

Our Tuesday Fellowship meetings have started again and have continued to meet regularly with a range of speakers and entertainments. We were also able to start a Lent Bible study course. The course has been based around a series of DVDs by teacher and historian Ray Vander Laan. They bring together the history, culture, and geography of the Gospels by taking us around Israel in modern pictures and reconstructions to illustrate the "Death & Resurrection of the Messiah".

We have also been able to hold our first monthly Saturday coffee morning, which was very successful and we were able to send the proceeds to All We Can's Ukraine appeal. Separately we were also able to answer an appeal from Action for Children for Afghanistan.

Our FoodBank continues to help those in need in our area on an increasing scale and I am told that Citizens Advice Woking which opens on the same day in our church actually had a queue of people seeking help.

Ecumenical activities have also been more in evidence and in particular the World Day of Prayer, which took place at Our Lady Help of Christians RC Church in West Byfleet and was well attended and supported by our members (although still mainly ladies). Let's extend this to a year of prayer for world peace.

Ken Mears



Climate Change

At the 2021 Methodist Conference a target of becoming a net zero emissions Church by 2030 was agreed.

How will we achieve this?

Through forging key partnerships at every level of the Church we can together make progress towards net zero. These partnerships include:

For churches, circuits and districts A Rocha UK which offers pathways through their award systems, **Eco Church** and Eco Congregation in Scotland.

For the Connexional team and the wider Church, *Faith: Long Term Plans* from Faith Invest provides a structured and achievable set of goals. Three categories have been selected:

- Faith - faith consistent use of assets – including investments, purchasing power, buildings and land.
- Wisdom – including theology, liturgies and prayer.
- Lifestyles – including traditions of simple living.



How will we measure our progress?

Accepting the need to be able to measure progress, the Conference directed that the Annual Property Checklist be updated to include steps taken on reducing carbon footprints. In addition, District Mission Plans will be required to include ways to achieve this ambitious target.

Where is your church on the journey?

Each church is at a different stage of this journey. Resources on the Methodist website have been sorted to reflect this and these resources can be found at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/environment-and-climate-change/>

Sue Howson

Cranleigh

It is difficult to assess how our re-opening of church has gone. Hardly anyone from Elmbridge Village has yet reappeared, except the very reliable organist who is always in church, always punctual, and gives you at least six weeks' notice if she's going to be away (rarely). We are very lucky to have someone so reliable. There are often services of some kind on offer in Elmbridge itself, and one cannot blame people if they stay on-site to attend such services if it saves a long trek. Also, some form of the virus is still rife in Cranleigh village, though people don't seem to be very ill, church members have caught it.

However, services are now proceeding, and we are very grateful especially to local preachers who often have to make a long journey to get to us. The hills in between seem to increase the mileage of the journey. We are rather cut-off, it seems!

We are also very grateful to the officials in Church: my colleague and fellow steward, Pat Mottram, who always relays details of the forthcoming service to us, especially so that we in the choir will know what the hymns are, and also to the lady who very efficiently puts details on the screen for the congregation, along with clear words they can see. She also finds appropriate pictures to accompany the words of the hymns or scripture. Mostly therefore we don't need hymn books. The Offertory is collected in a plate at the back of the Church and is taken to the preacher at the end of the service for dedication. Children carry the plate to the front. While continuing to be cautious the congregation no longer wear masks.

As for matters during the week: Hilary Strawson and the Wednesday Group Committee have continued to arrange fortnightly meetings, which are occasionally later shared by email. A very interesting one, which I unfortunately missed, was from a participant in Ukraine, a British worker, known to Hilary, and who was working in the area at the time. I understand it was very informative. Otherwise, we simply meet to have coffee and a chat and keep the fellowship going.

The collection of clothes for the Baby Bank is going well – people have been more than keen to donate!

Unfortunately, one of our long-term lettings has finished with the organiser's retirement. She has been a teacher of dance for many years, and it will be very difficult to find a replacement. I have wondered if we retired teachers could do something to use the newly refurbished room at the back to help some slower pupils to catch up if they've missed lessons at school. We shall have to see as it is a shame to see the room unused.

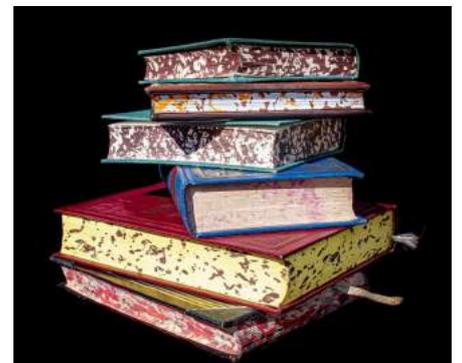
I hope all is going well for everyone else.

Glenda Sewell

Circuit Books of Faith Group

If interested please contact:

Rev J. Allan Taylor on 01483 200464



Songs of Praise



**Saturday June 18th
Horsley
Methodist Church**

(next to Village Hall)

7.00pm

Come and sing a selection of your
favourite hymns

Phone 01483 282474 to make requests



**Coffee
&
Cake
at
St Mary's**

*Take a break from your shopping
& meet up with friends*

10.30 am - 12 noon

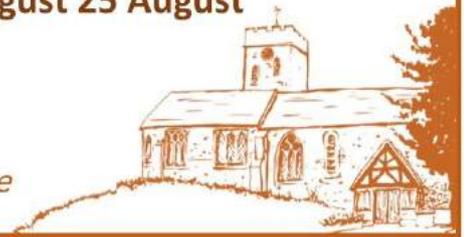
Thursday 26 May

Thursday 23 June

Thursday 28 July

August 25 August

Everyone welcome



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*

27 May 4 June
29 July 26 August

A Common Ground initiative

Ukraine

Foreword from the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

Witnessing the violent assault on Ukraine by the Russian military, and the humanitarian tragedy that it has caused, has left us both horrified and heartbroken. This devastating action and the resulting loss of life have rightly been condemned across the world and by the Methodist Church.

This war has resulted in millions of people moving across Europe to find safety. Methodist churches and members around the UK stand ready to open their homes and lives to all fleeing the situation in Ukraine – who desperately need our friendship and solidarity.

In response to the heart-warming generosity of Methodists, we offer this toolkit* of practical advice and support for those who wish to offer the gift of sanctuary to people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Christians are called to “pursue peace with everyone” (Hebrews 12:14, NRSV); this mandate is clear and requires courage, perseverance and understanding. We remember that this is but one war affecting our world at the moment and these refugees just one aspect of a worldwide humanitarian crisis that calls on our compassion. We ask you to pray that there may be an end to aggression and that dialogue, justice and peace may be established and rebuilding begin.

The Revd Sonia Hicks, President of the Methodist Conference 2021/2022

Mrs Barbara Easton, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference 2021/2022

*the toolkit can be accessed at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/ukraine/>

Clovelly Methodist Church

Although this little grade II listed chapel no longer has a regular congregation, it has a ministry as a house of prayer for the many visitors to the delightful village of Clovelly.

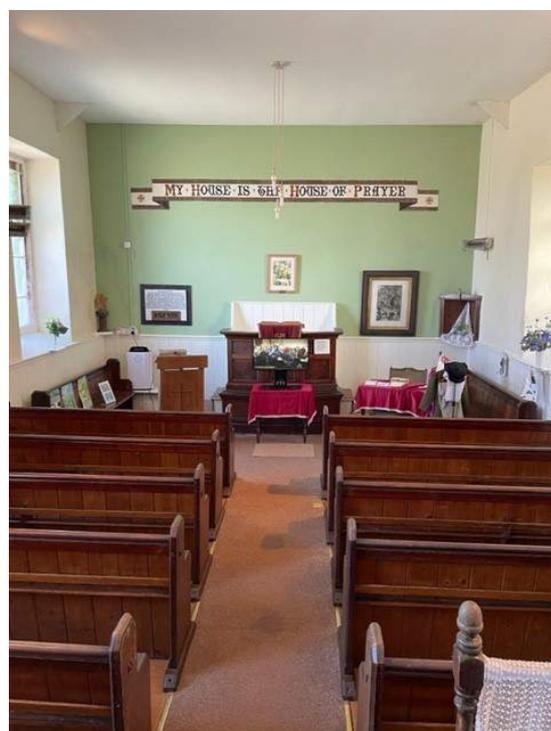
Nestled behind the New Inn a short walk away from the busy main street this whitewashed chapel dates from around 1820.

During the 18th century John Wesley inspired a strong Methodist movement in the West Country.

Today the chapel, with its serene interior washed a lime green, is open for visitors who are welcomed by a video (on repeat) of a choir singing some rousing hymns.

Many churches would be envious of the footfall this modest chapel attracts. It is just a shame that those who enter out of curiosity aren't able to pick up some general information about Methodism. An opportunity missed.

Sue Howson



Godalming United Church

Sunday services 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>

Our annual pantomime – this year Dick Whittington and his Cat – made a welcome return in February, with four performances playing to capacity audiences – smaller than usual because of increased spacing between seats. It was a joy to see and hear so many children having so much fun – both on and off stage. A huge *Thank You* to Barbara Keene and her team: another triumph.

It was with great joy that on 20 March we celebrated the 100th birthday of Bill Cartwright – still playing the organ from time to time, and in church on a perfect spring morning to receive our best wishes.

Lent was marked by a weekday Bible study course led by Minister Adam, and our usual Lenten Appeal - this year in support of the relief work of Médecins Sans Frontières in Afghanistan.

Messy Church made a come-back on 9 April with an afternoon of Easter-themed activities, a church-trail, chocolate eggs (of course), worship-time puppet-play and party tea.

Our Upper Room Maundy Thursday Communion service – with its peaceful views across the Lammas Lands – provided a reflective start to the Easter weekend. On Good Friday we joined in a special town centre street drama produced by the Trinity Trust Team, the Godalming Churches Together youth work project which we've supported across its 21 years. The action was interspersed with readings and reflections, and all were invited to tie ribbons to a giant cross that was then stationed in Crown Court. And on Easter Sunday we joined in the Churches Together Sunrise Service at the Minster Field shrine – probably the most ancient place of Christian worship in Godalming. The shrine marks the site of Godalming's first church, known as the Minster Chapel, believed to have been built between AD 550 and 650.

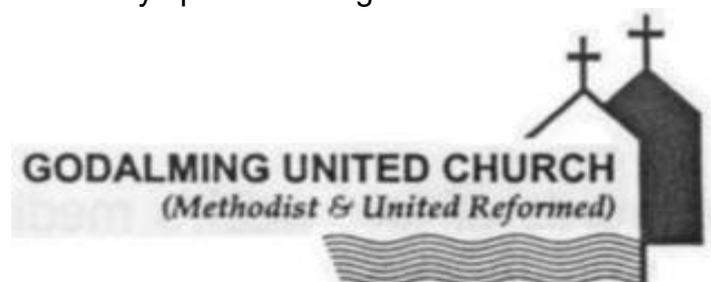
We're delighted that GUC has been awarded the "Eco-Church" Bronze award, demonstrating sustainability across five categories: Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement, and Lifestyle. Our thanks to Richard August for spearheading this. (Please go to <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> for more details of the A Rocha's UK's award scheme for churches, or revisit the article in the March - May edition of The Wey Forward).

Christian Aid Week - May 15 - 20 our support included a soup and fruit lunch on Sunday 15 May and collection in the High Street on Friday 20 May.

Saturday 21 May - saw Messy Church from 3 - 5pm.

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

Nancy Wilks



Guildford St Mary's

One of the pleasures of looking through Wey Forward, and I'm sure this issue will be no different, is to look through the contributions from the different churches and realise how diverse our Circuit is and how different our ministries are. The differences may result from location, the type of building and resources available and, of course, the inclinations of the individual congregations. Looking around the Circuit we have all our churches using their talents to show Christ's love in their particular context, be it witnessing in the heart of a village community, a suburb or a town centre. It's great to read of the range of outreach and service being undertaken in the Wey Valley.

At St Mary's (as regular readers may have noticed!) we seek to take full advantage of people's readiness to visit our truly historic mediaeval building in the heart of the town.

We have neither the facilities nor people resources to run a weekly children's activity so late in 2021 we started experimenting with *Pop-up Cafes* running on a Saturday every couple of months. These take the form of a drop-in over a couple of hours, offering something for all ages and always with a craft activity for children centred around a Christian theme. In turn, the first three have focused on Christingles, Candlemas and creating an Easter Garden. They've been successful in drawing people in (with or without accompanying children) and use a team of around six from St Mary's and Common Ground who enjoy taking on this periodic commitment.

The special atmosphere of St Mary's and our town centre location have provided a focus for weekly Friday evening *Vigils for Ukraine*, initiated immediately after the Russian invasion began, first taking over our regular monthly Night Vision slot. Hundreds of people have responded to the invitation to come inside on a Friday evening to show their concern, perhaps by lighting a candle, praying or reflecting with the help of pictures and prompts displayed on-screen throughout the evening. Many young people have engaged as they come past the church gate - some staying for just a minute or two and some staying much longer - but all very appreciative. The Mayor was one of our visitors on a night off from other engagements and enthused that St. Mary's was acting as a focus for the community at this time of pain and apprehension, keen that the Council should advertise the Vigils.

In all we do, ecumenical involvement is key; drawing on help from Common Ground and other volunteers who share the vision. All of which leads me to invite you to an **open afternoon for the Circuit on Sunday 19 June** when we will:

- express gratitude to you, the Circuit, for supporting the transformation of St Mary's building, equipping it for this type of ministry
 - give you a chance to share the unique atmosphere of St Mary's
 - offer a taste of the activities we undertake
 - provide light refreshments
- and
- conclude with a Circuit service giving thanks for the ministry of Keith and Hilary Beckingham as they move into retirement in July.

More details will be circulated to all churches shortly but in the meantime please save the date in your Diaries.

Nigel Champion-Smith

Knaphill

We have been able to hold our Coffee Mornings and C4U (clothing bank) sessions as planned so far this year, all very successfully, and have reinstated refreshments after services, albeit in all cases with reminders to people about the need for caution and ventilation. In services, we have adopted a mixed approach. Legal restrictions may have been removed, but not everyone is comfortable with close contact, so we have designated one side of the church as a “sit where and with whosoever you choose” area, but retained the socially distanced seating arrangements on the other side. This seems to be working well and gives cautious members the confidence to attend, without restricting those who would like to mingle more naturally.

We were so pleased to have a short communion service and simple evening meal on Maundy Thursday, for the first time in person, Easter service at KMC since 2019. Also for the first time since 2019, the Walk of Witness through Knaphill Village took place on Good Friday. This was a very poignant occasion as members from four churches came together to walk silently from Holy Trinity Parish Church to St Hugh’s Catholic Church, where there was a united service. The route taken passed Knaphill Baptist Church, where there was a pause for the bible passage “Jesus is questioned by the High Priest” to be read, to KMC, where the passage “Peter denies Jesus” was read, past the Memorial Garden in the centre of Knaphill, where we paused for a reading of the passage “Jesus is sentenced and mocked” and then on to St Hugh’s. There the fourth reading, “Jesus is Crucified”, took place, before the service began at 10.30am. The silently moving crowd of people, together with the large wooden cross carried by volunteers, is a powerful demonstration of Christians acting together to celebrate their faith.

Christian Aid Week house to house collections took place in Knaphill, during the week 15 - 22 May. We managed a limited collection last year, using “deliver-only” envelopes in selected roads, with the address of a person in each of those roads for the return of filled envelopes. We raised over £1,300 from these envelopes, which was increased to £1,800 by an extremely generous donation from a member of one of the other churches in the vicinity. This year, we hope with a mixture of deliver-only and call and collect we will be just as successful, especially as Christian Aid is now involved in pandemic relief and aid to refugees from Ukraine, as well as all its long-term commitments.

Lynda Shore



**POP-UP CAFÉ ... for
ALL AGES**

Call in at
ST. MARY'S
Quarry St Guildford GU1 3UP

for a break from shopping...
to enjoy coffee and cake...
link Holidays and Holydays...
and craft activities for
young visitors

Saturday 9 July 14.30 - 16.00

Circuit Mission Supper



What a pleasure it was to join with friends from other churches at the 2022 Circuit Mission Supper. The Sanctuary at Trinity was again transformed into a lovely entertaining space, and it was good to sit down to a lovely meal and see each other face to face after such a long time. Our guest speaker for the evening needed little introduction. Rev Conrad Hicks is the former Assistant Chair of the District and is now Director of Global Relationships in the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The team works to keep the Methodist Church in Britain connected with its global partners and share in God's mission throughout the world. The theme of Conrad's talk was 'What is the place of global mission in the 21st century?'

The Methodist Church has 107 Mission partners who are initially trained in this country at Cliff College and invited to serve for periods of at least one year by partner churches in the Caribbean, South & Central America, Africa, the Pacific, Asia and Europe. There are many opportunities to get involved in ministry around the world, as long-term Mission Partners or in various voluntary roles. People may also serve in their own country, and some come to Britain from overseas to support the work of the church here.

Overseas mission has needed to adapt and change over the years. There is a need to avoid mistakes of the past when mission had a more 'colonial' approach, tending to export our own cultural beliefs and practices rather than working with and alongside the people the church sought to serve. Short-term programmes have also brought their own problems and have occasionally ended badly. Young people who have benefitted from good education have left their home countries to go on to universities elsewhere where they have remained. This bleeding of educated young people has led to shortages of ministers, teachers and health professionals. Global Missions seeks to balance this problem by working jointly with mission partners in countries such as Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Jerusalem and Haiti.

So where does this leave Global Mission in the 21st century?

continued.....

Firstly, it offers enrichment in an interconnected world. We all face similar global problems, for example climate change. Climate Justice for all (CJ4A) is a climate focused, youth-led, global campaign which seeks to mobilise the Methodist family on issues of climate justice. It calls and resources **Methodist communities across the world to listen and learn from each other**, and to strive for world climate justice through a focus on **equipping** and **fairness, nationally and within** our own church communities. This will look different in each of the countries which are involved in the campaign, but the goals of equipping and fairness remain the same. The Global Mission team in the UK is addressing some of these problems in a practical way. It aims to reduce its carbon footprint by having longer but less frequent overseas visits to reduce travel, adopting overland travel rather than flights, planting trees, and more use of solar panels, aiming to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Secondly, Global Mission offers a model for effective collaboration with other partners through mutual learning and cooperative action. A growing number of churches and circuits are twinning with Methodist partner churches around the world. The aim is to share and learn in mission, understanding, culture and worship across Methodist communities. One way is through producing shared worship resources from a global perspective.

The pandemic affected many partners economically. This resulted in schools and churches closing. In the UK 79% of the population have received COVID vaccinations. In Nigeria this number is 7.4%, and in Haiti, one of the world's poorest countries, this number is only 1.3%. Our global mission partners have been responsible for bringing relief to many local communities during this difficult time. Campaigns advocating vaccine take-up were supported and grants were given to churches and projects. Resources were shared through the World Mission Fund, for example providing £750,000 to support the Methodist Church of Malaysia, and in practical ways such as providing PPE for clinics in Zambia and face masks to India during the COVID crisis.

Thirdly, Global Mission enables us to learn from churches in other countries. One example of this is from churches in Germany which has received 1.2 million refugees fleeing from the crisis in the Middle East, mainly Muslims. The Methodist Church played an important role in welcoming them and through this many became Christians. New churches were planted and now there are Arabic and Farsi speaking Methodist churches in Germany. What does this say to us in the UK? Did you know that 60% of refugees arriving in boats to the UK have a right to come and stay? And how can this help the Methodist church as we seek to support refugees from the current war in Ukraine? We have much to learn in developing good interfaith relationships and patterns of working together. Conrad has a real heart for overseas mission, having lived and served in Mexico and Jamaica and his passion and enthusiasm was clearly evident as he spoke to us. He has seen God's guiding hand in the opportunities he has personally received for service, and in the wider mission field of the Methodist church.

Changes in the Charity Commission requirements mean that the financial organisation of the global mission fund must change. To implement these changes, a committee has been formed from a number of partners from different countries. Conversations about the future of global missions must embrace but not control our partners worldwide as we share common challenges. In response to the question 'What is the place of global mission in the 21st century?' the answer must be - we still have much to learn, much to give and much to receive.

Helen Bowerman

Merrow

What I love about this time of the year is being able to go out into the garden and discover new green shoots from plants which were cut right back in the autumn or indeed from some which we thought had died off completely. If we now carefully tend and nurture these we will be rewarded with abundant growth throughout the rest of the year and hopefully for years to come.

Church life in Merrow post COVID feels a bit like that. With the 2020 lockdown and faltering on/off since then most of our community and church fellowship initiatives died off but now we are seeing real green shoots of recovery!

In the December issue of this magazine I talked about “ Together We Can” a programme developed by Surrey County Council Adult and Social Care Team which was designed to benefit those in our community who might be feeling isolated or lonely. It’s aim was to help build friendships and confidence with a hope of offering a glimpse of how things can be better. After a faltering start in the Autumn we are now just completing our Spring six week course. This has been attended by twelve guests and their feedback has been very positive. Our next course will now run during June and July on Wednesday afternoons from 2.00 - 4.00pm.

Our Tuesday Community Luncheon Club which we run at Merrow in conjunction with St John’s and St Pious is now back up and running on the first Tuesday of every month and it is intended this year to continue throughout the Summer rather than closing for the holidays as in previous years. We have welcomed twelve new guests over the past few months and now regularly have twenty one attending enjoying the opportunity of a cooked lunch in a friendly meeting place for the housebound and those needing company.

We used to host a Youth Hub run by Matrix on Thursday evenings but unfortunately this closed down with COVID. However, we have been approached by the youth workers who are keen to start up some initiatives at Merrow again. They have suggested a club once a month after school on a Monday aimed at pupils from years 7 and 8. Again green shoots of recovery.....

Totally separately, Gillian Brierley was chatting recently to some teenagers who were involved in hosting an Easter tea party for the community, in our hall. They were members of a young music group and we are very hopeful that they will soon be performing for us at one of our Sunday morning worships!

Our Women’s Fellowship group continues to meet at 2.30pm on the first Monday of the month and our Outlet Group at 7.30 for coffee on the second Monday of the month. Recent speakers have entertained on subjects ranging from “Hansard, the Ear of Parliament” to “Mental Health Today” which was led by Ama Quarm.

After a busy Easter we are now planning ahead for our Church Anniversary which will be held on Sunday 26 June. How the year flies by, but by then we will hopefully be enjoying seeing how the green shoots have matured both in the garden and in our post COVID church life.

Hugh Bradley



Methodist Tapestries

In 2020, the Weardale Museum in Ireshopeburn acquired the neighbouring High House Chapel, which is now currently undergoing significant repair and refurbishment. As a flagship project, capable of attracting visitors from across the world to the proposed Weardale Heritage Centre, the Museum has launched the Methodist Tapestries Project with the intention of portraying key elements of the story of Methodism through the medium of embroidery. As High House was, until 2019, the oldest purpose-built chapel in the UK to be in continuous weekly use since its inception in 1760, it will be a particularly appropriate home for an artwork showing the history of Methodism.

The completed Methodist Tapestries Collection will be displayed as part of a dedicated exhibition area once the Chapel is fully restored (expected shortly). The work so far in Phase 1 involves the creation of an artwork which, interpreted through 15 panels, tells the story of the High House Methodist Chapel since its opening in 1760. These designs are the nucleus of the collection, in that they focus on the more local stories; each panel measures 50cm x 50cm with the artwork area measuring 40cm x 40cm. These 15 panels have been transferred to Angus Twill Linen, and some have now been completed while others are in progress. These will form the core of the collection which it is hoped will feature over 100 local Methodist stories from around the UK and beyond.



Phase 2 takes the project further afield. Individuals and communities from around the country and beyond have been invited to help us create further embroidered panels depicting scenes of familiar events, characters, places and movements in the worldwide history of Methodism, as well as stories about how a specific church or chapel has contributed. In recognition of the level of commitment required to take on a panel of this type, stitchers work on a slightly smaller piece measuring 40cm x 40cm, with a stitched area 30cm x 30cm. The format, with text in a circle around the inner design, plus corner motifs, remains the same. We are fortunate to have attracted funding via grants from a variety of organisations, including the Rank Foundation, the Radcliffe Trust, the Willan Trust and the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage, and continue to apply for further funds to enable widespread participation

Unlike similar projects such as the Quaker Tapestry and the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry, the Methodist Tapestries Collection will feature a wide variety of stitches and textile techniques. These will help to reflect the diversity and breadth of Methodist history. Therefore, stitchers are welcome to use any stitches they feel appropriate to the design, as well as techniques such as applique, use of found items, stump work etc.

Photos of work on various panels can be seen on our Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as sometimes featuring on the Weardale Museum's Twitter feed. Anyone with a love of needlework, and who has previously completed a sewing project of any kind, is welcome to participate. It is possible to research and design a panel, with assistance if needed, or to take on an existing design, and technical embroidery support is available as required.

Liz Walsh, Project Co-ordinator

contact@methodisttapestries.org.uk

Stoughton



Daffodils are always a signal for me that there is new life once again in our countryside. This year it is more difficult to appreciate with the daily distressing news about the suffering of people in Ukraine. However, it also reminds us that there are many other people in areas of our world who are also suffering from acts of conflict and, just because they are not front page news, we should not forget them in our prayers.

This year Pentecost is celebrated on Sunday 5 June. Stoughton also celebrates its 127th Anniversary on this date and, as you know, that weekend is part of a celebration for our Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We look forward to Rev Allan Taylor leading our service of thanksgiving for this special time in the life of our Church and country.

We are holding a Community Coffee morning on Saturday 4 June inviting all those in the surrounding neighbourhood to join us for coffee, cake and a chat.

At Stoughton we have still had Covid affecting some of our members but I am sure we are not alone in that.

As I have just referred to the Anniversary and the fact that the church is 127 years old it may not surprise you to know that we have had some recent concerns regarding brickwork at the gable end of the church. Repairs were being carried out when further damage was revealed which has led to a more substantial bill than was expected – sounds like a story of life!

We send our thanks to Rev Keith Beckingham and his wife Hilary for their ministry to our Circuit and God's blessing and all good wishes for wherever they are led.

Linda Macbeth



Walton's daffodil cross
on Mothering Sunday

Walton-on-Thames

Since Christmas, we have been pleased to be able to hold gathered services every Sunday with two afternoon Zoom services as well each month, which offer a different style of worship and enable friends outside the UK to join in as well.

We were very pleased to host a wedding service in our church on 19 February. The first in several years, it was a gloriously joyful happy day as the bride and groom had postponed it on two previous occasions.

We have not been able to restart our Pudding and Praise café style worship yet, but we have had Breeze (our pop-up worship band) lead our worship and play in one of our recent own arrangement services. We were delighted to have some of our young people taking part in aspects of this service as well. We were thinking about dreams and showed this clip of Martin Luther King Jnr's famous speech during the service. It was surprising how many people had not actually listened to the full version of his speech all the way through.

It can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP4iY1TtS3s>

Another one of our green shoots, is that Christopher Heffernan (one of our Youth Leaders) has volunteered to organise some activities for our young people. There are about ten activities now planned across the next six months. One of these was to join in with the Learning Network's symposium on Racial Justice at Wesley's Chapel on 26 March. This is a topic which our Church community has been grappling with and reflecting on across the past two years, so it was an excellent opportunity for us to get involved in it.

We took five of our young people up to the event at Wesley's Chapel which had been arranged for Methodist Youth groups to attend. It was an excellent day out where we learned much about the topic, about each other and made some new friends with youth from a neighbouring circuit. We know that this is a path that we will be journeying down for some time as a church, and it was very good to finally get some traction on this project by engaging with this topic through the symposium. We plan to involve our young people in a racial justice themed service next month.

We are also delighted that confirmation classes will be starting in April for a handful of our young people. We will run these over seven weeks and explore different elements of our Methodist tradition and what it means to be a young Christian in today's world.

On Mothering Sunday we thought about those people that had cared for us when we were young and of the God that cares for us as a mother figure. Everyone was offered a daffodil as they came into church, and they were asked to put it into the cross as they remembered those people who had cared for them.

As Lent draws to a close with the approach of the promise of hope offered by Easter Sunday, we have been working through the Lent study based on Andrew Roberts' Holy Habits book, which has been a blessing to all who have taken part. We are planning to work through the book across the rest of the year to see how we can explore other aspects of our faith together as a community.

In May several of the congregation joined others in the circuit on the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This was a good time to get to know others from the circuit and from other churches as the pilgrimage progressed, and to develop our faith together.

Ross Richardson

West Horsley

We are looking forward to the marriage of Janet Gardham and Graham England in our chapel in July. This will be the first wedding of two of our church members for a considerable time. We wish them every joy for the forthcoming years.

We have selected Saturday 18 June for our Songs of Praise evening, at 7.00pm. All are welcome to come to this enjoyable event; there will be an interval for refreshments and to meet old and new friends.

We held the second of our afternoon tea parties for friends and neighbours on Sunday 20 March. Thanks to Celia Chapman's organisation, this was a great success and a worthwhile occasion.

We have successfully installed glass front doors to the chapel to give a more open and welcoming appearance, including easy wheelchair access. Several neighbours have commented on the new look.

Our new projection screens are working well and much appreciated by preachers and the congregation, particularly the one at the back which can be seen by the preachers and readers.

By the time you read this, we will have joined with the other local churches for the Open air Good Friday service, celebrated Easter with Claire Hargreaves and Chapel Anniversary with Paul Hulme. So, perhaps we can say that our church life is back to normal?



Margaret Faulkner



Tulips blooming at Trinity, Woking

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.

Weybridge



Like all churches Weybridge is looking forward to the summer months. We are planning a family celebration for the Queen's 70th Jubilee which we hope to hold (weather permitting) out on the lawn. Games and a barbeque are the order of the day and attendees are invited to dress up as Her Majesty or Prince Philip – will be interesting to see. Luckily our safeguarding officer is on the planning team so all risks will be covered! We hope that this event will raise the profile of the church in the neighbourhood.

Two of the new members who joined us in July 2021 have taken up positions as church stewards; unanimously elected at the General Church Meeting! We have also welcomed two new ladies into the congregation over recent weeks.

We continue to try and re-establish the monthly 'coffee & chat' with prayer sessions.

Our premises are back up to pretty much maximum usage with just a few gaps. We have welcomed a couple who are using the hall for the occasional hour to practise ballroom dancing ahead of their son's wedding!

As in most churches the summer months will be a challenge on Sundays as church members catch up on missed holidays over the past few years, however we wish them all refreshment as they enjoy catching up with family and friends or visiting new places.

The summer months will also see the Testimony service of our Minister Rev Sydney Samuel Lake and his Ordination service in Shrewsbury in June. We continue to pray for him and his family.

God is Good!

Linda Weedon

Trinity, Woking

The tulips are bobbing in the big flower tubs outside the Church today. They've taken over from the daffs whose yellow heads made a nodding sea of colour along the main road for the past months. (see page 20 for a beautiful picture of them).

Although it sounds like it should be, *Philoxenia* is not however a flower we have growing at Trinity, well at least not in our garden. The Greek scholars among you (and I am not one) will know that it is literally translated in biblical terms as 'friend to the stranger'.

As a leadership team we have in recent months been discussing our vision for Trinity, and our aspiration for the sort of church we want to be, as we grow The Foundry in to something long term and sustainable, and as we welcome new friends and old into the church premises, at worship, and into membership.

The notion of 'Christian hospitality' or *philoxenia* is one that we all agree is important (and with a leadership team of 11, with strong personalities and diverse skills and experience we don't always agree on everything!!)

It is what we are doing with Messy Fun Church every Friday evening, where Sue and her volunteers welcome anywhere between 8 and 20 youngsters for two semi structured hours of play, prayer and cooked meal.

The staff & volunteer team based in the office and premises extend a warm Christian welcome to all our building users and tenants, be it offering the Associated Music Board Examiner a 'posh' chocolate biscuit in their tea break, the teachers at Italia Conti (they are using us for auditions until their new home in Woking is finished) a phone charger, the blood donor clinical team a jug of coffee and a quiet place to eat their lunch, or Surrey Young Carers a warm, safe space in the Sanctuary for a half term photography course.

Rev Sam has welcomed friends from across the Circuit to a series of Lenten Prayers via Zoom, beamed from her office at home.

We're about to launch a project for our Sunday Morning Welcomers, and develop a Welcome journey for new people who come to Trinity. Hugh is leading on those projects.

We don't always get it right, sometimes we get it demonstrably wrong and sometimes we 'wing it' but I do get the sense that we are all pulling in the same direction and everyone who comes to Trinity will benefit from our shared purpose.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Hebrews 13: 2 ESV

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Matthew 25: 35 ESV

Daniela Warr Schori MA

Church Administrator and Foundry Centre Coordinator

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 25 of The Wey Forward
is midnight 5 July 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 26 26 September 2022

Issue 27 16 January 2023

Issue 28 6 April 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
June 2022			
1 June	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Together We Can 6 week course (details from Hugh Bradley)	Merrow
2 - 5 June		Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations	
4 June	8.30pm - 11.00pm	Night Vision	St Mary's, Guildford
4 June	tbc	Community Coffee Morning	Stoughton
5 June	10.30am	Stoughton Church Anniversary Service with Rev Allan Taylor	Stoughton
7 June	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship Group	Merrow
13 June	7.30pm	Outlet Group	Merrow
18 June	7.00pm	Songs of Praise	West Horsley
18 June	10.30am	Coffee Morning	Addlestone
19 June	Details to follow	Open afternoon followed by Circuit Service (5.00pm)	St Mary's, Guildford
23 June	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
26 June	4.00pm	Ordination Service for Rev Sydney Samuel Lake	Shrewsbury
July 2022			
4 July	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship Group	Merrow
5 July	Midnight	Copy deadline for The Wey Forward (Edition 25)	
9 July	2.30pm - 4.00pm	Pop-up Cafe	St Mary's, Guildford
11 July	7.30pm	Outlet Group	Merrow
16 July	tbc	Byfleet Parish Day	Byfleet
16 July	10.30am	Coffee Morning	Addlestone
17 July	10.30am	Keith's last service in the Circuit	St Mary's, Guildford
28 July	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
29 July	8.30pm - 11.00pm	Night Vision	St Mary's, Guildford
August 2022 (and beyond)			
1 August	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship Group	Merrow
8 August	7.30pm	Outlet Group	Merrow
20 August	10.30am	Coffee Morning	Addlestone
25 August	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
26 August	8.30pm - 11.00pm	Night Vision	St Mary's, Guildford