

The Wey Forward

Issue 38 – December 2025 to February 2026

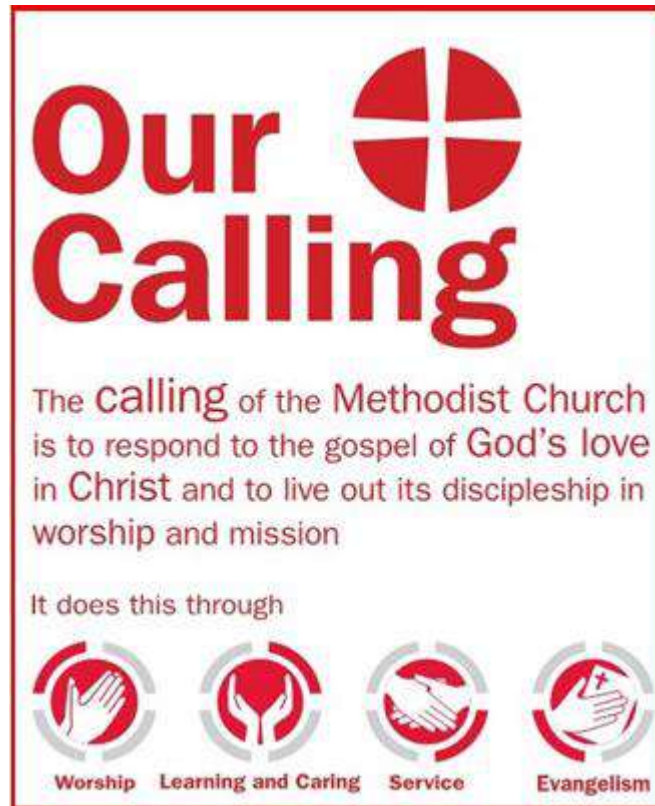


The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit

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

Hi everybody and welcome to this new look Wey Forward magazine. We want this publication to be a gift to you. Useful in terms of providing interesting articles and information that helps you in your Christian journey.

And speaking of 'gifts' there will be a theme to each issue of this magazine, and this quarter we've picked up on the theme of the Advent and Christmas campaign of the Methodist Church – 'You are a gift - made with love.' If you go onto the Methodist Church national website and search 'Advent and Christmas resources' there are LOADS of things available including orders of service, digital files and posters. There's even going to be a Christmas video. DO check it out.

Elsewhere in this edition, there's a look at the gift given to us by our founder John Wesley in terms of the way he looked at the Christian faith, and other articles which we hope will be of interest to all.

I know that you will be getting and giving gifts this Christmas. When I was a child, I used to get really excited about what I might unwrap on Christmas Day (even hankies from my gran!). Nowadays I'm less excited about the physical gifts I might receive (although a member in a previous church did used to enjoy surprising me on Christmas Day in the service with unusual presents – including a Moses action figure one year!). What I am spending some time thinking about this year is that I myself am a gift - made with love. I'm surprised by how much that idea is taking hold of my thinking.

What does it mean for me to be a gift? What does that say about how much I am loved and cherished? What does it also say about how I interact with the people around me? It's quite a lot to think about. What does 'being a gift to the world' mean at this troubled time?

I have a feeling that thinking through the implications of all of this might be the gift that keeps on giving... and will certainly see me through the whole of the Christmas period.

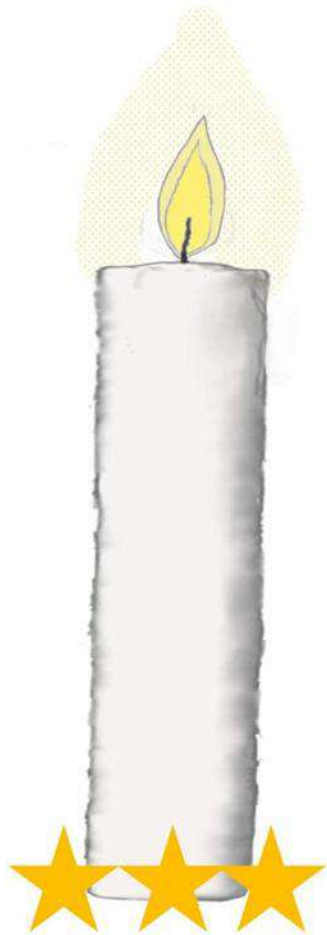
Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season,

Rev'd. Dr. Paul Glass



Sunday 7th December 2025
at 5pm
Merrow Methodist church

From Loss to Light



Take this opportunity to pause and remember
those who are no longer with us.

Action for Children

At Christmas time our thoughts naturally turn to thoughts of giving – especially to those in great need.

Did you know that one of the great gifts that the Methodist Church has given to the life of this country is the charity, Action for Children. 156 years ago, Methodist Minister the Revd. Thomas Bowman Stephenson was in London and he saw children sleeping rough underneath the arches of Waterloo Station.

He challenged the Methodist Church to take action against this injustice and to care for children living on the streets. The charity that the Methodist Church set up was called National Children's Home (later to become Action for Children). The first two children rescued from the streets in 1869 were Fred and George.



Today, Action for Children works with children and families at risk around the country through a range of different projects. It also offers fostering services.

You can be your own gift to that work this Christmas. If you go to actionforchildren.org.uk/about-us and click on the 'support' tab you will find out ways to be an amazing Secret Santa to a child in need this Christmas – you can even send e-Christmas Cards.

We've talked a lot about being a gift this Christmas in this copy of the Wey Forward – this is one way you could do just that.



It only took 57 years!

A Pilgrimage to Iona

I first came across St Columba in 1958 at Cranborne Secondary School (Dorset) through the BBC Radio Schools programme and an RE textbook. The story of Columba's exploits and mission of his monks thrilled me. I knew then that I wanted to go to Iona. For all sorts of reasons, I thought I would never get there. Until a Circuit Pilgrimage to Iona was suggested – I could hardly believe it, and of course, I signed up.

Shortly after that a series of health problems including surgery made me wonder if I would ever get there. However, it was definitely a deeply rooted call; and I came through the mists of pain and uncertainty, believing that God had planned I would go!

What an experience it was to become! Nervously I took my seat at Euston and felt alone as the train pulled out of the station. I soon discovered a dimension of Pilgrimage I hadn't anticipated. For the four-hour journey to Glasgow, a Pastor from a church in Texas, on his way to family wedding, took the seat beside me and we conversed for the whole journey. I discovered Pilgrimage was about meeting people and sharing conversations about our faith. As we separated at Glasgow, we blessed each other.

Soon I was alone again in a hotel for the night. The next morning, I walked to the station. A small group of us met together and we took the busy train to Oban, where we met more of our fellow Pilgrims and shared conversations, as we crossed the water to Craigmure on Mull. A further small group met up with us, and we took the amazing bus journey from there to Fionphort for the ferry to Iona. The scenery was spectacular and the roads very narrow – full marks to our driver!

During that journey we discovered much about ourselves and formed friendships which, for me, became one of the strengths of this Pilgrimage – we were all individuals but very much part of a group of new friends – sharing information and reactions to the beautiful scenery and aura of the past – leading to the future – constantly being aware of God's presence.



The interior of the Chapel in the Bishop's House

This was enhanced by the regular opportunities to share worship with others from across the world in a variety of services at various times from 'Morning – Evening Prayers. Each service exploring our faith with others. Some encouraging new thinking and some familiar. I thoroughly enjoyed the singing and the interpretations of the different styles broadening my faith and leading me to spiritual healing, after the past twelve months. I could understand how Columba found God's calling to his mission had such a spiritual effect and led him to become an evangelist.

Iona continued....



One of the most significant experiences for me was the broken sculpture of the fallen Christ. In recent years I have had some falls and have felt the humiliation of being sprawled on the ground and all that means. Yet, Jesus suffered this for me! It was a deeply spiritual moment.



The other was after our last Evensong in the Abbey when in this small chapel we shared an hour of unaccompanied singing with another group of pilgrims we hadn't met before. It was stunningly powerful! Pilgrims together saying farewell in song and prayer and Godspeed to each other.



Farewell you beautiful Island.

It was well worth the wait – thank you Lord for such an uplifting experience!

I thanked my fellow Pilgrims, for their friendship and fellowship in our time together.

Alone with none but you, my God, I journey on my way. What need I fear, when you are near, O Lord of night and day? More safe I am within your hand than if a host around me stand.

Attributed to St Columba of Iona

Graham Warr, Heritage Steward and member of the Wey Valley Circuit

“THE METHODIST QUADRILATERAL”

(Or how I gave up worrying and learned to love Wesley’s theology)

I was asked to write this article by our Superintendent, and though what follows may be very familiar to many of you, we can all benefit from a little light revision! Have you ever been asked, “**As a Christian, how can you be sure that what you believe is actually true?**” You may well have asked yourself the same question. Our founding father John Wesley can help us here, even though he lived nearly 300 years ago, because he had a method of working out his theology in a very practical way that can still be applied to this day.



Basically, Wesley had four sources of authority which underpinned his whole theology. They were **Scripture, experience, reason, and tradition**. Because there were four ‘pillars’, as it were, they have become known as ‘**The Methodist Quadrilateral**’. They can provide us with a rule of faith which is flexible and which enables us to deal with the basic questions we have about living. And so, for example, we look at the Bible *in the light of reason, tradition and experience*.

Similarly, our Church doctrines and practices are governed *by what we read in Scripture, our consciences, and so on*; and our natural reason and experience are informed and complemented by the other pillars in the same way.

SCRIPTURE:

John Wesley said that he was ‘*homo unius libri*’ (‘a man of one book’), and he believed all that was in the Bible ‘as far as I understand it’. In other words, though Scripture is our ‘rule’, as Wesley would say, the Holy Spirit is our ‘guide’, who enables us to interpret the words using all the powers God has given us – our reason, the wisdom of the Church and our own experience – so that we may relate the Bible to our present-day faith. And so he insisted that we should study the **context** in which a particular passage was written, and the **levels of meaning** within the passage. In this way, the Bible can become a living word to us.

EXPERIENCE:

Wesley tested **all** truth by experience, or religious intuition, as we might say. This didn’t mean that he placed reliance upon feelings or emotions by themselves. He knew that one can convince oneself of almost anything. Rather, ‘experience’ was ‘*that consciousness of personal relationship or of truth which comes to the whole personality, and not to the mind and senses alone*’.

The Old Testament writers called it ‘wisdom – that gift from God which tells us in our deepest being that such and such a thing is right or wrong. Our experience, of course, is always accompanied and informed by our prayer and careful reflection.

REASON:

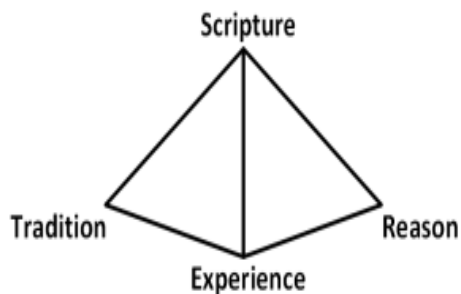
By 'reason', Wesley meant the faculty which God has given to us all for thinking logically. He steered a very careful middle course between the rationalism of the 18th Century (which was an appeal to the unaided use of the mind) and the 'enthusiasm' (fanaticism and an excess of religious zeal) which early Methodist were accused of displaying.

This is why we should never be afraid of lively, honest debate and disagreement – even in church councils!

TRADITION:

John Wesley (and even more so, his brother Charles) was a high churchman and had a deep reverence for the traditions of the Church, its doctrines and teaching. He wasn't blind to its faults, however, and was remarkably flexible for his day. *'The Methodists alone'* he wrote in 1788, *'do not insist on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think . . . I do not know any religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed, since the age of the Apostles'*.

You and I are fortunate in that we have a veritable treasure chest of inspirational material – hymns, songs, poetry, art, devotional books, commentaries and theology – representing the collective wisdom of millions of Christians over the ages.



The late Revd. Dr Donald English suggested we think of a mobile, like those which people hang from the ceiling of their hallways, and which rotate slowly in the moving air. In the centre is Scripture, and around it is Experience, Reason and Tradition, and just as the mobile moves, so Wesley's approach to theology was a *dynamic* thing, which was always developing. Flexibility is the key!

The important thing, which Wesley never neglected, was to link these four pillars together. He was only too aware of the problems that can be created by basing belief and practice on any one by itself. As we know, a reliance upon Scripture to the exclusion of the other elements can lead to a dogmatic and sterile fundamentalism. Letting experience be the only guide to our actions can result in a spiritual outlook which becomes simply a matter of what we happen to feel is right at the time – a pragmatic, whimsical approach which will not do. A faith based solely on reason, by contrast, can end up by being a cold, formal, intellectual system of belief, without the warmth of a genuine experience of the love and presence of God. Too much emphasis upon tradition can lead to a fossilizing of attitudes in the Church.

By allowing these four pillars to complement each other, Wesley was showing a way forward to a lively, balanced approach to faith that would help his contemporaries and provide his heirs with useful tools in their search for truth and meaning.

Revd. Barrie Tabraham

Christmas 2025
Genesis Chorale presents:

***Gloria, by Vivaldi &
In terra pax, by Finzi***

**with carols
& audience participation**

**Musical Director:
Florence Price**

**7.30pm, Saturday 13th December
St John's Church, West Byfleet,
KT14 6EH**

**Tickets: Adults £18 on
website or from choir members,
£20 on the door, £9 students.**



www.genesischorale.org.uk

Registered Charity no 1048381

St John Ambulance

I'm a dummy in this photo. I'm being practised on for first aid on a head cut by members of St John Ambulance. If it was an actual head cut though, there would be lots of blood. Thankfully it was just a practice, but I was able to be more real life than a manikin.



I have recently been appointed a chaplain to the local St John Ambulance in Weybridge. I visit the group every few weeks, meeting and listening to the volunteers. Their commitment arises out of a vocation to serve others by offering first aid and training.

I've had the privilege of being a chaplain to various groups and institutions in my ministry. Sometimes that involves leading special services. At other times, it is simply listening to people and being alongside them. Chaplaincy isn't just about sharing the resources of the Church with others; it's also about learning and being inspired by other people's experiences. We recognise and celebrate God's work in the wider world. I am energised and resourced by involvement in the wider community. Chaplaincy is not a gift offered to others but also a gift received by the Church.

In conversations as a chaplain, I say I'm there on behalf of the Methodist Church and name the local church or churches. I often get the reply, "Oh we know so and so from your church" or "I've been to the church with such and such group". The wider connections we all have are part of our calling as Christians. You never know where they lead.

Revd. Shaun Sanders

What's Happening Around the Circuit

ADDLESTONE	Weekly Coffee Morning	Saturdays 10am to 12pm, different activities each week
BYFLEET	Christmas Fair	Saturday 6 December 10am
	Tuesday Fellowship	9 December 2.15pm Christmas Festivities
CRANLEIGH	Weekly Coffee Morning and Baby Bank	Tuesdays 10am to 12pm term time
	Wednesday Group	Welcomes ladies on alternate Wednesdays
GODALMING	One Sunday evening per month	Snackchat for teenagers
	Alternate Wednesday mornings	Pop up prayer sessions
	Friday Lunches	12.00-1.30pm every week (except August)
	Godaltots (mother and baby group)	Wednesday mornings in term time.
	Hobbies group	2pm to 4pm alternate Fridays
	Music Kids (a singing group for 5 to 12 year olds)	Every Friday
	Lunches at Wetherspoons	Monthly
	Messy Church	5/6 times a year on Saturday afternoons
	Short Bible Study courses led by Revd. Adam Payne	Regularly
	Alice in Wonderland Pantomime	7 and 8 February
GUILDFORD ST. MARY'S	Coffee and Cake	Monthly on a Thursday
	Vigil for Peace	Friday evenings
	Chit Chat	Wednesdays 9.30am for people from other countries living in Guildford who may be finding it difficult to cope with speaking English or being away from their own country.

	Advent Reflections	4 & 11 December 12.15pm
	Carols at Lunchtime	18 December 12.15pm
KNAPHILL	Cameo	Fortnightly Wednesdays
	Coffee Morning	Last Saturday of the month
	Fellowship & Bible Study	Fortnightly Tuesdays
	Clothes Bank	Third Saturday in month
MERROW	Coffee Morning	Thursdays 10.30am to 12pm
	Bible Study Groups	Daytime and Evening
	Women's Fellowship	First Monday of the month
SHEERWATER	COW (Church on a Wednesday)	Friendly Bible Study Group 10am to 11am
	Prayer Walk around Sheerwater	1st Wednesday of the month at 12noon
	Community Lunch	4th Sunday of the month 1pm two course meal with tea/coffee £6.00 Bookings essential for catering purposes
STOUGHTON	Coffee Corner	Tuesdays 10am to 12pm
WALTON-ON-THAMES	Contemplative Meditation Group	Thursdays, 8.30pm at Walton or on Zoom
	Fellowship & Bible Study	Second Tuesday of the month
WEST HORSLEY	Coffee Morning	Thursday 10.30am to 12pm
	Bible Study	Fortnightly Mondays 2pm
TRINITY, WOKING	Coffee and Chat	Wednesdays 10.30am to 12pm
	Messy Fun Church	Friday afternoons in term time
	Prayer Group	Once a month on a Friday
	Foundry Worship	Sunday evenings, fortnightly at 6pm

For further information on any of the events listed, please contact me and I will put you in touch with the relevant person.

Lucy Venmore

Did You Know?

Did you know that the Methodist Church in Great Britain holds one of the most significant collections of modern religious art in Europe?

The collection has been building for a number of years now and is still being added to today. It contains paintings by well-known 20th century artists like Maggi Hambling, Elizabeth Frink, Graham Sutherland and Patrick Heron.

The REALLY exciting thing is that, due to a generous bequest, 24 items from the collection are coming to Guildford to be on display for a month!

From March 9th to April 5th - the exhibition 'From Darkness to Light' will enhance your Lenten journey and deepen your understanding of the cross and beyond.

This is a very exciting opportunity for outreach and for generating rich conversations with the people who come in to see the paintings. So...four things...

- 1) Do plan to come and see the exhibition yourself – it is extraordinary.
- 2) We need help. Could you offer some time to be in the building whilst it is open and engage in conversation with visitors? There's a short training session and we will happily work with you in terms of what you can offer. Please contact the Circuit Office and we will pass your offer on.
- 3) Do plan to come along to one of the programmed events during the exhibition – we have music, reflection, meditations, lectures and Lord Griffiths coming to shine light on how the collection came to be.
- 4) Tell your friends, encourage others to come along. Give us your prayerful support as we attempt to share this wonderful collection with as many people as possible.

THANK YOU!



FROM DARKNESS



... TO LIGHT

Explore stunning works
from renowned artists such as
Graham Sutherland, Elisabeth Frink,
Patrick Heron and Maggi Hambling

at

**St Mary's
Quarry Street
Guildford GU1 3UP**

9 March to 5 April 2026



Mark Cazalet: Fool of God. Lee-Elliott: Crucified Tree-Form – The Agony. Richard Bavin: The Empty Tomb.

From Darkness to Light is an exhibition of works selected from **The Methodist Modern Art Collection.**

The paintings are inspired by scenes from the life and teachings of Christ and this exhibition, during **Lent and Holy Week 2026**, will focus on the events leading up to Good Friday and Easter.

The Methodist Modern Art Collection, one of the world's most important modern religious art collections, has been touring the UK since the 1960s, with new works added over the years.

The collection can be viewed online at
[The Methodist Modern Art Collection](#)
and at [Art UK | Home](#)

A programme of events and opening times will be published early in 2026. Bookings can be made now for private visits by art groups, educational establishments, churches and others.

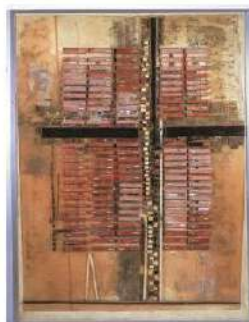
For bookings and enquiries please contact :
MMAC2026@htsmguildford.org.uk

*Images from the Methodist Modern Art Collection, used with permission of TMCP.
www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection*

Works selected for exhibition from The Methodist Modern Art Collection



Dalit Madonna
Jyoti Sahi



The cross over the City
Michael Edmonds



Fool of God
(Christ in the Garden)
Mark Cazalet



Crucifixion Polyptych
Francis Hoyland



Christ Enters Jerusalem
Sadao Watanabe



Untitled - Pentecost
John Brokenshire



Judas Iscariot Betrayed
Our Lord Jesus
John Muafangejo



The Washing of the Feet
Ghislaine Howard



The Elements of
the Holy Communion
Jaques Iselin



Storm over the Lake
Eularia Clarke



Good Friday:
Walking on Water, 2006
Maggi Hambling



The Feeding of
the Five Thousand
John Reilly



The Five Thousand
Eularia Clarke



Crucified Tree Form –
The Agony
Theyre Lee-Elliott



The Raising of Lazarus
John Reilly



The Deposition
Graham Sutherland



Preaching
George Walsh



The Empty Tomb
Richard Bavin



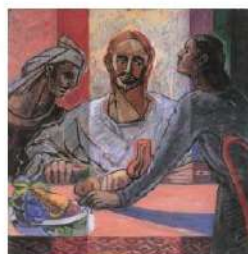
Pietà
Elisabeth Frink



The Supper at Emmaus
Ceri Richards



The Stripping of
our Lord
Philip le Bas



The Supper at Emmaus
Roy de Maistre



The Crucifixion
Francis N Souza



The Ascension
Peter Rogers

* Patrick Heron's *Crucifix and Candles* is also included in the exhibition.
Please see [The Methodist Modern Art Collection](#) for further details.

Reconciliation

In a world seemingly awash with conflicts – between nations, within communities – the Christian prayer is for reconciliation. Time spent at Coventry Cathedral provides a powerful impetus for these prayers.

The last time I visited Coventry Cathedral was as a schoolboy shortly after its consecration in 1962. A recent trip to the Peak District provided a welcome opportunity to re-visit, and for Daphne to visit for the first time. The history of the Cathedral and its predecessor's destruction in 1940 are well known and many readers will be familiar with the buildings and their story.



The striking appearance of the Cathedral cannot fail to evoke a profound reaction. Instead of rebuilding the old cathedral, Basil Spence the architect insisted the ruins should be kept as a symbol of remembrance with the new cathedral built alongside, effectively forming one church.

Whilst overtly modernist, Spence's design lacks the brutalism of many buildings of its era. On the contrary it is welcoming and inclusive, drawing in the visitor by symbols of sacred beauty that stand alongside stark reminders of the horror from which it emerged. Central to this are the potent examples of contemporary art that Spence commissioned – such as the mighty bronze sculpture attached to the east face (Jacob Epstein's *St Michael's Victory over the Devil*) and the tapestry which fills the huge east wall (Graham Sutherland's *Christ in Glory in the Tetramorph*). Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* was composed for and premiered in the new Cathedral to mark its consecration.

Reconciliation lies at the heart of the Cathedral's mission. Following the bombing in 1940, Provost Richard Howard had the words "Father Forgive" inscribed on the wall behind the altar of the ruined building. And in 1958 this Litany of Reconciliation was written and is spoken daily in the Cathedral.

David Lander



The Litany of Reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class.	Father, forgive.
The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own.	Father, forgive.
The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth.	Father, forgive.
Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others.	Father, forgive.
Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee.	Father, forgive.
The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children.	Father, forgive.
The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God.	Father, forgive.

**Be kind to one another, tender hearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

Sustaining Hope Gathering, Saturday 4 October 2025

A district meeting called 'Sustaining Hope' took place at Redhill Methodist Church on 4 October. The group who gathered, started by sharing more about the ways in which we are involved in supporting refugees, displaced people and asylum-seekers.

There was a presentation on Surrey refugees football club, by Martin King, who has connections with Reigate Methodist Church. He and his wife have established a Surrey-based organisation – a not-for-profit organisation providing sports coaching and activities for children and young adults from disadvantaged groups, including those with special educational needs. They work closely with Big Leaf Foundation – a local charity that provides a nurturing programme of activities, projects and events, aimed at combatting social isolation for displaced young people. Together they deliver a football project for refugees in Surrey. They are currently developing activities that can be shared by these two groups of children and young people, who often experience prejudice and exclusion, and may have unidentified or undiagnosed needs, which need specialist support. They have ambitions to create a local football league for marginalised youngsters across Surrey.

Martin sees sport as a key way of sharing values and helping young people integrate. He spoke passionately about the positive impact of sport on physical and mental wellbeing, helping young people develop coping mechanisms to deal with the trauma they may carry. However, this is not widely understood or appreciated, making it difficult to raise enough money to provide appropriate footwear for the youngsters, and to keep paying for sessions at local sports facilities. It was inspirational to listen to Martin, and the question time was wide-ranging and vibrant. He ended with his favourite quote from a young member of the football group:

'When I come to football, my mind is free. I see people like me, and we give each other hope. My coach is smiling at me, and I feel welcome. Everyone encourages each other – do your best, do your best. I remember this for the rest of life too. I will do my best.'

A second presentation was given by Paul Richards, All We Can's Engagement Office for London and the South East. He helped us consider the impact of climate change on migration. Quoting Desmond Tutu: *'We need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find why they are falling in'*. He emphasised that how we do development is as important as *why* or *what* we do. He cited the most recent (statistics: 2/3 of the world already face severe water scarcity; 7.7m. people live in displacement caused by disasters). He highlighted how extreme weather, rising sea levels, desertification and declining agricultural yields exacerbate the 'Push' to migrate and the 'Pull' towards places of greater political stability and financial security and opportunity.

If you are interested in learning more or are passionate about this range of issues the next meeting of this District initiative will be on Saturday 25 April 2026. More details to come!



Save the dates

Friday 9 January 2026, 7.00pm

Circuit prayer session via Zoom

Saturday 14 March 2026

Circuit Mission Supper

Woking Trinity

Full details nearer the date

News from around the Circuit

Addlestone

Resource sharing – A theme worth following

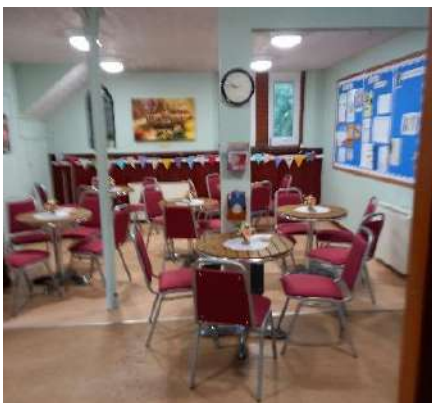
Being one of the Circuit's smaller churches, resource sharing is a theme very important to us. But before we get into that, however small we may be, ensuring we do not neglect having a social side to our church life should not be neglected. With this in mind, we share the photo taken of our September social event at a local restaurant, not quite with a full membership attendance, but close. Fellowship and a good meal enjoyed by all.



Resource sharing

The smaller the membership, the less expertise in aspects of church business.

Just one example, recently we needed help to find a company to deal with our five-year electrical testing process. We knew David Lander was the Circuit Property Officer but didn't realise he was sufficiently local to our area to be able to help us. Fortunately, I decided to contact him anyway and as a result he immediately solved our problem. Thank you, David.



Our coffee lounge, modern and comfortable. Weekly Saturday coffee mornings of tea/coffee and cakes and a different activity every Saturday - Fun Bingo, Singing favourite hymns and songs, popular games or time to sing songs and to pray. Competing with our local coffee shops is still a problem. We need suggestions to find how to change the attitude that you go to a café for a coffee, not a church.

We pray that God will make a way when there seems to be no way.

Fred Rowe

Byfleet

NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEKEND – BYFLEET METHODIST FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

On Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st September, as part of the National Heritage celebrations, Byfleet Methodist Church opened its doors and offered an opportunity for visitors to see how beautiful it is and joined us for refreshments. We combined this with our Harvest Festival, so the floral decorations took on an autumn feel.



The photos were taken by our Minister, Shaun Sanders, who has proved to be quite the photographer, adding to his portfolio!

Saturday 6th December is the date for the Annual Byfleet Christmas Fair. The fair will be held, as always, in Byfleet Village Hall, which is very close to our church. It is open from 10am to 4pm and we shall have our “£1 stall”, where gift-wrapped presents for Men, Women, Boys and Girls will be sold. Refreshments are available all through the day, and the Fair has some wonderful, different and interesting stalls. Please do come and see for yourselves.

Tuesday Fellowship

Tuesday Fellowship meetings take place fortnightly, from 2.15pm to 4pm, with an entertaining programme. On 9 December, there will be Christmas festivities. Tea, coffee and biscuits are served after the event. Everyone is welcome.

Lastly, on a much sadder note, we said goodbye to Lawrie Repath. Laurie and his late wife Pippa were regular and much-involved members of our church community and both are sorely missed. Their son and daughter – David and Sharon - invited members to a celebration of their lives and we thank them for their warm welcome. Of particular note is the fact that in 1998 they spent 3 years in Romania working in an orphanage and a kindergarten.

Gill Bond

Bug Hotels at Cranleigh!

Here at Cranleigh we are working towards our church becoming an Eco Church.

This was introduced during a recent Local Arrangement service when we explored the Creation story and undertook activities and discussions about how we can play our part (however small that might seem) in the current situation regarding Climate change and the differences we can make to improve our God given planet.

The children are particularly inspired and excited about this project and we have already made peanut butter bird feeders, bug hotels and planted butterfly friendly plants in our church back yard. We've also carried out litter picks in the area around the church and have ideas for creating bird houses and nesting boxes. Alongside this we are endeavouring that all our refreshments are from Fairtrade sources and we will continue to do all we can to meet the requirements to earn our Bronze certificate as soon as we can – watch this space! Other church members have become equally involved and have offered their help in any way they can. It is proving to be a project which unites all ages.



Hilary Strawson and Jane Briggs

More News from Cranleigh...

Harvest services held recently in Elmbridge Retirement Village and Cranleigh Methodist Church were very well attended and raised an abundance of goods and cash for the local food bank – including locally grown marrows and squashes.

As we write, we are still planning the service of Remembrance for the afternoon of Sunday 9 November in Elmbridge Retirement Village led by our own faith group team including Revd. Allan Taylor, with the sermon presented by Revd. Martin Booth. This service will be supported by the wonderful music provided by the Godalming Band.

Our next ecumenical service for everyone will be the annual carol service, led by Revd. Paul Glass, on Saturday 20 December at 2.30pm in the village hall in Elmbridge. Everyone welcome, especially as we are serving mulled wine and mince pies afterwards.

Our planning for the services in Elmbridge Retirement Village will continue in 2026 without the services of Revd. Roy Woodhams, the minister at St Nicolas Church in Cranleigh – he has now retired and he will be much missed. We hope to invite other Methodist preachers to Elmbridge in 2026.

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

National Methodist Youth Brass Band – Lincolnshire

In August, Eloise, following a long-held Rowling family tradition, accompanied the band on its annual summer mission/holiday – this year hosted by the Centenary Methodist Church, Boston. The weather was perfect for outdoor concerts at Skegness Tower Gardens, Tattershall Castle and Lincoln Cathedral gardens. More formal evening concerts – enthusiastically attended – took place at Wainfleet Methodist Church and Lincoln Central Methodist Church. There was also plenty of downtime for the Band with some serious Rounders, a visit to the beach at Skegness, and a trip to the Aqua Park at Rutland Water.

Evening fellowship included a quiz night and shared prayer and praise. Each day on tour also included a time of worship and reflection known to the Band as Epilogues. This year's study was the Book of Ruth and entitled - *Irreplaceable – Part of God's Story*. Its themes were courage, commitment, inclusion, obedience, loyalty, blessing and redemption, and the key part played by Ruth in the wider Bible story – shining a light onto the unique and irreplaceable part we each play in God's plan.

Follow the Band on social media - Facebook: The National Methodist Youth Brass Band; Instagram: @nmybb. New musicians (brass or percussion) aged 13-21 very welcome!

Charity Cream Tea – September

The sun shone on our riverside lawn and over £700 was raised for our ongoing Gambia Ophthalmic Project (£15 pays for a cataract operation).

Looking Ahead

Sat 6 Dec 6:00pm Christingle-making party – bring along some edible festive treats.

Sun 7 Dec 10:30am Gift Service with Christingles. An Advent service with the opportunity to bring gifts to our Christmas tree for the less fortunate in our community – toys and gift vouchers please (to be distributed by the Cellar Camino Café). Everyone will go home with a Christingle.

Sat 13 Dec 3:00pm Messy Church – Welcome Christmas Bible-based activities for all the family, story-time and songs, party tea. messy.church@guc.org.uk 01483 414778

Godalming continued....

Sat 13 Dec 7:00pm Godalming Band Christmas Concert. Tickets 01483 355129 or www.godalmingband.org.uk

Sun 14 Dec 10:30am Favourite Carols: a seasonal "Songs of Praise" service.

Sun 21 Dec 6:00pm Candlelit Carol Service.

Wed 24 Dec 4:00pm Christmas Eve Communion.

Thurs 25 Dec 10:00am Christmas Day Family Service. Bring along one of your presents to show.

Sun 28th Dec 10:30am Circuit Service – led by Rev Paul Glass – hosted by GUC.

Sun 4 Jan 10:30am Covenant Service and dedication of Church Officers.

Sun 18 Jan 10:30am Godalming and District Churches Together Annual New Year Service hosted by GUC.

Sat/Sun 7/8 Feb Annual pantomime – four performances of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. For tickets contact beckylkeene@gmail.com or see church website.

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

Nancy Wilks



Christmas Carols mis-heard by children

- We three kings of porridge and tar
- On the first day of Christmas my tulip gave to me
- Noel, Noel, Barney's the king of Israel
- With the jelly toast proclaim
- Sleep in heavenly peas
- O come, froggy faithful
- The cattle are blowing the baby away
- Hark, the hairy angels sing

The Contemplative Oasis

We host a weekly Ignatian style contemplative meditation group each Thursday night at 8.30pm.

Saint Ignatius developed this approach to study scripture to help people grow in intimacy with Jesus by entering into the Gospel stories with all the faculties of the soul—mind, heart, senses, and spirit. It is an embodied, experiential, and relational way of praying. Through this practice, we do not merely study Scripture; we step into it playing ourselves into it as part of it.

We meet in the Church Sanctuary at Walton and on Zoom so those interested can meet in person or from the comfort of their couches...

There is absolutely no requirement to take part in any way as the 30-minute session is styled to simply create an opportunity to step aside from busy lives, quieten our bodies, minds and spirits and spend a little time in silence contemplating the significance (or not 😊) of a piece of scripture.

If you fancy joining us – as it says on our Church coffee mug – “All are Welcome!” so, feel free to email me at r.richardson952@btinternet.com for further details.

Ross Richardson



SAVE THE DATES

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

Thursdays
27 November
4 & 11 December

Carols at Lunchtime
18 December

12.15 for 12.30

St. Mary's Quarry St Guildford GU1 3UY

Knaphill

We had a lovely Harvest Service on 28 September, with beautiful flowers to decorate the church and creative decorations on the windowsills to illustrate harvest. We collected goods and/or monetary donations for The Whitechapel Mission, as is our usual custom, and kept the collection open until the end of October, for anyone who missed the service.

Coffee Mornings on the fourth Saturday of each month have continued to be successful and the Clothing Bank on the third Saturday has been well used, with many lovely Winter items available for visitors. We give ourselves a brief rest from these in December, but the January and February dates are already fixed (see calendar of events on the back cover).

The start of Advent was marked by our Gift Service on 30 November, when we made our usual collection of items suitable as Christmas presents for children and adults. These were sent to the Salvation Army for them to distribute to needy families in Woking. On Sunday 7 December, we have the Christmas Afternoon Tea for the elderly and those who live alone. After a delicious tea, there will be carol singing, both of which are enjoyed by all.

More carol singing will take place in locations around Knaphill, organised by Churches Together. Last year we sang in Sainsbury's for the first time in years and I am delighted that they have agreed to us doing so again. I found it the best of the three occasions because, not only were we warm, but staff and shoppers were clearly enjoying our efforts. Parents stopped with small children to listen and join in for a few minutes and staff members came by to thank us and say how much they were enjoying it. Then we have Carols by Candlelight at 6pm on Sunday 21 December, followed by seasonal refreshments, and a short "Come and Sing" Service at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

After that, January and February look rather quiet, but there are our regular events and plenty of things will arise to keep us busy.

Lynda Shore



Stoughton

In September and October, we had two joyful Sunday afternoon services which were each billed as an "International service". An invitation was given to everyone in the circuit, the local community and to the University. Our thanks go to Revd. Paul Glass, Revd. George Quarm and Revd. Adam Payne who kindly gave of their time to take part in the services and to our Ghanaian friend Effie, for her enthusiasm in taking her idea forward.

Our Harvest Festival service was led by our minister George, and we were reminded of the need to be thankful – a difficult reflection when we see the destruction in our world. Gifts brought to the service were gratefully received by the Salvation Army based in Guildford.

Our fortnightly coffee mornings continue to be supported by a small group of members and friends and we will be making a donation to Cherry Trees at Clandon from our meeting on 9 December.

We look forward to Revd. Allan Taylor leading our carol service at 2.00pm on 21 December and Revd. Peter Hills leading our candlelight communion service at 6.30pm on Christmas Eve.

As we go into Advent with hope and look for the joy in Christmas, we send blessings and good wishes for the New Year.

Linda Macbeth

Weyfarers

The circuit book reading and discussion group, which began way back in 2009, has decided to adopt a new name. Henceforth it will be known as WEYFARERS travelling the Way and the Wey.

In recent months we have lost a number of members through illness, death, house moves etc but we have also gained some new members. We meet fortnightly on Friday afternoons either in members' homes or in one of our churches.

Over the years we have read many books by a rich diversity of authors e.g. Bishop Tom Wright, Oxford Professor Keith Ward, Chair of District Tom Stuckey, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sachs, Archbishop Rowan Williams and many more.

For more information, contact me on 07708 573661 or jat.hoschap@yahoo.co.uk

Do come and join us!

Revd. Allan Taylor

Walton-on-Thames

Harvest 28 September 2025

The celebration of Harvest is always such a special time as we give thanks for God's goodness and bounty. It is also the time when we welcome the Uniformed Organisations to participate in our church service. It is always so lovely to have these young people and their leaders in our congregation and involved in the act of worship.

As we have done in recent years, we supported the work of the Food Bank. Many items were donated: some on display throughout the church, accompanying the beautiful autumnal flowers and plants that had generously been given by members of our congregation; as well as other gifts received during the service.



We recognise and appreciate the valuable work done by all who volunteer to help at our local Food Bank.

Our Harvest Festival celebrations would not be complete without the opportunity to share food and fellowship together. The lunch of soup followed by bring and share desserts was enjoyed by all who were able to come. As always, we are grateful to our wonderful team of preparers, caterers and clearer uppers.

Macmillan Coffee Morning 3 October 2025

Fundraising for Macmillan has become an annual event at Walton. Banners were put up, tables made ready and delicious homemade cakes laid out on a table in the church. We also had wonderful homemade plum jam for sale. We did not have a great number of people, but we had a good two hours of friendly chat, getting to know each other better and were glad to welcome two new visitors to the church.

We thank everyone who came and supported the morning, collecting £150 for Macmillan.



World Pet Sunday, 5 October

4th October is the feast day of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. For the past few years, we have been encouraged to reflect on the well-being of all God's creatures. Pauline spoke at our service on 5 October about Woodgreen Pets Charity which provides safe shelter, specialist care, and a brighter future for thousands of dogs, cats and small pets. After the service, we enjoyed cakes made by Pauline's grandchildren to raise money for Wood Green.

Memorial and Thanksgiving 12 October

We held a special, reflective service on the afternoon on 12 October to remember loved ones who have died. It was a simple half-hour service in which we heard their names read out and lit candles in their memory. We were treated to refreshments afterwards.

Remembrance 9 November

Our annual Remembrance Service this year is slightly shorter, giving the members of the congregation the option to join with sister churches and members of the community at the war memorial in Walton.

New Project Underway

We are always looking at ways of trying to make Walton Methodist Church part of our community and are working on our plans for the area to the right of our church front. We have now purchased the bench to place there in memory of all who have worshipped at Walton, hoping that people walking back from the town might be able to rest a while. We need to make the bench safe and secure and we also intend to put a planter there with herbs in it to create a restful atmosphere. With all that it is happening in our turbulent world, we are also going to put a Peace Pole there as well – to remind everyone that we need to pray for peace.

Val Barker



West Horsley

West Horsley is busy planning special events for next year as this will be the 150th anniversary of our stone-laying. Revd. Conrad Hicks, our district chair, will be preaching at our anniversary service on 26 April. We are inviting our previous ministers to take a service during the months of May to October, and we are delighted that the current Vice-President, Matthew Forsyth, will be leading us in worship on 1 November. We have set up a committee to plan other events during the year, with Revd. Claire Hargreaves in the lead. Look out for more information in the next issue.

Margaret Faulkner

The Weekly Wey Valley Circuit Letter

I hope you continue to enjoy our weekly Circuit Letter, which is circulated every Wednesday by email and posted on the circuit website (www.veyvalleycircuit.org.uk). Our ministers and supernumerary ministers graciously give their time to write these thoughtful letters, and it is always a pleasure to read their reflections and insights.

Each edition also includes posters for local events, helpful resources, good news, and occasional announcements.

If you find that the email sometimes becomes buried in your inbox, may I encourage you to take a few moments to open it and have a look — there is always something of interest to discover.

Lucy Venmore
Circuit Administrator



Weybridge

Weybridge has just celebrated the 125th anniversary of the church building. There was a Methodist society in Weybridge which commenced as a house group in the late 1880's, later moving to a local hall. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1900 and the church opened for worship in 1901, but we have always celebrated the earlier date as the anniversary. Our worship of celebration was led by Revd. Shaun Sanders, after which we gathered in the church hall for a shared lunch which included birthday cakes.



On 8 November we once again joined with Churches Together in Weybridge for a morning of prayer for Remembrance. This was hosted by the Parish church but all churches had a prayer station. On our prayer station we displayed photographs of Ypres decorated for the Remembrance weekend taken by one of our members in a previous year. Revd. Shaun Sanders led some of the prayers and we all remained for a shared lunch. The annual Civic service of Remembrance was held the following day. The usual Christmas events included a collection for the Foodbank, but this won't be delivered until January. People are very generous to the Foodbanks on the run up to Christmas, but donations reduce dramatically in the first few months of the year; so we will save our donations to fill that gap.

In January, Churches Together in Weybridge will be hosting a weeklong series of events for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. These events will take place at different times of the day and in various gathered and remote locations. Our church will start the week with a prayer session via Zoom.

We continue to support the Old Folks Club, which is struggling at present mainly due to major changes to the local authority real estate portfolio. Unfortunately our church premises are just too far from the town to make us a viable option, but we are assisting in every way we can. Revd. Shaun Sanders will be visiting again in the New Year to talk to the group.

Linda Weedon



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 39 of The Wey Forward is:

midnight 30 January 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 40 1 May 2026

Issue 41 31 July 2026

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
December 2025			
4 & 11 December	12.15pm	Advent Reflections (see page 28)	St. Mary's Guildford
6 December	10.00am	Christmas Fair	Byfleet
6 December	6.00pm	Christingle-making party	Godalming
7 December	5.00pm	'From Loss to Light' Service (see page 4)	Merrow
7 December	2.00pm	Christmas Afternoon Tea	Knaphill
9 December	10.00am to 12noon	Coffee Morning in aid of Cherry Trees	Stoughton
13 December	3.00pm	Messy Church - Welcome Christmas	Godalming
13 December	7.00pm	Godalming Band Christmas Concert (see page 27)	Godalming
13 December	7.30pm	Genesis Chorale Concert (see page 10)	St. John's West Byfleet
18 December	12.15pm	Carols at Lunchtime (see page 28)	St. Mary's Guildford
20 December	2.30pm	Ecumenical Carol Service, led by Revd. Paul Glass	Elmbridge Village Hall
21 December	2.00pm	Carol Service	Stoughton
21 December	6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight	Knaphill
21 December	6.30pm	Carol Service	Walton-on-Thames
24 December	3.00pm	Christingle Service	Walton-on-Thames
24 December	4.00pm	Family Carol Service	Knaphill
24 December	4.30pm	Nativity Service	West Horsley
24 December	6.30pm	Candlelight Holy Communion Service	Stoughton
24 December	11.15pm	Holy Communion Service	Trinity, Woking
28 December	10.30am	Circuit Service, led by Revd. Paul Glass	Godalming
28 December	10.30am	Morning Worship with Revd. Sam Funnell	On Zoom
January 2026			
9 January	7.00pm	Circuit Prayer Session	On Zoom
17 January	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
18 January	10.30am	Churches Together Annual New Year Service	Godalming United Church
24 January	10.00am to 12noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
February 2026 (and beyond)			
7/8 February	TBC	Alice in Wonderland Pantomime	Godalming
21 February	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
28 February	10am to 12noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
14 March	TBC	Circuit Mission Supper	Trinity, Woking
9 March to 5 April	See pages 14-18	'From Darkness to Light' Exhibition	St. Mary's Guildford