

## WEY VALLEY – WEEKLY CIRCUIT LETTER – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026

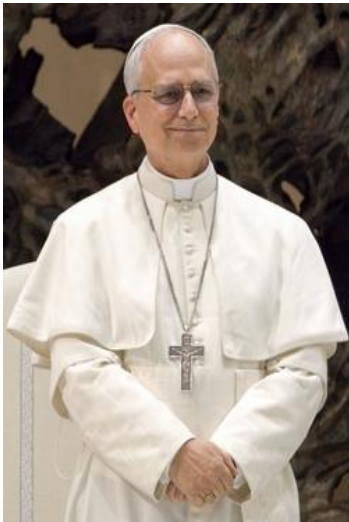
Barrie Tabraham

### “What should WE do?” (Luke 3: 10,12,14)

As a former history teacher and a Methodist minister, I have to say (in sincere humility) that I have had varied feelings about the **Roman Catholic papacy** – and like most of us, my knowledge of the 267 popes is very limited!

I scratch my head when I read, for example, about Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503), one of the most controversial of the Renaissance popes, who was the father of both Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia. Ditto with the ‘Warrior Pope’ – Pope Julius II (1503-1513), who led troops into battle in 16<sup>th</sup> century Italy. Some of you will know that opinions are divided about Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) and Pius XII (1939–1958), both of whom had the extraordinarily difficult task of facing up to the threat of fascism and all the horrors that followed from its proliferation in Europe. Both attracted criticism from the general public.

And again, what can one say about the wonderful Pope John XXIII (1958-1963) who seemed a revolutionary at the time when he convened the Second Vatican Council in 1962? I have to admit that though I studied (all too briefly) part of the amazing Vatican II documents which appeared in 1964, my excuse is that it was a long time ago! What I remember is the fearless, far-reaching pronouncements that sought to ‘modernise’ the Roman Catholic Church itself.



But back to the present! The other day I found myself reading some of the pronouncements made by the present **Pope Leo XIV** on world affairs. It’s interesting that the (Jewish) journalist Jonathan Friedland writes that *‘it’s no longer fanciful to imagine that what an eastern European pontiff, John Paul II, did by confronting the Soviet empire in the 1980s, an American pope may do in the 2020s by daring to speak truth to the would-be emperor in the White House.’* How inspiring is the present pope!

The phrases he uses to condemn violence and tyranny – for example when he clearly refers to people like Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, and other dictators – reminds me very much of **John the Baptist**. Yes! If we compare Pope Leo XIV’s description of these 21<sup>st</sup> century monsters as *‘masters of war’*, whose hands are *‘full of blood’*, and who *‘drag that which is sacred into darkness and filth’*, we are not very far from John the Baptist’s *‘brood of vipers’*, who should *‘flee from the wrath to come’* of 2000 years ago.

Now it’s all very well people like me putting my thoughts on paper, sincere and full of indignation at the present state of the world as they might be. But what should we do? According to Luke’s Gospel, the various people who came to John the Baptist (we are told, bystanders, tax collectors, even soldiers) all asked the same question: **“What then should we do?”** I won’t quote the answers that John gave them, they’re there in Luke 3 vs. 10 – 14, but they are all concerned with the same thing – a radical shift in lifestyle. The Greeks had a lovely word for it – *‘metanoia’* – a complete turnaround.

Of course, you and I as individuals cannot by ourselves, for example, stop Kim Jong-un from making nuclear weapons in North Korea, nor can we prevent the atrocities perpetrated by the current regime in Iran, any more than we can limit the excesses of the present Trump presidency. However, just because we are, like Mother Teresa's 'like a drop in the ocean', doesn't excuse us from being true to ourselves and true to our Saviour, in whose footsteps we tread. The ocean, as Mother Teresa reminded us, is composed of many drops, and you and I in our own humble circumstances, are 'people of the way'. That was the term used to describe the early Christians as they stood up to the might of a cruel and unjust Roman Empire. We have no better example to follow.

So – thank you, Pope Leo, and strength to your arm!



**A Prayer:**

We thank you, our gracious God, for the courage of statesmen and women, and of ordinary people, who stand up for truth and justice, often at great cost to themselves. Help us to live out the truths we read in the Gospels, and always follow in the way of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ – for love of him. Amen.

Every blessing to you all,

*Barrie Tabraham*

---

**Resources/Good News**

**The Digital Transformation Programme**

The Methodist Church recognises that the amount of paperwork, compliance, reporting, training tracking, safeguarding records and governance documentation that sits on the shoulders of local churches has grown steadily, and the tools we have to manage it haven't kept up.

So, tell us about digital and the Methodist Church. What's working, what's frustrating, what worries you, what you hope for.

Whoever you are, whatever your role: minister, steward, administrator, regular worshipper, volunteer helping out, family member of someone in the church - we'd genuinely like to hear from you.

At the end of every month, we publish a short "*Here's what we heard*" post that names the themes that emerged, what we've done already and what we're looking at doing going forward.

[Digital Transformation Programme - Have Your Say - The Methodist Church](#)

**Saturday 16 May 2026 2.00-4.00pm**

Knaphill Methodist Church, The Broadway, Knaphill GU21 2DR

(between Boots & the old Lloyds Bank)

## **Clothes4U**

a clothes bank supporting the local community

To claim your FREE clothes, collect a voucher from 30+ places in Surrey.

Email us to find out where they are: [clothes@knaphillmethodist.co.uk](mailto:clothes@knaphillmethodist.co.uk)

Visitors are very welcome to stay for refreshments (free of charge).

Donations can be left in waterproof bags outside the church on 16 May  
before 1pm

## **STOUGHTON METHODIST CHURCH**

*(On the corner of Stoughton Road and Grange Road)*

### **COFFEE CORNER**

Tuesdays from 10 am – 12 noon



**7<sup>th</sup> April**  
**14<sup>th</sup> April**  
**21<sup>st</sup> April**  
**28<sup>th</sup> April**

**2026**

**5<sup>th</sup> May**  
**12<sup>th</sup> May**  
**19<sup>th</sup> May**  
**26<sup>th</sup> May**



Enjoy Coffee & a Chat, Coffee & a Game, or Coffee & a Book  
The choice is yours!

**Everyone welcome – bring a friend!**

# **LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS!**



## **Local Arrangement Resourcing Event**

For Church Stewards, Worship Leaders  
or anyone in the Congregation that is interested.

Please come along and join Dave Ingoldby, Elizabeth Gurd,  
Graham Warr & Sam Funnell for a session on how to tackle  
these and even ENJOY them!

### **Where?**

Trinity Methodist Church,  
Brewery Road, Woking, GU21 4LH

### **When?**

Sat 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2.30-4.30pm (Refs from 2pm)

### **What do I need to bring?**

Pen and paper (or laptop) plus an open mind and heart!

**We look forward to seeing you then!**



**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2026 2pm**

**Walton Methodist Church Hall  
KT12 2SR**

**A maximum of 6 people per team**

**Refreshments being served at half time.**

**To book a table please email:**

**[waltonmethodistchurchsecretary@virginmedia.com](mailto:waltonmethodistchurchsecretary@virginmedia.com)**

**Donations on the night in aid of Tearfund**

**[tearfund.org/quiz](https://tearfund.org/quiz)**

Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, United Kingdom

+44 (0)20 3906 3906 ✉ [info@tearfund.org](mailto:info@tearfund.org) 📱 @X /Tearfund

Registered office: Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE. Registered in England: 994339. A company limited by guarantee. Registered Charity No. 265464 (England & Wales) Registered Charity No. SC037624 (Scotland)

**tearfund**

# LET'S TALK DEMENTIA

**Day 1 4pm - 6pm**  
**Tuesday 19 May**

Join our chatty tables and connect  
with organisations for  
advice/support

Dementia friendly activities for  
loved ones

Cafe open for everyone

**The Hive**  
**Park Barn Drive,**  
**GU2 8EN**

**Day 2 10am - 4pm**  
**Wednesday 20 May**

Join our chatty tables and connect  
with organisations for  
advice/support

Virtual Dementia  
Experience Bus  
(no booking required)

**Guildford Spectrum**  
**Parkway,**  
**GU1 1UP**

Can't make the event but  
have a question? Fill out  
the form and someone will  
get back to you with an  
answer



# THE BRIGITTE TRUST PRESENTS Planning Your Funeral with Judith Dandy



Join us for a FREE talk with Judith Dandy, funeral director and founder of Dandelion Farewells. During the session, Judith will share her extensive knowledge of the industry and answer any questions you may have around end-of-life planning.

Taking place at Effingham Golf Club in Leatherhead, this session will offer a refreshing approach to death and dying, and provide you with the information needed to ensure that you get the perfect send-off.

**WHEN: Tuesday 12th May, 9:30am (for a 10:00am start) until 12:00pm**

**WHERE: Effingham Golf Club, Guildford Road, Leatherhead KT24 5PZ**

This session is free and open to all. If you are interested in attending, please book through one of the following options;

- Contact Mandy East at [mandy.east@brigitte-trust.org](mailto:mandy.east@brigitte-trust.org)
- Visit our Eventbrite page through the QR code →
- Or visit our website at [www.brigitte-trust.org/our-services/the-brigitte-trust-presents/](http://www.brigitte-trust.org/our-services/the-brigitte-trust-presents/)

