

The Wey Forward

Issue 40 – June to August 2026

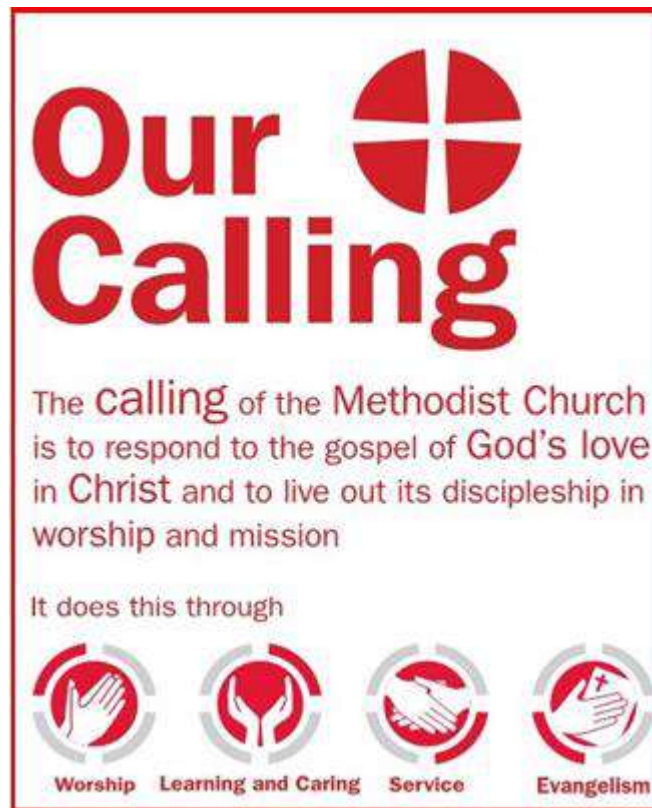


The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit

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 visit our website - www.veyvalleycircuit.org.uk to find a church that meets your spiritual and pastoral needs.

The Circuit Office is open each weekday morning from 9am to 1pm and Lucy Venmore, the Circuit Administrator, can be contacted on circuitoffice@veyvalleycircuit.org.uk or 07808 046451.

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

Lucy Venmore

Editor

A Message From Our Superintendent

'Yes and No'

I always face a bit of a quandary – the dilemma is this. When faced with most things (questions about whether I should get involved with things, opportunities that come my way) my natural default position is to say 'yes'.

'Yes' when asked whether I can take a ministerial training student on placement (hello Sam Halofaki!), 'yes' when asked whether I can do a puppet show at the Cranleigh summer fayre. 'Yes' to attending an event at Guildford Town Hall about interfaith awareness and understanding.

Saying 'yes', I have found, opens lots of doors and opportunities for other things to happen. It also often leads to experiences that are fun and life-giving. Just a few months ago Peter Hills contacted me and asked whether St. Mary's would be up for having a Parade Service to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the Air Training Corps in Guildford. The answer was 'yes' – we can work out the logistics of being joined by 60-70 cadets and their families later.

Saying 'yes' meant spending a delightful 40 minutes this morning with a group of 17 2nd year actors from the Guildford School of Acting who are performing Thornton Wilder's 'Our Town' about small town life on the east coast of America in 1903. Below is a photo of the director and cast (the old guy at the front is me) at St. Mary's. They loved asking lots of questions about the play, its background and what Christianity would have felt like in small town USA at the turn of the last century (all of them were born in this century!).



Superintendent's letter continued....

Saying 'yes' leads to interesting engagement and opportunity, it feels positive and as a minister being in servant mode, it feels like what I should be doing.

However (I did say this was a quandary, didn't I?) – saying 'yes' can also lead to being overburdened, feelings of being pulled in too many directions at the same time. It can lead to 'burn out' and a sense of guilt.

So (and my wife tells me I don't do this nearly enough) – I am trying to learn to say 'no' a little more frequently. But that too leads to problems. In a period when the circuit desperately needs people to say 'yes' to taking on jobs, taking up responsibilities – being a person who is modelling how to say 'no' a little more often doesn't feel very helpful.

So, you see my quandary. Perhaps it's one that you have faced too.

I think the only way to deal with this is by much, much prayer and reflection. God does offer us all kinds of opportunities to be helpful to others, to share burdens, to share love and care – but God also wants us to tend to ourselves. "Love your neighbour as you love yourself" is often quoted. What we forget sometimes is that the second part of that sentence talks about us loving ourselves – for that is the only way that we can show true love to others as well.

So 'yes', or 'no'. Which will it be? May God's spirit in these days help us in our responses to that question.

Rev. Dr. Paul Glass





Circuit Service

**With Revd Conrad Hicks
District Chair,
South East District**



All welcome

Refreshments will be served after the service

Sunday 14 June 2026

3.00pm

**Byfleet Methodist Church
Rectory Lane, Byfleet, KT14 7LL**

Golgotha

A poem I wrote two years ago called Golgotha. I imagined Jesus talking to those who were crucifying him.

The Cross will be my place of beauty.
You relish its ragged, ruthless horror,
revel in its hideous cruelty.

You think to crush me with its awful weight.
No! I won't allow it. I will break
your vicious power with my submission.

I choose to make this Cross my own
by shunning anger, outrage, bitterness,
and offering instead my free forgiveness.

Even you, I will forgive, and promise paradise
to all who glimpse the truth amidst the thorns,
who catch the strains of love among the cries.

I'll wrap my mother and my friend within
a seamless woven robe of love and care.

I look, and I find beauty even here:

beauty in the hacked and splintering wood,
the dead set nails and spiteful thorns,
and my life's blood poured out to feed the earth.

And you will see your bullying brutality
somehow flickering, faltering, failing.

I choose beauty.

Jay Whittaker
St. Michael's Church, Sheerwater

Circuit Mission Supper 2026

It was lovely to gather at Woking for this year's Circuit Mission Supper.

We were joined by Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman and her lovely family. In a wonderfully refreshing evening full of smiles and gentle love, Grace recounted some of their daily experiences as Mission Partners. What unfolded was an extraordinary life that has encompassed Cameroon, Milan, Rome and Uganda. We were all left with a sense that rich stories told for the building of the body of Christ are a precious thing indeed.

After supper we had a collection for The Methodist Church in Uganda and raised £450. Here is a letter of appreciation from Uganda.

Easter greetings and appreciation

Grace and peace to you in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the Methodist Church in Uganda, I wish to express our deepest gratitude for your generous donation of an equivalent to 2, 188,418/= Uganda shillings which is going to help us in our mission to spread scriptural holiness in Uganda.

We are truly overwhelmed by your love and kindness; we pray for God's blessings upon you and your families as together we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour.

Yours in Christ's love and service,

Rev David W. Ntogohnya
Bishop
Methodist Church in Uganda



Rev. Dr Paul Glass with Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman

The First Tuesday of Every Month

CHD LIVING, GODALMING

TEA & TALK

Cafe



The first Tuesday of the month

7th April, 5th May, 2nd June – 11 am – 12:30

Surrey Hills, Surrey Heights and St Catherines Manor Dementia Care Centres'
Tea & Talk Café is a dementia-friendly community space, welcoming people living with dementia along with their friends, family, and carers.

Enjoy tea, coffee, and cake, and be part of a welcoming community that's all about creating happiness daily.

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

01483 413 121

The Chinese Methodist Congregation in Woking

In the last edition of the Wey Forward there was a lovely article about the fact that the Lunar New Year moves into the year of the Golden Horse in 2026-2027. The congregation were able to share in that celebration in a special combined morning service that everyone enjoyed thoroughly (the church was packed!). The service was followed by a magnificent banquet prepared by the Cantonese speaking congregation which was an absolute delight!

Another recent special event for the Chinese Methodist congregation at Woking was the appointment and commissioning of three 'Community Preachers' to serve the work of the church. Three members of the congregation (Sim Hwee Leng, Helen Lo and Tammy Wong) who have a variety of theological experience and training, have been appointed to help serve the increasing needs of the local congregation. The Methodist Church does not currently offer its Local Preachers a training course in Cantonese, and these leaders of worship are very specifically going to lead worship for the Chinese Methodist congregation. A similar path has been taken by the Chinese congregation at King's Cross Methodist Church in London and it was a joy for me to join the congregation at Woking for this special service and preach (translated into Cantonese of course!).

Rev David Foo has written an article on the Recognition Ceremony on page 11.

Rev. Dr. Paul Glass



The Book Room

Tucked inside Hathersage Methodist Church, a quiet revolution is taking place – one made not of noise, but of pages turning.

'The Book Room', a second-hand bookshop inspired by John Wesley's publishing house, has quickly become a beloved stop for locals and visitors wandering through this Peak District village.

Part of the church's wider open-door initiative, the space has welcomed more than 10,000 people in just 8 months. That's around 42 curious wanderers a day stepping inside to explore Methodist history, pause for prayer, let children play, tackle a communal jigsaw or browse the ever-changing shelves of pre-loved books.



Open daily from 9.00am to 5.00pm, the church has become a gentle hub of hospitality.

The Book Room operates on trust: every book costs £1, paid via an honesty box or card reader. More than 3,000 books have already found new homes, with every pound reinvested into the project. Visitors are also encouraged to donate their own books, keeping the shelves fresh and allowing the stories to live on.

Monthly themes guide the displays, ranging from literary anniversaries, such as the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen, to topics reflecting the church's values, including Black History Month and environmental awareness.

Dave Fisher, Lead Volunteer for the Open Church Project, said the idea is rooted in Methodist tradition. "John Wesley established The Book Room because he believed reading supported spiritual growth and helped sustain the early Methodist movement. That principle still resonates and we wanted to revive it in a way that serves the community today".

"The church's central location makes it well-placed to welcome passers-by and with the high number of visitors to Hathersage, we wanted the church to be a place people felt able to step into".

"None of this would be possible without the support of hard-working volunteers and community support. A bookshop only works if people keep it alive, and The Book Room has become a shared effort for the whole community."

Dave added: "Books have a way of opening doors; all we've done is make sure one of them is unlocked."

(With thanks to Samantha Roberts, Communications Officer, Sheffield Methodist District)

Ceremony of Recognition for Community Preachers

We give thanks to God for a joyful and meaningful occasion in the life of our Chinese Congregation Methodist Church.

On 15 March 2026, with the support and presence of our Circuit Superintendent Rev Paul Glass, we held a Ceremony of Recognition for our three members, Helen Lo, Tammy Wong and Sim Hwee Leng.

Helen Lo: Israeli Institute of Biblical Studies, Biblical Hebrew (completed all levels); Biblical Aramaic; The Torah.

Tammy Wong: Graduated from The Alliance Bible Seminary HK.

Sim Hwee Leng: Graduated from The Alliance Bible Seminary HK.

They have been serving faithfully and have been actively involved in leading the Bible Studies and teaching Sunday School. They have demonstrated spiritual maturity and deep commitment to sharing God's word.

While they have not completed the Methodist local preachers' course due to some issues (for example the Chinese Congregation has yet to be accepted by the District) the only way forward is to appoint them as Community Preachers. Their formal theological training, together with their years of consistent and fruitful service, have been well received by the congregation and pastoral team.

The Ceremony of Recognition conducted by Rev Paul Glass and I was a significant moment of affirmation, recognising their calling and ministry. It was also an encouragement to the whole congregation as we witnessed God raising up leaders to serve His church.

We thank our Circuit Superintendent Rev Paul Glass for his guidance and support in making this possible.

Let us continue to uphold our Community Preachers in prayers as they faithfully serve and proclaim the Good News.

To God Be the Glory! Amen.

Rev. David Foo





THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

I wholeheartedly endorse the powerful appeal for peace made by the Holy Father, Pope Leo, during his Palm Sunday Mass. His call for the laying down of arms and the renunciation of violence resonated profoundly with me, as it speaks to the very essence of what all major religions teach.

Indeed, whether we look to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism or any of the world's great spiritual traditions, the message is fundamentally the same: love, compassion, tolerance, and self-discipline. Violence finds no true home in any of these teachings. History has shown us time and again that violence only begets more violence and is never a lasting foundation for peace.

An enduring resolution to conflict, including the ones we see in the Middle East or between Russia and Ukraine, must be rooted in dialogue, diplomacy and mutual respect — approached with the understanding that, at the deepest level, we are all brothers and sisters.

I urge for and pray that the violence and conflicts may soon come to an end.

31 March 2026

Thank you to Nancy Wilks from Godalming for sharing with us this important message of peace and multi-faith understanding from the Dalai Lama.

Mission Trip to Ghana

In January this year I joined a two-week mission to Ghana with a team lead by Rev William Davis from the Blackheath/Crystal Palace Circuit. Joining the mission to Ghana was a fantastic and enjoyable experience for me. I joined the mission not knowing any of the team. I need not have worried about this, everyone on the mission team gelled together extremely well. I much enjoyed being on the mission and fellowshiping with all the 20 strong team. These four photos are a sample of the many photos I took during the trip. Later this year I hope to put together a PowerPoint presentation to show, if asked, to church fellowship groups in the circuit.

The photos show a 'Praise the Lord shop' in an Accra market that we shopped in briefly, and in the second photo, a phrase I saw painted on a church wall in Northern Ghana on the way to visit a remote village with a Methodist Church and Methodist Primary school. The message on the church wall translates fully as 'Jesus is the Answer Church - indeed is the answer'.

Below is a photo of me with gifts given to each member of the mission team at one of the three Methodist churches we



visited. And lastly, a photo of me at Cape Coast Beach with one of the mission team members, the Methodist Minister of Kings Lynn Methodist Church, who I am now great friends with.

The mission team also visited a Methodist Orphanage village outside Accra. I will write more about this visit in an article Rev Paul Glass has asked me to write for the next edition of The Wey Forward.

There is another mission trip to Ghana taking place early next year. If anyone is interested in following this up, there is information in the circuit office.

Mike Widdup



River Poem

The meandering river snakes its way through the wintery land
Slithering silently
Barely a breath or a sound
Just a whisper of life.
Yet the force is submerged
Deadly and dangerous
Benign on the surface, gentle and quiet
Whispering - inviting you to come near
Look at me I'm a beautiful river
Still like glass or a mirror.
A soft voice seductively inviting you in
What could be nicer than a gentle swim?
And yet; and yet;
Below the surface is a sinister power
Rippling, wriggling, writhing,
Snake-like in its search for new ways to flow,
new dangers to show
new people to snare.
Slow and powerful
Lapping at riverbanks
Taking trees in its wake
Smoothing rocks to slippery steps
In you go, swallowed whole.
And the river continues.

Carol Morgan

Walton-on-Thames Methodist Church



Welcome Service

for

Revd Paul Tabraham

Our new Superintendent Minister

Light refreshments will be served before the service



Sunday 6 September 2026

6.00pm

**Knaphill Methodist Church
Broadway, Knaphill, GU21 2DR**

News from around the Circuit

Addlestone



It was time again for a social evening, much needed as our small active team has worked hard recently. With great relief we have now overcome our financial difficulties thanks to our new Preschool nursery having settled in. We thank them for providing a nursery that will meet the needs of children in the area.

Sadly, we said goodbye to Smith and Selvi in April, when business needs required them to return to their Indian homeland. We thank them for their kindness and friendship in addition to the help they provided. May God's blessing be with them, especially for Selvi who is due to give birth to twins in June. Dear Selvi, you will be in our prayers.



Our church family. The photo taken shortly before Smith and Selvi left us, and not long before we will lose Cecilia who is retiring and moving back to her Trinidad homeland. Cecilia's contribution to the church in the 20+ years she has been with us is too much to be able to record here. She will be greatly missed for that, but even more so for her willingness to help and kindness to everyone.

God helped us to find a way when we lost our nursery last year. With His help, a way will be found to overcome our active membership shortages now. Let us pray by asking Him to HELP US to find a way.

Fred Rowe

Byfleet

This past quarter has seen some special activities – the first notable one is the celebration of the opening of our church 89 years ago, with a special anniversary service and lunch.

We were delighted to welcome a former minister, Rev Julie Underwood, to lead our service on 1 March and join us in the lunch that followed. Needless to say, a cake was an essential part of the day, and below is Julie is doing the honours.



That celebration was swiftly followed on Friday 6 March by World Day of Prayer. This year it was Byfleet Methodist Church's turn to host the service. After the church service, tea and cakes were served in our main hall. It was so lovely to see the church full, with lots of chat and laughter in the hall afterwards. So many magnificent cakes were made by members of the other churches who participated in the event. We had many lovely comments, so I have selected a couple. Our thanks must go to Sandra Wadsworth and Maureen Lowe who serve on the committee and put much work into the organisation of the day.

Thank you so much – I am still thinking of the lovely service you organised – you did the women of Nigeria proud!

Thank you for being hosts for this year's WDP. It was a wonderful service and your pretty church looked amazing with all the daffodils. You made us feel very welcome and a big thank you to your church team for organising things so smoothly.

Finally, last Sunday saw us say farewell to Peter and Analena Hall, who are returning to South Africa after seven years in Byfleet. They will be sorely missed as they have been an active part of our church during all that time. We wish them all the very best and know they will be surrounded by their loving family and friends.

Gill Bond

Cranleigh

After receiving our certificate for Eco Church status, Cranleigh Methodist Church continues to reach out to the local community.

Baby Bank continues, and every Tuesday morning the doors are open for people to make use of the wide range of clothing and other items that we have. We continue to help a significant number of families in the area, and this is much appreciated.

Thank you to Peter Allin for working so hard on increasing the number of lets we have in the building, which is developing nicely.

June 6th and 7th is our anniversary weekend which includes a family fun morning on Saturday 6th between 10am and 2pm, with puppet activities, refreshments, a yoga demonstration, stalls and a performance by My Choir from Cranleigh at lunchtime. Picnic lunches will be available and posters with timings will be with you soon. If you're in the area, you would be more than welcome to pop in. Rev Paul Glass will be leading our Chapel Anniversary service which will include communion and reception into membership for a new church member.

All are welcome to join us.

Elmbridge Faith Group

Elmbridge Faith Group had a very good response to the Stations of the Cross in Holy Week and is building on this success with plans for a Pentecost service on Sunday 24 May, led by Rev Paul Glass. Harvest Festival is on 13 October at 5.00pm where we collect donations of all kinds for the local food bank and Day Centre, followed by supper in our restaurant. Our Remembrance Service is on Sunday 8 November at 2.30pm supported by the Godalming Band and Rev Peter Hills will be preaching. Rev Sue Tresman will be leading our Remembrance service at our own flagpole on Wednesday 11 November at 11am to which all staff as well as residents are encouraged to attend. Plans are also in hand for the annual Carol Service on Saturday 19 December at 2.30pm which will be led by Rev Paul Glass, followed by free mince pies and mulled wine. Bible study is soon to start sessions on the Psalms- around 8-12 people attend the twice monthly meetings. Our quarterly coffee mornings are well attended, and our next one is on 6 June.

Hilary Strawson and Jane Briggs



Godalming United Church

GODALMING UNITED CHURCH,
BRIDGE ROAD, GODALMING, GU7 3DU



- Livestream: <https://guc.online.church>
- Service videos on our website: <http://guc.org.uk>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@GodalmingUnitedChurch>

Looking back to Spring...

In February, Julie, Eloise and Esther again teamed up for a weekend away with the Methodist Youth Band at Rugby Methodist Church Centre – joined this time by two young newcomers who also play with Godalming Band. Rehearsals on Friday night and Saturday morning were followed by downtime (exploring the town, mini-golf and bowling) before an evening concert to an appreciative and welcoming audience, then on to leading worship on Sunday morning.

The theme for the weekend (two evening epilogues and the Sunday morning service) was “Salt and Light” focusing on Matthew 5: 13-16. Among the ideas shared by the band were the many purposes of salt – not just for bringing out the flavour of food but also clearing roads and paths in winter – and the need to “shine God’s light” into the community and demonstrate our faith more widely, even if this might sometimes be uncomfortable. The Youth Band’s summer tour will be to Northern Ireland.

Our March Messy Church, themed around Easter, was attended by almost 30 children plus their carers. A great intergenerational time of fellowship.

And looking ahead to Summer...

Sat June 13th Choir Blast - The Burys Godalming 10am – 10pm Our Music Kids singing group will be there again – in the UK’s biggest non-competitive festival for contemporary choirs. Each group has two 20-minute slots on two out of the seven stages around the town’s historic Burys. A fabulous free day out for the 2,500 singers and supporters and a free festival atmosphere with plenty of stalls and refreshments.

Sat 27th and Sun 28th June 2-5pm Busbridge Open Gardens 15+ gardens open in support of two local charities – Skillway and Phyllis Tuckwell. Tickets £5.

26th June to 6th July – annual Whitechapel collection of items for the East End Mission for the homeless www.whitechapel.org.uk. Urgently needed – non-perishable breakfast foods, men’s clothing, toiletries, blankets, small rucksacks. As usual the trailer will be parked in the church car park. Contact Ryan 01483 423261 or Janet 01483 527670 or see church website.

Godalming continued....

Sun July 5th annual Church Anniversary – BBQ lunch on the lawn with strawberries & cream and entertainment.

Fri August 7th Messy Church 10:30am – 12:30pm Bible-based fun for all the family. BYO picnic lunch. “Party Time” theme – a Godalming Staycation event messy.church@guc.org.uk.

Sun Aug 9th No church service - GUC will be supporting the annual Staycation town service at the Burys bandstand.

Sat Sept 12th 2:30-4:30pm Cream Tea on the lawn in support of The Gambia Ophthalmic project.

For more information and other future events, please visit <http://guc.org.uk> – there is lots there, including the monthly magazine!

Nancy Wilks

WHOSE JOB IS IT?

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done, and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody’s job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn’t do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

(taken from Church Editor Ideas Forum)

The Joy of Singing

Join Capel Choral Society for
an inspiring and uplifting
singing workshop with

Amy
Bebbington

Saturday
20 June 2026
10am to 4pm

at Capel Memorial Hall,
Capel, RH5 5LD

The Joy of Singing

Join Capel Choral Society for an inspiring and uplifting singing workshop with

Amy Bebbington

Saturday 20 June 2026

10am to 4pm

at Capel Memorial Hall, Capel, RH5 5LD

Amy will introduce participants to a variety of accessible choral works and offer her unique insights into valuable vocal techniques.

The focus of the day will be on producing healthy, expressive singing, a plethora of choral take-aways to elevate your ensemble singing skills, and LOTS OF FUN!

Some choral singing experience at any level will be helpful but not essential.

To include music by: Britten, Finzi, Bebbington, Quartel and Hepplewhite.

Cost: £25

Tea / coffee provided, along with home made cakes for purchase.

Please bring your own lunch, water in a plastic bottle and a pencil!



Contact: Rosemary Goddard
Email: rosemary.goddard25@gmail.com
Mobile: 07866 399 231



Knaphill

Clothing Bank afternoons have been very busy recently, possibly because folk were looking for some lighter weight clothing with the spell of fine weather. The next one is on Saturday 20 June, 2-4pm, with our regular coffee morning the week after.

On 28 June, we are having our Church Anniversary Service, led by Rev Paul Glass, followed by a faith lunch. It may not be Paul's last service as our minister, but we will be saying a formal farewell and thank you for all he has done. Then in July, Knaphill services will be structured around Philippians, as we follow Bible month.

August may be quieter, with most of our hirers on holiday, but the Clothing Bank and coffee mornings will still take place, on 15th and 22nd respectively. Come along to the coffee morning if you are free – there are always plenty of books, jigsaws and bric-a-brac to browse among, and delicious home-made cakes and fantastic bacon rolls to sample, as well as a chance to relax in good company!

It's not strictly in the Summer, but we are looking forward to the afternoon of Sunday 6 September, when Knaphill is hosting the Circuit Service at 6pm to welcome Rev Paul Tabraham to his new duties. There will be refreshments before the service.

All told, we are expecting a busy few months and we wish everyone a good Summer.

Lynda Shore

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING

AND SALE

TEA
COFFEE
BISCUITS
BACON BUTTIES

**BOOKS, DVDs,
JIGSAWS, CAKES,
BRIC-A-BRAC & MORE**

KNAPHILL METHODIST CHURCH HALL

4th Saturday every month (except December)

10am to Noon



Circuit Service

**To bid a fond farewell to
Revd Uncle George Quarm**



All welcome

Refreshments will be served after the service

Sunday 19 July 2026

3.00pm

**Merrow Methodist Church
Bushy Hill Drive, Merrow, GU1 2SH**

Merrow

Some of you may have been wondering whether Merrow has disappeared from the circuit – don't worry, we haven't.

Although our planned 70th anniversary celebrations finished in December with a 'Quirky Christmas' Event, our 70th anniversary year does not actually end until June this year. As such, Merrow's Anniversary Service on 5 July (don't ask!!!) will be the 'Grand Finale' to our 70th anniversary celebrations. The service will be led by our previous Superintendent, Rev Keith Beckingham – it will be great to see him and his wife Hilary again. The service will be followed by a family lunch.

The Circuit Service on 19 July which will be led by Rev Dr Paul Glass will be the farewell service for our minister 'Uncle George'. This is likely to be a lively service. I hope you will all come and wish George and Ama well as they prepare to move to their new circuit in Essex.

Merrow is also anticipating the arrival of our new Superintendent, Rev Paul Tabraham. It won't be that long before he will be starting – as this year is already going so quickly.

70 years is definitely a long time. The history board in the church showed all that Merrow has done, but we can now look forward to see all that Merrow will do, now and in the future.

Julie Wallis

WANTED!

SINGERS

Would you like to join the small but enthusiastic choir
at Merrow Methodist Church to sing a well-known Introit

on Sunday 19th July at 3pm

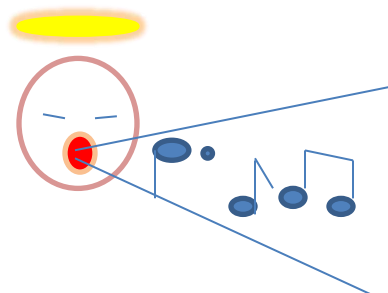
for

George's Farewell Circuit Service?

For further details please contact Gillian Varley

phone/text:07518 518023

Email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com



Walton-on-Thames

Easter Joy

Our Easter Cross of tulips created on Easter Sunday is an image of such beauty and hope. After the service, we displayed it in our church window to convey our Christian message to all passers-by.



Our Mission Statement

We have now had our Mission Statement printed onto small cards, so that everyone who visits the church can have one. Our aim is to keep our mission at the forefront of our minds so that we may put it into practice.

We have divided the main statement into six key areas which we plan to explore, develop and make meaningful in our Local Arrangement Services.



Peace Pole and Solar Panels

We have plans to install a “Peace Pole” here at Walton. A Peace Pole is a symbol dedicated to carry a simple message of universal Hope and Peace (“May Peace Prevail on Earth” in several different languages) and its underpinning philosophy is to represent the highest aspirations of peace and goodwill inherent in the human heart, transcending race, religion and creed.

Since 1955 over 200,000 Peace Poles have been planted in many notable locations around the world. We want to plant a Peace Pole in Walton, to show the world outside our door that alongside our exhortation in our church window to always pray for peace, by installing a Peace Pole – we have a practical symbol of this as well.

At our Church Council back in February, the council agreed to the installation of some solar panels and batteries, largely with the aim of hopefully reducing our utility bills. It also of course makes our church slightly “greener” in keeping with the Methodist Church’s aspirational target of becoming a net zero carbon emissions church by 2030. We did install a more efficient boiler a while back and added masses of insulation in our roof space, which put us well on the way.

The order has been placed for twelve panels and ten Kwh of storage capacity. In addition, a lot of cabling will largely be hidden away in our loft. This means that solar energy can be stored during the day and used at night. It also may mean that we can buy cheap electricity at night and store it. We will have some optimisers to take into account the shadow created by our spire.

Tuesday Afternoon Fellowship

TAF meets on the second Tuesday of the month throughout the year and weekly during Lent. It was good to have members from the Catholic Church and from the URC joining us in the lead up to Easter.

In June and July, we will be studying Esther’s great book in The Old Testament. This is a dramatic story by an unknown author about Israel being saved from extermination by a young Jewish orphan, Esther. It is the only book in the Bible that does not mention God, but it certainly shows God at work to deliver His people. Few of the people mentioned in it are known from historical sources, but they are known names of people from that period of time.

Jews still celebrate this event by the Feast of Purim. This year Purim was celebrated on March 2nd (sunset) to March 3rd, with a holiday and gifts of food.

Thanks to Jeannette Curtis for running TAF and providing this information.

Pet Service

After last year’s successful event, we will be holding our second Pet Service on Sunday 7 June at 3pm. Everyone is welcome to join us for a lovely short act of worship, with or without a pet! Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Val Barker

Microsoft Publisher

Microsoft is retiring Publisher in October 2026. If your church uses it to produce orders of service, newsletters, posters or flyers, you will need something else in place before then.

We have heard this come up in several conversations recently, so we wanted to share what we think are the best alternatives – both of which are free for registered charities.

If you want...	We suggest
A like-for-like replacement for Publisher - orders of service, newsletters, flyers, multi-page layout	Affinity Publisher 2 (free for charities)
Something simpler for social media posts, posters, single-page flyers and quick designs	Canva Pro (free for charities)

Both are made by the same company – Canva bought Affinity last year – and you can use them together. Many churches will want both.

Most churches will benefit from having both Canva for the quick, templated work and Affinity for the longer, more traditional documents.

This guidance is taken from the Methodist Church website [Microsoft Publisher is being retired. Here is what we suggest instead - The Methodist Church](#)

Neil Champion at Stoughton also has some suggestions and would be happy to talk to anybody who would like his advice.

West Horsley



Wow! What a weekend of celebration!

West Horsley celebrated our 150th Anniversary over the weekend of 25/26 April.

On the Saturday, the church was full for a Songs of Praise evening. A variety of hymns were chosen by members and friends, many giving reasons for their choice. We were admirably accompanied by Jean Kallikoti, a regular at these events. Sue Stratford had made a special birthday cake, candles were lit and Happy Birthday sung to the church.

On Sunday, the church was full again for our anniversary service led by Rev Conrad Hicks, Chair of our District. He gave an inspiring and thought-provoking sermon, extemporaneously. Together with rousing hymn singing, it was a service to remember. As well as our usual congregation, it was attended by friends from the local community and people connected to our chapel.

After the service, we moved to the village hall next door for coffee and more birthday cake before sitting down for a buffet lunch. We were nearly 70 in total as we were joined by more friends from the circuit who came after their own morning services. The excellent food was provided by a local catering firm, plenty for all, including second helpings! A very happy atmosphere, with plenty of chatter.

We have invited special preachers to take a service each month, until November. In September we are planning to have an open air service under the village oak tree, which is where services were held before the chapel was built. We're hoping for fine weather so that we can have a picnic.

We have commemorative mugs (£5) and booklets available – just get in touch with one of us if you would like one.

Below is a photo of the chapel, with Graham England and Celia Chapman, and our new banner (unfortunately GDPR means we cannot publish the photo we took on the day.)

Margaret Faulkner



Have Your Say

The Digital Transformation Programme

Have your say on Digital in our Church

We're listening across the whole Methodist Church about how digital things – websites, apps, the way we communicate – are working for people, and what could be better.



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.

We're asking everyone across the Methodist Church to contribute to this programme of work. We're posting on social media, putting links in emails, asking circuits to place inserts into bulletins and sending out postcards to churches.

We're trying as hard as possible to listen to as many people as possible.

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. You don't need a digital background, or any particular knowledge, or to be part of any group.

You don't have to give your name. You don't have to answer every question — say as much or as little as you like. The survey takes about three to five minutes.

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.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/digital-transformation-programme/digital-transformation-programme-updates/have-your-say-on-digital-in-our-church/>

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. 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 41 of The Wey Forward is:

midnight 31 July 2026

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 deadlines listed below. Pop them in your diaries now.

Issue 42 30 October 2026

Issue 43 29 January 2027

Please send your items (and photos) to

weyforward@weyvalleycircuit.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Lucy Venmore

Diary Dates

Date	Time	Event	Venue
June 2026			
6/7 June		Anniversary Weekend (see page 18)	Cranleigh
7 June	3.00pm	Pet Service followed by refreshments	Walton-on-Thames
13 June	10.00am to 10.00pm	Choir Blast - The Burys Godalming (see page 19)	Godalming
14 June	3.00pm	Circuit Service with Rev Conrad Hicks	Byfleet
20 June	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
26 June to 6 July		Annual Whitechapel Collection	Godalming
27 June	10.00am to 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
28 June	10.00am	Church Anniversary and Faith Lunch	Knaphill
July 2026			
5 July	10.30am	Annual Church Anniversary with BBQ lunch	Godalming
5 July	10.30am	70 th Church Anniversary with family lunch	Merrow
18 July	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
19 July	3.00pm	Farewell Service for Rev George Quarm	Merrow
25 July	10.00am to 12noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
August 2026 (and beyond)			
7 August	10:30am to 12:30pm	Messy Church with BYO picnic lunch	Godalming
15 August	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
22 August	10.00am to 12noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
6 September	6.00pm	Welcome Service for Rev Paul Tabraham	Knaphill
12 September	2:30pm to 4:30pm	Cream Tea in aid of Gambia Ophthalmic project	Godalming