

# **The Wey Forward**

Issue 25 September - November 2022



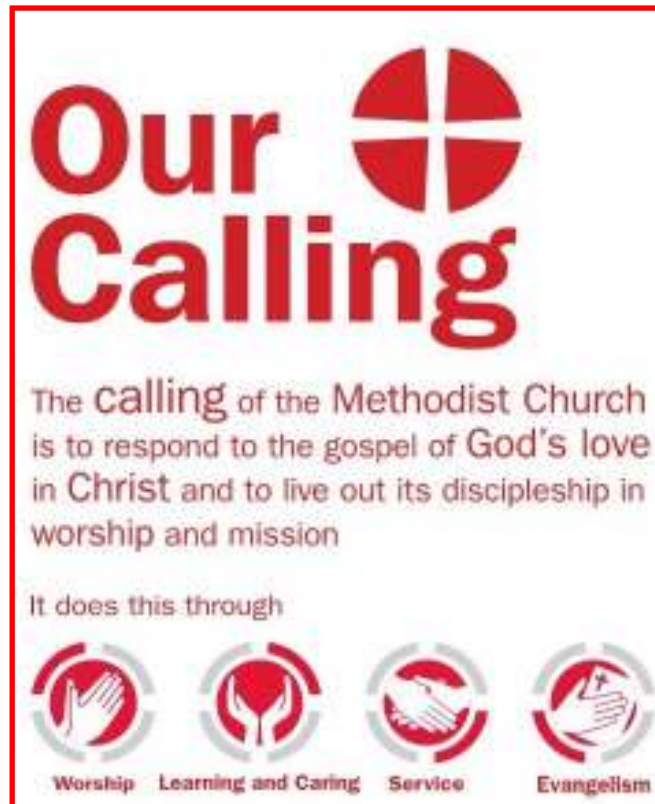
And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."  
Matthew 4:19

# The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit

The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit came into being on 1 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](http://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](mailto: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

Hello!

I am writing this letter early in July, increasingly surrounded by packing boxes and trying to engage in a 'life thinning down' exercise after being in the same house for 15 years.

It's a valuable part of the moving on process. Looking around yourself and being intentional about leaving behind the things that you haven't used or don't need. Life can get very cluttered sometimes and lots of things crowd in from the sidelines. It can take courage to leave aside something that you've held onto for a long time.

My wife, Janet, and I are constantly asking ourselves questions that revolve around the word 'if' at the moment. 'If we haven't used this in 15 years do we really need it?'. 'If we have both read this book and don't see that we will ever read it again should it go?' The parallels to our own lives are clear.

What are the 'iron rations' of our faith? Those basic things that we cannot do without? Those key things that we need to believe and hold onto if our faith is to work? It's a question that is worth asking.

We move to Wey Valley after 15 years in Canterbury where I have been Chaplain at Kent College. Previously I have been Superintendent Minister of the Wakefield Circuit, the Chaplain to Ashville College in Harrogate and Circuit minister in Ilkley and in South Leeds. I'm a local boy... I grew up in Leatherhead Methodist Church and my mother still lives in the town.

I am married to Janet who is a chemist. After working for Cambridge Research Biochemicals she moved to working for ICI/Astra Zeneca in Huddersfield. She then did her teacher training and has been Head of Science at an inner city school in Bradford and Learning Strategies Co-Ordinator (and timetabler) at Kent College. She's from the Wirral. We are absolutely delighted to be joining you in Wey Valley and very much look forward to meeting you.

A character that I come back to time and time again in the Biblical story is Barnabas. The name means 'son of encouragement' and as you read about how his story intertwines with Paul's you can see how he embodied his name in how he was and what he did. Encouragement is crucial.

As we come out of the pandemic together and face the joys and the challenges that no doubt the future will bring I think that encouragement is going to be key. I hope to be a real encouragement to you and it is crucial that we work hard to encourage each other as we work to discover our discipleship path.

We'll praise him for all that is past  
And trust him for all that's to come.

Blessings,

Paul

*Rev Dr Paul Glass*  
*Superintendent Minister*



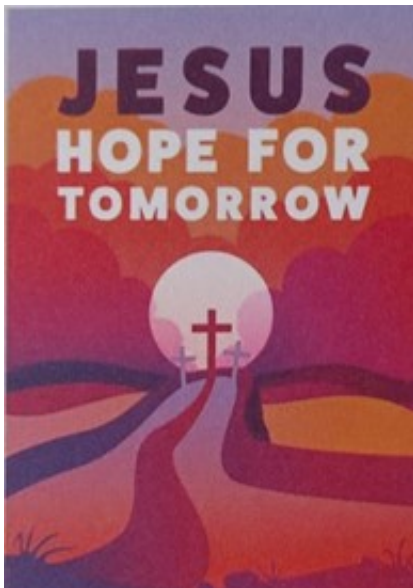
# News from around the Circuit

## Addlestone

Watching a news programme can be like living in a world that is on course for ultimate disaster.

We have a faith that reminds us of the words of a song **God will make a way when there seems to be no way**. We know that with God all things are possible, and with Paul's words to the Corinthians we are reminded of three things helping us into the future; Faith, Hope and Love.

We were recently reminded in a sermon of the words in Galatians 6: vs 2 'Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.'



With such a small number of those willing and able to contribute to the running of the Addlestone Methodist Church we are greatly blessed by the way we few are able to work together to ensure the duties necessary are dealt with so efficiently. With those few members plus a few circuit helpers, we feel we are fulfilling the law of Christ. We can never thank them often enough for their support, never forgetting that 'God is With Us' giving us that hope for tomorrow.

Our greatest contribution to our community continues to be our monthly Saturday Fun Bingo Coffee Morning from which we are able to make a donation to the Working and Sam Beare Hospice. Numbers attending are increasing and we are now working on ways to start another monthly Saturday event to enable us to double our donations to the hospice. Watch this space.

Last, but certainly not least, are the informal type of Sunday Services we now hold at least twice a month. The support given by the appointed preachers is beyond expectation. We now need to publicise effectively the way our service will present the message - **Come with joy to meet our risen Lord Jesus. Come with all creation to praise and glorify His Blessed name.**

*Fred Rowe*





## Byfleet

These past few years have been trying times and we at Byfleet are delighted to be back to normal although we must not forget that Covid is still in the background.

Our biggest highlight is the good news that Pam Bailey, (right) has been appointed a Worship Leader by our Church Council.

Many congratulations to Pam who successfully became Byfleet Methodist Church's Worship Leader on 31 May. She was accepted by the Church Council at its meeting on 30 June. There was a Commissioning Service for her on 24 July where Rev David Faulkner and Pam took the service together.

Pam joined our church in the 1970s and has developed from the important role of a mother of Sunday School scholars and a somewhat hesitant reader in church to an accomplished speaker and a leader in our church life. She is presently one of our Senior Church Stewards, a leader of our Tuesday Fellowship and our Holy Communion steward.



Our Sunday lunches and monthly coffee mornings are continuing and we held a very successful Platinum Jubilee Coffee Morning and sale in our car park. The next Sunday lunch will be on 31 July and the next coffee morning on 8 August.

Our regular Tuesday Fellowship meetings have continued and we are pleased to say that over the last few weeks we have enjoyed some very interesting speakers not only from Church but also from Byfleet village. Visitors are always welcome

Having recently completed a very successful Lent Bible Study course there is now a Bible study group with the topic being "Life of the Messiah". This is led by Peter Hall, our recently elected steward. They are held at 2.30pm on Thursdays until 4 August.

The Foodbank continues to help those in need in our area especially at this difficult time. The partnership with Citizens Advice Woking, who hold a drop-in clinic at the church at the same time, has proved to be particularly successful. Together with the financial support provided by the Byfleet United Charity, this is an excellent example of three local charities working together for the benefit of our community.

We are celebrating Harvest this year by holding a Harvest Supper and concert on Saturday 24 September followed by Harvest Festival on Sunday with gifts for the Foodbank.

A Remembrance Day service and parade is held at the Byfleet War Memorial after our shortened Sunday morning service and will be led this year by Rev David Faulkner.

*Margery Babb*

## Circuit Mission Day

"The Word became flesh and moved into the neighbourhood." John 1:14 (The Message). Long ago God became a man so that he could go and live amongst the people he loved. We, as his followers, are called to do the same! Our faith is not limited to Sundays or church buildings; All of us are called to live out the good news of Jesus in our neighbourhoods through all we do and say.

If you think that sounds exciting, but also a little daunting, why not come and join us, **10am for 10.30am at Godalming United Church on 15 October?** We'll hear from Tom Lewis, (right), a pioneer Community Chaplain working in a new housing area. He'll lead some creative discussions to help us rethink mission and discover some simple ways to be more missional in your everyday life.

*John Nelson*



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

**10.30 am - 12 noon**

**Thursday 25 August**

**Thursday 22 September**

**Thursday 26 October**

**Thursday 23 November**

**Take a break  
and  
meet up with friends**

*Everyone welcome*



**St. Mary's**

Quarry St  
Guildford  
GU1 3UP

**Cream Tea**

**Tuesday 30 August**

**1.30 - 4.30 pm**

**for Africa**

For further details, contact  
[gmc.info@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gmc.info@hotmail.co.uk)





# Cranleigh

The **Baby Bank** (which was established in 2020) continues to be one of our major outreach activities. We provide local families in need with everything baby related free of charge and equipment can be borrowed for as long as it is needed. Referrals are usually made by local agencies and the Baby Bank is open on Tuesday mornings alongside **Time out Together**, when the Church is open for people of all ages to meet together for coffee and company. These occasions have proved to be very popular and are regularly attended by over twenty participants, including babies and toddlers and their parents.



We are pleased to say that the Baby Bank has also been able to provide baby clothes and blankets for use in Ukraine. Eleven boxes of items were collected from the Church on 18 June, weighed and transported to Chisinau in Moldova from where they were delivered a few days later to a Church centre in Kiev, Ukraine. They will be distributed to where they are desperately needed, including to a local Mother and Baby Home. We are very grateful to all those who donated the items and to those who worked hard in the UK, Moldova and Ukraine to enable this to happen.



*Boxes, boxes everywhere*

On 5 June we held our Sunday morning service at **Elmbridge Retirement Village** which coincided with Elmbridge's Jubilee celebrations that weekend. It was good to see a congregation of some fifty people, from Elmbridge and the Church at the service, which was conducted by Jane Briggs.

We held a successful stall outside the Church to coincide with **Cranleigh Lions Fair** on 25 June, which raised much needed funds for the Church. Again, thanks go to all those involved in making this a successful event. One of our current priorities is seeking new lettings to make use of our improved facilities, especially since a longstanding dance group is finishing in July following the retirement of the teacher.

Our **Sunday Club** continues to meet every week and our two loyal children have great ideas for updating our small outside space at the rear of the church! The fortnightly ladies **Wednesday Group** continues to flourish and a new programme of activities will start again in September. Meetings include speakers and members' evenings and new members are always very welcome to join us.

We send our best wishes to Keith and Hilary for their retirement.

*Hilary Strawson*



cranleigh  
arts

# LONDON WELSH RUGBY CLUB CHOIR

Fundraising for Cranleigh Rotary and Cranleigh Arts.



SATURDAY 3  
SEPTEMBER  
7:30pm £16



Including  
classical  
guitar

Fiona  
Harrison

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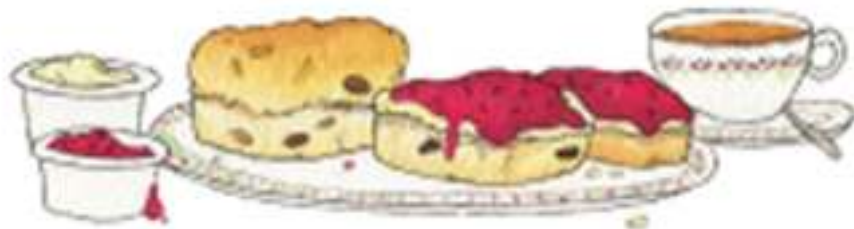


**Saturday 10 September, 2.30pm – 4.30pm**



Godalming United Church invite you to come and join them on the Church patio\* for a Cream Tea.

Raising money for the Ophthalmic Project in Gambia.



Godalming United Church, Bridge Road, Godalming, GU7 3DT

\*in the case of inclement weather will be in the River Room



# COFFEE MORNING

IN AID OF

# KSSX AND SALE

**AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY**  
KENT SURREY SUSSEX  
Registered Charity No: 1021367



TEA  
COFFEE  
BISCUITS  
BACON BUTTIES

**Bacon Butties!**

There will be various stalls including:  
Cakes, Tombola, Guess the Weight of the Cake,  
Guess the Name of Teddy, Guess How Many  
Sweets in the Jar & Brick - a - Brac.  
*Offers of help and donations of items welcome! Contact Tarina Berry*

OPENED BY THE  
MAYOR OF WOKING



**KNAPHILL METHODIST CHURCH HALL**

**Saturday 8th October 2022**

**10am to Noon**

[www.knaphillmethodist.co.uk](http://www.knaphillmethodist.co.uk)

# 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](http://www.guc.org.uk), or, after the service, <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube>.

## Looking back over the summer

At the end of June we welcomed back the Paynes from their summer holiday in their homeland in Indiana. They had a wonderful time meeting up with family, but after 3½ years in the UK Adam writes:

*"The culture was somewhat jarring. A typical American street, which seemed so normal before, seemed loud and intrusive. Billboards, business signs, flashing lights...it all seemed so much more gaudy and noisy than the quiet high streets of Surrey. The people seemed louder. The food fatter and more filling. Lizzy summed it up with one word: overwhelming.*

*Ironically, we realised that our hometown was relatively the same. Oh, a few new restaurants and shops had opened, a few old ones closed, but the atmosphere, the feel of the place was familiar. Almost depressingly so because we realised it wasn't our home that had changed.....it was us. All that noise and light were things that were there before. We just noticed them now. So, we realised that we couldn't go home again, because for us that place is no longer home.*

*Coming back into Heathrow, the Immigration agent was giving us a bit of a hard time, asking why we would possibly want to live in the U.K. We get this a lot from Brits ..... but the truth is, we now can't imagine living anywhere else.*

*A big part of that is the church. I'm a believer in the idea that the church is more than a community. It's a family. I know that my time in Godalming can't last forever, but, for as long as possible, it's good to know we have a home and a family here in this church. I hope you too feel just as comfortable being a part of the church community." Adam*



*Compare and contrast.... American street scene with the Wey Lammas Lands behind our church.*

And after temperatures in the mid-30s combined with high humidity the Paynes have been revelling in the temperate British summer!



The annual collection of clothes and foodstuffs for the Whitechapel Mission for the Homeless was massively supported as ever, with donations coming in from other churches and the wider Godalming community.

Our annual Church Anniversary service and meal made a welcome return on 17 July – an ever popular combination of BBQ, strawberries and cream, and family entertainments - including bouncy castle and singing provided by Music Kids – all set against the incomparable backdrop of the Wey Lammas Lands.



Having gained the Eco Church bronze award we are now working towards silver. The already burgeoning garden – steadfastly maintained by the Baileys – now boasts patio planters of vegetables (sown by Messy Church) and extra pollinator-friendly plants.

Messy Church has returned with a session every half-term. We also ran an August-extra under the banner of Godalming's Staycation week – the Amazing Picnic (you can guess the story) - concluding with a bring-your-own picnic.

## Looking ahead

We will be holding a cream tea on the afternoon of Saturday 10 September – hopefully outside on the lawn – in support of our ongoing commitment to The Gambia Ophthalmic Unit.

Planning is under way for our spring 2023 pantomime – Cinderella - to be performed the first weekend in February. Always a great coming-together of the organisations and generations within the church community.

For other future events, please visit [www.guc.org.uk](http://www.guc.org.uk) for a constantly updated rolling calendar.

*Nancy Wilks*





# Guildford St Mary's

We had our Annual Church Meeting just before writing this, which was an opportunity to review what has been happening, reflect on these times of change and look forward to the future. I imagine the same happens in all our churches to a greater or lesser extent. It was the last meeting under Keith's chairmanship so of course we took the opportunity to thank him and Hilary for their supportive and enabling ministry with us over the last few years

Our recent Festival Afternoon was recalled with pleasure, and we thank all from around the Circuit and beyond who joined in the celebration and explored the various outreach activities we undertake, as well as the uplifting Circuit service in the evening.

Some of these activities take us to the sharp end of interacting with non-churchgoers which has to be a crucial part of our mission.

Our improved facilities, the history and atmosphere of St Mary's give us opportunities to attract, and engage with, people ...

and it's people that matter, not really the buildings.

In a recent radio service, the speaker referred to church doors as being either a welcome or a barrier – physically, ours now offer more of a welcome but many people still require persuasion or at least a warm invitation to cross the threshold into a building which may be alien to their cultural position - or just plain scary.

People's hesitation, nervousness and misplaced hesitation and concerns about what is expected of them (am I dressed right? am I too loud? what do I have to do? I've had a drink, my lifestyle isn't acceptable, you'll be wanting money from me) can represent a real barrier but a warm welcome can break that down.

We've experienced very moving moments in recent months through our weekly Vigils for Ukraine, with great appreciation expressed by people unconnected with any church, grateful that the church is offering an opportunity to show their concern for what's going on beyond Guildford. Sunday morning worship may not be their thing – and would it be readily accessible to the uninitiated anyway?

Our discussion turned to how church organisations measure success – generally with a focus on how many attend Sunday worship or what their income is – when maybe we should be paying more attention to what our weekday engagement is with the wider community and what impact we're making.

How can you measure a young neighbour coming into church to thank us that Keith had prayed at our gate with her mother a few weeks earlier when the mother was weighed down by the threat of imminent deportation and separation from her family because of a visa technicality? Or recently arrived refugees practising their English and learning about life here?

*Nigel and Andrea Campion-Smith*



## Knaphill

Thankfully, although many more of our members have had Covid-19 in the past few months, no-one has been very severely affected. We are very pleased that we have been able to continue with our usual events – Clothing Bank (Clothes 4U) on the third Saturday of the month and Coffee Mornings on the fourth Saturday. (This is the usual plan, but occasionally circumstances mean we have to move one or the other of these events to a different Saturday, so please check if you intend to visit or are directing anyone to Clothes 4U). Our May Coffee Morning, which included a plant sale, was very successful, with many folk attending and very good sales. It is lovely to be able once more to see folk relaxing around the tables, as they enjoy their bacon rolls and chat. In October, two Coffee Mornings are planned – our usual one and a special event in aid of the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Service, on 8 October. (For details of this event, please see Page 9).

Another event which proceeded in a near “normal” fashion again was the Christian Aid Week collection in May. We raised money in a mixture of ways – standard house-to-house collecting, deliver only collections, KMC collection and a street collection outside Waitrose on Goldsworth Park shopping centre. The biggest problem is not unwillingness to give or even the modern issue of not having cash, but shortage of collectors. However, with help from many KMC folk and some members of other churches in Knaphill and Woking, including some very generous individual donations, we raised £2,081.65. This will go to support projects in Zimbabwe aiming to provide drought resistant seeds to enable small scale farmers, often women, to improve the food supply for their families.

Other good news is that we were approached in April by a pre-school called Wonderbloom, which is now using our premises. In addition to all the usual things pre-schools supply, they offer extra support, if needed, for speech and language issues. We wish them every success.

*Lynda Shore*



## Circuit Books of Faith Group

If interested please contact:

Rev J. Allan Taylor on 01483 200464



# Numbers, Numbers

There is a **lovely story** (which I'm sure is apocryphal!) of a preacher who arrived at a small country chapel, only to find that the congregation consisted of the organist and a rather pretty young lady sat alone in the middle pew. Reminded of the old dictum in Matthew 18:20 ('where two or three are gathered . . .') the preacher was determined to deliver his prepared service. Looking intently at his sole congregational member, he announced his first hymn: *"Come, O thou traveller unknown, whom still I hold, but cannot see! My company before is gone, and I am left alone with thee; with thee all night I mean to stay, and wrestle till the break of day."* His congregation immediately shrank to one, as the young lady made a rapid exit!

I've lost count of the number of times that I've been to a small church in a village or town and the steward has said to me, *"I'm sorry we're so few today"* and been offered various reasons, whilst taking care not to imply that folk have stayed away because they knew I was coming! And always my reply has been on the lines of *"If God cannot be worshipped by the five or six of us here tonight/this morning, then he can't be worshipped by a thousand in Methodist Central Hall!"*

The current **membership of the Methodist Church** in the UK apparently now numbers just under 170,000, and I know that there will be people who will be wringing their hands in despair. *"What's gone wrong?"* people will say. *"Why are there more Methodists in Brazil, for example, than in this country?"* And it would be very easy to become disheartened, depressed, and even guilty at our apparent failure. The two parables in Matthew can help us here.

## Parables about growth – (Matthew 13 : 31 - 33)

<sup>31</sup> He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup> it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.' <sup>33</sup> He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

**Yeast** is an amazing organism. It's a long time since I've made bread or a cake, though my son Paul made one a little while ago for his wife Claire. It was a Victoria sponge – except that he used plain, rather than self-raising flour, and succeeded as a result in inventing the 'Victoria biscuit'! The two little parables that Jesus told



about the apparently tiny and insignificant becoming great – particularly **the mustard seed** – are part of a repeated pattern in Matthew's Gospel of signs, sayings, and miracles which all point to the same truth: that God's Kingdom far exceeds human expectation, and that his love is greater than anything we can conceive. In his commentary on Matthew, Ivor Jones\* says that 'they encourage the faint-hearted to believe against evidence to the contrary, that God is working his purpose out'.

We must not set too much store simply by numbers. Our politicians have shown us all too clearly how numbers can be manipulated to prove almost anything. Anyway, not all organisations which grow numerically are necessarily good – look at the Nazi party in Germany in the 1930s. So when we think about the Church, perhaps we can allow ourselves to smile, or at least feel more hopeful.

\*The Gospel of Matthew (Epworth Commentary Series) by Ivor H Jones, P. 85

continued.....



Why? Well **our Bibles** should be able to tell us the reasons. The Kingdom of God has never been a democracy! Although our hearts may be gladdened by the sight of congregations in their thousands in other parts of the world; and though we may read in wonder at the crowds who flocked to hear John and Charles Wesley (and George Whitefield and others, too) in the eighteenth century, there are plenty of examples of God working his divine purposes through minorities. Think of Moses, who returned to Egypt with just Aaron and his family in support. And what of the prophets and prophetesses, who were often lone voices crying in the wilderness? Remember, too, the little group of women gathered at the foot of the cross, whose faith inspired and encouraged the leaders of the early Church. And consider the exploits of the early churches in the first and second centuries – tiny, vulnerable minorities in a hostile world. And the whole theology of **‘The Remnant’** that runs like a golden thread throughout Scripture, should remind us of this truth.

However, a small word of caution, if I may. It’s very easy to become downcast (perhaps even a wee bit jealous) when people regale us with stories of other churches which are packed to the rafters and bursting with young people. One of the things I learned when in the ‘active work’, was that Christians from different denominations are not in competition. Each church has a unique ministry and a calling by God to use the gifts he has given to his people to fulfil its own individual calling – just as individual Christians are called to fulfil their own God-given potential.

Therefore, I’m not saying that we shouldn’t be concerned with our shrinking membership in the British Methodist Church. Of course not. But we should never base our estimation of the spiritual health of our churches solely on how many attend or who are ‘signed up’ as members. So, what is our task?



**Bishop Desmond Tutu** once said, “Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world” – which echo the words of **St David**, the patron saint of the Land of my Fathers, so many centuries before, when he urged us to *“Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things in God’s presence with conscientiousness and devotion”*.

So perhaps small tasks will make a difference, but ultimate victory is in Christ - always!



**A Prayer:** Loving God, forgive us for being so easily discouraged. Help us to realise that our purpose as the Church – your people – is to reflect your love and to lead others to you. Keep us obedient, keep us loving, keep us faithful, even in difficult times, through Christ our Lord, **Amen**.

*Barrie Tabraham*

## Merrow

By the time you read this, it will be approaching September and the start of a new 'Methodist' year. For some, it may seem as if nothing has changed, and life proceeds as normal. For others, it may involve a change of role, jobs, school, homes etc and all the upheaval that can result from it. At Merrow, we have recently said a very big 'Thank You' to our long serving (possibly suffering) Senior Steward, Hugh Bradley, who has stepped down after nearly 10 years' service. Hence, I now have a new role as Senior Steward and am now spending a sunny afternoon in June writing this article!

On Sunday 26 June, we celebrated our 67<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary. Rev Darlene McCarley led the service and was welcomed back to Merrow. She encouraged us 'not to look back' and to hanker for the past but 'pick up the mantle' and to use the gifts that God has given us. It was a very encouraging sermon. Throughout the service, two teenagers from the George Abbot School played various classical pieces on the violin and saxophone. Afterwards, a buffet lunch was held in the Hall where in good Methodist tradition – everyone had too much to eat! There was a lovely 'buzz' around the hall as people simply socialised. Something that has been missed for so long.

With the relaxation of the rules, Coffee Mornings have slowly restarted. These have always been very popular events at Merrow and have raised considerable funds for different charities. At a recent event, we welcomed two locals who had seen our banner and decided to come in. They had never been in the Church building before despite living locally for several years. Hopefully, the coffee mornings will become regular monthly events again from September.

It has also now been possible for the Church to host Councillor Surgeries for the local Community which enables the residents to be able to easily speak to their local councillors and PCSO (Police Community Support Officers) if they have any issues.

A new Matrix Youth club has now been running once a month on a Monday for pupils from years 7 and 8 since April. After a slow start, increasing numbers of young people do seem to be attending and enjoying the activities. (I did observe a 'silent' disco which seemed to involve each young person walking around with their own headphones and dancing accordingly. I must admit it was a new one to me but I'm of a different generation clearly!) It was great to see (and hear) the fun going on and I hope it will continue in September.

Our Harvest Festival service will be on 18 September, and it will be led by our minister George. It does seem strange planning for Harvest when it is nice, warm, and sunny outside – but we do so need to be organised. Organisation will need to become my catch phrase.

*Julie Wallis*



*George and John about to cut the anniversary cake*

# St Michael's, Sheerwater

We are thrilled that the Council Executive of Woking Borough Council have approved a grant of £1.85m to create the St Michael's Community Hub. It was particularly encouraging that all three political parties spoke in favour. Below is part of the press release from the Council website:

## ***St Michael's to become new community hub for Sheerwater***

*As part of Woking Borough Council's ongoing regeneration of Sheerwater, St Michael's church is set to be transformed into a brand new, multi-use community hub.*

*The £1.85m investment, approved by the council's Executive Committee on Thursday night (16 June), will fund the refurbishment and extension of the existing church building on Dartmouth Avenue, and provide a new home for the Maybury and Sheerwater Community Trust (MASCOT).*

*The plans being discussed between St Michael's and the council's development company, Thamesway, include the provision of a hall for hire, a one-to-one meeting space, a training room, and a café area. The new facilities will be accessible and made available to the public through a community-use agreement between the council and the freeholder, St Michael's, who will manage the hub.*

*Exterior improvements include the development of a community garden, designed and match-funded by RHS Wisley, creating a high quality retreat for the purposes of wellbeing, and adding to the biodiversity of the area.*

## **Tots Praise**

With the support of our friends from The Church of the Good Shepherd in Pyrford, we started a Toddler Group (Tot's Praise) in June, where families are enjoying songs, puppets, stories, play and refreshments. This will continue to be part of our programme of community outreach from September along with our successful Pop up Café.



Polly the Parrot hides each week, Robin found her behind the curtain!

(with permission from Robin's parents to use the picture).

At St Michael's we're very grateful for the prayers and support of the Circuit and all those individuals who have stood with us as Sheerwater is regenerated. Do please continue to pray with us as we prepare to take this through planning and building works begin. We are always happy to hear from local people who want to volunteer, visit or get involved in any way. Just contact Tracey in the office on [office@stmichaelssheerwater.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelssheerwater.org.uk)

*Tracey Francis*



# Walton-on-Thames

## Pilgrimage, Racial Justice, Jubilee Joy, Confirmation and Ordination Celebration

In May several people from Walton Methodist went on the Circuit Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This was an amazing chance to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and find out more about the places and people that Jesus met on his travels.

We also took the opportunity in a local arrangement service in May to explore the theme of Racial Justice which is something we have been planning to do for a long time, and followed on from our recent visit to the Racial Justice Day at Wesley Chapel. It was an exceptionally powerful service, with moving personal testimony from some members all underpinned with beautiful music from Breeze. Glen Penfold sang his own composition anti-war and peace song titled "Angel's Song". His song is well worth searching for and watching on YouTube.



June was exceptionally busy at Walton. On Saturday 4 June from 2 - 4pm we opened our church to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. During a time when the world seems so full of darkness: war and suffering and uncertainty, the jubilee perhaps offered to many a beacon of light, an opportunity to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship.

The Methodist Church encouraged us 'to open our hearts and open our doors and take the good news out and about'. We invited not only our church congregation but people from other churches and our local community, giving us a chance to put our motto 'All are Welcome' into practice.

We gathered inside in the Narthex where tea and cakes were in plentiful supply and outside under the shelter of a gazebo which, despite the high winds held firm! Cakes were decorated on a royal theme and our centre piece was a wonderful, iced fruitcake featuring a picture of Her Majesty. We asked for donations for the tea and cakes, raising £250 for The British Red Cross. According to their website, The Queen has been a patron of this charity for nearly seven decades and has been 'a source of support and comfort to people during some of the toughest times in their lives'.

It seems fitting that the jubilee flags and red, white and blue balloons fluttered and bounced at the front of the church where, in the window were posters of the Methodist Church's prayer for peace in Ukraine.

It is always a joy to welcome new members into our church family and on Sunday 5 June we were delighted to have the confirmation and reception into membership of two of our young people following weeks of preparation on Saturdays, in a course led by Sydney Samuel. Their commitment is to be commended and celebrated, and we hope to receive two more of our young people into membership in a second confirmation service in September. Our young people now meet regularly in a youth group on the second Saturday of the month and have started fund raising for their trip to 3Generate in October.

continued .....



Sydney Samuel after ordination. Also pictured with Ian Couchman who was also ordained from this District.

On Sunday 26 June a few of us made the pilgrimage up to the beautiful St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury for the ordination service of Rev Sydney Samuel together with eight others. It was a joy filled uplifting service with excellent singing in the very best Methodist tradition. It was good to share this service with Sydney Samuel and his family and chat with Rev Dr David Hinchliffe, South East District Chair and former minister at Walton, and others after the service.



*Ross Richardson*



## St Mary's Guildford

*is open during*

## Heritage Weekend

*9 – 11 September*

Friday & Saturday  
10.00 – 16.00

Sunday  
12.00 – 16.00

*Refreshments available  
each day*

Join us for this year's series of  
**Advent Reflections**  
followed by a bread & soup lunch

**Thursdays**

1, 8 & 15 December  
12.15 for 12.30

St. Mary's  
Quarry St  
Guildford  
GU1 3UP

## West Horsley



We are eagerly anticipating the wedding of Janet Gardham and Graham England in our chapel on 8 July. George Quarm is officiating with Claire Hargreaves assisting. By the time you read this it will all be a memory, but it is a huge milestone for us as it is a very long time since two of our church members were married in the chapel.

We wish Janet and Graham every happiness.

Our Songs of Praise evening in June was an uplifting occasion and was well supported by friends from around the circuit and from local churches in our neighbourhood. We anticipate holding a 'Carol Praise' evening early in December, so keep an eye out for information nearer the time.

Each year we have a charity which the church supports. We have just finished raising money for the Prisoners' Educational Trust and in discussing what should be next, George mentioned that two of his home churches in Ghana need a computer for use by the young people in their schools. This idea appealed to us and we have agreed to support it and are very grateful to the people who 'kick-started' this project with donations at our Songs of Praise evening.

Bob and Heather Spackman came back from the recent Circuit Pilgrimage to the Holy Land full of enthusiasm and appreciation. We are looking forward to hearing all about it when they give an illustrated talk to our church house group.

*Margaret Faulkner*

## 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 many churches Weybridge held a family celebration for the Queens 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. It was delayed until 12 June to avoid a clash with Sydney Samuel's testimony service on 5 June – a good decision because the weather was much better on 12 June.



The church family, across all ages, enjoyed a Jubilee themed barbecue out on the lawn. We were invited to dress up and if you look carefully you will see that Mary is wearing her crown!

Plenty of good food, jolly conversation, nostalgic music and sunshine!

Our thanks to the team who organised the event; a great time was had by all.



Weybridge continues to attract visitors to our services, some of whom have become regulars. We have welcomed another three regular attendees to our Sunday worship. God is Good!



Linda continues to volunteer with the Woking food bank; weekly at the depot and monthly at the Byfleet Church. During May & June the food bank have been running a weekly session specifically for Ukrainian Refugees, most of whom are desperate to give something back to this country which has provided refuge to them. These sessions have been very busy, testing and occasionally amusing.

Church members continue to support the Weybridge Old Folks club and two of the congregation are also members of the club. A very busy programme is planned for the autumn.

*Linda Weedon*

# Trinity, Woking

This last quarter church life has barely been affected by Covid. We've had a couple of last minute changes brought about by illness, but these seem to be taken in our stride. Has Covid taught us to be more adaptable? Worship also feels different – we seem to have kept a number of lockdown induced changes (e.g. using a single entrance; streaming services; coffee in church instead of out the back), and maybe we appreciate one another a bit more now! There is certainly a bit more of a buzz around morning worship.

The same can be said for the other worship streams based out of Trinity. Foundry Worship (fortnightly Sundays at 6pm) provides an informal café style blend with contemporary music and an opportunity to share and reflect together on matters of faith. There are encouraging signs that more people are finding this worship style works for them. There is also great promise on Friday evenings. Our children's club has been changed slightly to be more like Messy Church – complete with a meal. This is a formula that seems to appeal to families, and numbers are growing. Then there is the Chinese Congregation – caring for so many people arriving from Hong Kong and growing numerically and spiritually in the process. So a total of four worship streams – what a lot we have to thank God for.

So with four worship streams based at Trinity, all looks rosy? Perhaps not. Three of the worship streams are in reality very new in the form they are in. There is still a long journey before we can start to consider new people as members, and if so, members of what? And then there are our premises – at times bursting at the seams. This results in increased wear and tear, on top of increased heating and other costs. And all this supported from the traditional Trinity membership that is at best static numerically. Our staff team does a great job managing everything, and have had a great part in bringing about our successes, but the reality is that the situation is going to be precarious for a few more years yet. Living on this particular edge is very tiring. And yet as a church we are blessed with more staff than most other churches in the circuit and as a large church should have more volunteers . . . .

Our Foundry Development Missioner frequently tells us that the world has changed with respect to volunteering. Committed volunteering, where people take on responsible roles requiring regular time commitment, has been replaced by casual volunteering, where people are more than willing to volunteer but will not commit to a regular time slot and do not want responsibility. The reasons for this are many, but one is that the more responsible jobs now come with requirements to be trained and to acquire sometimes quite specialist knowhow. The reality is that increasingly what were once voluntary jobs now better suit paid employees. This has profound effects for churches, for example, how do we afford to fund an increased staff team when some churches can barely keep the rain out?

At time of writing, Trinity are putting together the finishing touches on a strategy (vision?) of how we can move forward in this new world. It won't be easy. Although still very early days, our members have recently received a document entitled Change & Challenge to inform and prepare them. Our Leadership Team wrestles with what we can achieve as an individual church, and what we think needs to be done at a circuit level. We worry about how we can navigate the rules of Methodism! We are concerned for people who fear change, for people who can't grasp our vision, people who fear the worst. No-one ever said change was easy, but we have reached the point where we are convinced change is necessary.

Hopefully this article has given you a good feeling for Trinity at present. We rejoice and are genuinely excited at the positive things that are happening. But in a legal sense our very existence remains precarious. Our hope is that in the near future we will be able to share our vision with you, for it is a vision that we believe addresses the challenges faced by most of the churches in the circuit, one that will re-energise us all, one that will enable Methodism to grow. And as a final comment we would note that the vision places as a matter of priority trying to preserve a local presence in communities so that we may together better serve our neighbourhoods and be about God's Kingdom work in the places where we are.

*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 26 of The Wey Forward  
is midnight 26 September 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 27 16 January 2023**

**Issue 28 6 April 2023**

**Issue 29 5 July 2023**

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

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

*Sue Howson*



# Diary Dates

Date	Time	Event	Venue
<b>September 2022</b>			
9 -10 Sept	10am - 4pm	Heritage Weekend event , refreshments available	St Mary's, Guildford
10 Sept	2.30pm - 4.30pm	Cream Tea in aid of ophthalmic project in Gambia	Godalming UC
11 Sept	12 noon - 4pm	Heritage Weekend event , refreshments available	St Mary's, Guildford
17 Sept	10am - 12 noon	Clothes4U Clothing Bank	Knaphill
22 Sept	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
24 Sept	tbc	Harvest Supper and Concert	Byfleet
24 Sept	10am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
26 Sept	Midnight	Copy deadline for The Wey Forward (Edition 26)	
<b>October 2022</b>			
8 Oct	10am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning in aid of Kent, Surry & Sussex Air Ambulance	Knaphill
15 Oct	10am for 10.30am	Circuit Mission Day with Tom Lewis	Godalming UC
15 Oct	10am - 12 noon	Clothes4U Clothing Bank	Knaphill
22 Oct	10am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
26 Oct	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
<b>November 2022 (and beyond)</b>			
19 Nov	10am - 12 noon	Clothes4U Clothing Bank	Knaphill
23 Nov	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St Mary's, Guildford
26 Nov	10am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
1 Dec	12.15pm for 12.30pm	Advent Reflections with bread and soup lunch	St Mary's, Guildford
8 Dec	12.15pm for 12.30pm	Advent Reflections with bread and soup lunch	St Mary's, Guildford
15 Dec	12.15pm for 12.30pm	Advent Reflections with bread and soup lunch	St Mary's, Guildford
Feb 2023	tbc	Cinderella the pantomime	Godalming UC

## And to end..... some really awful fish jokes

What did the shark say after eating a clownfish? That tasted a little bit funny!.

Why do fish swim in schools? Because they can't walk.

What do you call a fish with no eyes? Fsh.

Two fish swam into a concrete wall, one turns to the other and says "Dam!"

There was a massive fight today at the fish restaurant. One fish got battered!

If you can think of a better fish pun, let minnow...

Well, salmon had to say it.

Have you thought of a fish pun yet or do you need some more time to mullet over?

That's enough fish puns for today, I think we should scale back.

