

The Wey Forward

Issue 32 - June to August 2024

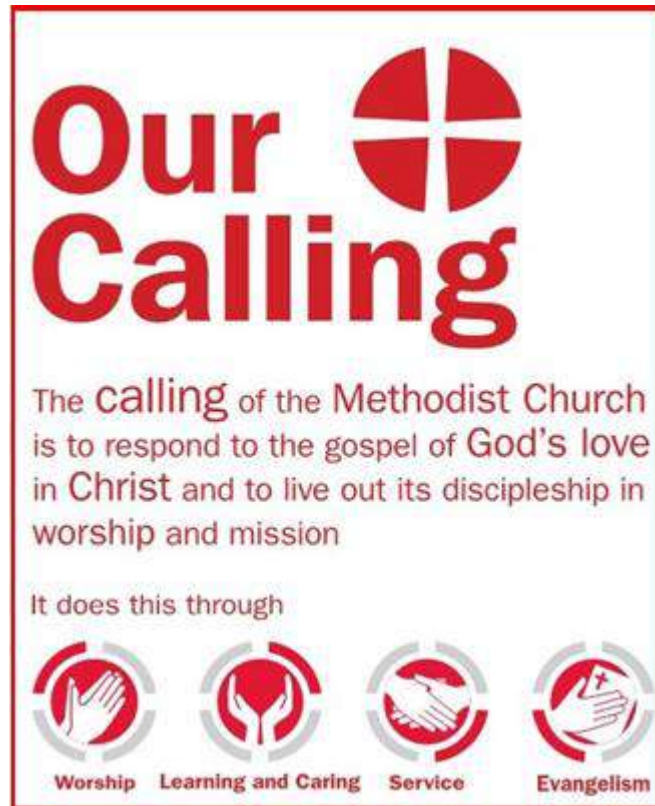


The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit

The Wey Valley Methodist Circuit came into being on 1 September 2016. It was formed by the joining of 13 churches in the Guildford and Woking & Walton-on-Thames circuits. Each church has its own distinctive personality and gifts, and continues to look forward to mutual sharing and support and to responding together to the gospel of God's love in the community and the wider world. (For those not familiar with the term, a "circuit" is an administrative group of Methodist churches in the same geographical area).

Our churches can be found in :

- Addlestone
- Byfleet
- Cranleigh
- Godalming
- Guildford
- Knaphill
- Merrow
- Sheerwater
- Stoughton
- Walton-on-Thames
- West Horsley
- Weybridge
- Woking



If you are a visitor or newcomer to the area, or living here and seeking a church for the first time, please use our website - www.veyvalleycircuit.org.uk to find a church that meets your spiritual and pastoral needs. We have included links to the websites of all of our churches in the Circuit, but you can also contact the Circuit Office for more information. The office is open each weekday morning from 9am to 1pm and 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 Acting Superintendent

Dear Friends,

Here we are and it's the summer edition of Wey Forward already – where have the months gone!?!

As Paul is currently on his sabbatical it falls to me to write a few lines to introduce this edition and encourage you all to enjoy its contents.

Actually, summer time and sabbaticals, make me think about seasons of rest and refreshment, for we need to balance times of activity and 'doing', with times of inactivity and 'being'. It isn't just about resting in the down time, although that is important and necessary too but in these times of rest we find our renewing – of ideas, of perspective, of energies. I wonder how many of the activities and events that this copy of the Wey Forward shows us were born out of people having enough time and space to reflect, to dream dreams, to ponder and wonder, to listen to God's promptings? If we fill all our waking moments with 'doing', then there's surely little space for God to get a word in edgeways.

So, please enjoy what you find here; may it inspire you and encourage you – not only to maybe join in some of the planned activities but also to have some space and time to reflect, to renew, to seek God's leading – as individuals, as communities, as churches and for all of us as a circuit.

May God bless you all this summer!

Rev Sam Funnell

Acting Superintendent Minister



News from around the Circuit

Addlestone

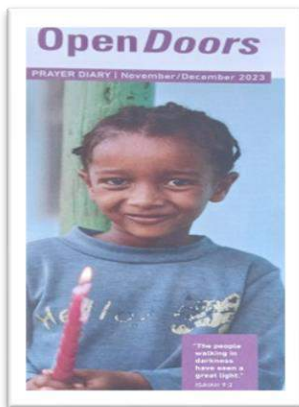
Our now regular church family meals together started way back in October with Fred's 90th birthday. The balloon with 90 on it floating just above Fred's head left no one in doubt. We had an enjoyable evening and our thanks to those who organised it. The photo shows just a few of those present.



More recently, our meal at the Harvester celebrated the birthday of Denise. We all enjoyed our now regular special



version of pass the parcel, not forgetting the lovely birthday cake at the end. Thank you, Denise. Sorry about the photo showing just a few of those present.

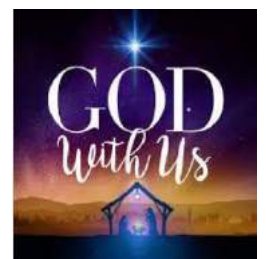


We recently had the good fortune to have a representative of Open Doors charity talk to us about their mission – to help Christians in countries where Christians can face extreme violence, persecution and imprisonment. 360 million people worldwide are affected. Open Doors fieldworkers risk everything to help. They and the people they are helping need our support. We remember they are the neighbours referred to in Mark 12: 30-31.

We are about to celebrate the church's 126th anniversary this year, with the service concluding with a faith lunch. We intend that the 126th year will be the beginning of the revival of our church membership. The world needs a revival in the Christian faith and we intend being a part of it. With God

with us anything is possible, and God is with us. Thanks be to God.

Fred Rowe



Byfleet

Cakes and Drones

First I should mention that our planned local Lent Bible Study on “Experience the Bible in Historical context with Ray Vander Laan”, a video filmed on location in Israel and Italy, went off successfully and we want to thank Peter Hall for drawing our attention to these and other works from the same author.



To go on to my title topics though, we had an excellent and enjoyable Church Anniversary led by Rev Julie Underwood who had been our Minister from 2002 to 2009. We had a simple cake which went down very well with a “cuppa” after the service. Our church society is much older than the 85 years shown on the cake, but we celebrate the opening of our present church sanctuary in 1939.

We were also able to hold a church lunch on the same Sunday which enabled some folks from other local churches to meet Julie and husband Malcolm again.

Our second cake was on 31st March which was someone’s special birthday. He brought some friends and family along with him

and we had the biggest and probably our most enthusiastic congregation of the year as well as a good service.

We had a much smaller congregation on the Sunday the M25 was closed but it was a very good service and a number of us including the preacher, Hugh Bowerman, said it was some time since we had been so early to church. It would be interesting to know if the closing of a motorway had been so cleverly worked into a sermon before! By the time this is printed we will have had a second closure but as it is from a junction before ours it should not affect us but who knows.



A church tower is an excellent feature of a church but when it is roofed, as ours is, it requires scaffolding or a cherry picker to check the tiles and guttering. We were therefore blessed when Vaughan Starkey found a firm that could do a drone survey. We now have a mass of pictures of our roof from various angles which provided us with much information. I have been on our roof many times but never so high so most of the pictures were new to me. However, I found Vaughan’s pictures of the drone more interesting and particularly they also show off our church tower. A few of the photos are featured on the next page.

Ken Mears

Byfleet continued....



Practical Aspects of Spirituality

Join us for

Wesleyan Spirituality

- 'real Christians'
not 'almost Christians'

led by

Allan Taylor

Saturday 22 June

09.30 – 12.00

**St. Mary's Church
Guildford GU1 3UP**

Refreshments from 09.15

If you would like to attend please email gmc.info@hotmail.co.uk



Cranleigh

At the end of March, we had the usual Good Friday service, this time at Elmbridge where more than 50 people worshipped together at a service led by Elmbridge's chaplain Rev Allan Taylor. We also enjoyed a communion service of rejoicing with Rev Claire Hargreaves and a colourful flower bedecked cross on Easter Sunday.

Our regular Wednesday group meet every other week to enjoy fellowship, speakers and coffee! The Baby Bank continues each Tuesday and sometimes on Sunday as well. Time out Together attracts many parents and young children to enjoy a social time where they can get to know each other, the children play and the parents pop into the Baby Bank for much needed replacement clothes or other essential equipment. We find we give out only slightly more than we receive, so our turnover of everything a child needs from birth to 5 years old, plus maternity wear and toys, means we are very busy! We are hoping to have a table at a local sale soon, to sell some of the toys and books to replenish our funds to buy nappies and powdered milk.

The church is planning, for a second year, to have a stall outside the church on the local Lions Carnival Day, Saturday 29 June. We will sell whatever we have donated to us, books, bric-a-brac, toys etc. This and the ploughman's lunches, which were very popular last year, will again hopefully yield much needed funds to boost our own church coffers.

Our rooms have been let, on occasions, to the local U3A and have become increasingly popular so we are hoping the classes they organise will increase the frequency of their lets, for their new term starting in September.

Our church will celebrate its 120th anniversary with a service led by Dave Paterson on 9 June. This will be very low key compared to our 100th, back in 2004, when we had a year of events, printed coffee mugs and an embroidered montage (completed by our own members), picturing all the activities our church generated. Although almost all of them are still in operation, many of them are scaled back to take into account our diminished numbers and our ageing congregation, but all of us are still as active and as passionate about worshipping together and in our own church, so we soldier on as best we can.

Jane Briggs



Godalming United Church

On 17th March, Circuit Superintendent Rev Paul Glass led morning service and presented our dear friend Kath Benny with a certificate to mark 70 years (actually now 72) of Local Preaching (*see page 15*).

Kath grew up within a loving Christian family at Mickleover just outside Derby, getting involved in Sunday School, (developing her public speaking skills at anniversary performances!), church choir, the Wesley Guild, Derby Methodist Mission Hall, holidays at Methodist Guest Houses and so on.

As a student at Royal Holloway College, she joined Egham Methodist Church and, under the influence of Rev Ronald Rawlings, became an active member of their Youth Group, assisting with services throughout the Staines Circuit. She clearly remembers Whit Sunday 1950, during communion at Egham church, feeling the warm touch of heavenly joy flood through her that was her calling from God - to a lifetime of service and worship. The memory of the great joy, peace and security of that evening has stayed with her clearly ever since. So, Kath started training to be a Local Preacher (while continuing her teacher-training and becoming engaged to Alan!), becoming fully accredited in 1952.

And how times have changed. After her first full service she recalls a gentleman taking her aside and quoting St Paul: "Let your women keep silence in the churches!" Fortunately for us, Kath remained true to her calling, juggling preaching with marriage, three children, and teaching – latterly at Godalming College - simultaneously taking her faith out into the community with involvement with Churches Together and the Cellar Café. Thank you, Kath – you have been a blessing to us. Congratulations!

Looking Ahead

- Sunday June 9th – 10:30am Church Anniversary Morning service followed by BBQ, strawberries & cream, and entertainment. Contact frymaile@gmail.com for more info or see church website.
- 28th June to 8th July 2024 – annual collection of items for the Whitechapel 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 for ten days or so – contact Ryan 01483 423261 or Janet 01483 527670 or see church website.
- Saturday July 20th – 3.00pm-5.00pm Messy Church – Bible-based activities for all the family, story-time and songs, party tea. messy.church@guc.org.uk

Online services: <https://guc.online.church>

Service recordings: www.guc.org.uk, <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube>

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



Nancy Wilks

Sidney Herbert Sime and the Sime Gallery

The Sime Gallery, Worplesdon, houses much of the surviving work of Sidney Sime. Sidney Herbert Sime (1865 – 1941) left an amazing body of work but is probably one of the least well-known British artists of the late 19th/early 20th centuries.

In its small, low-key way, the Sime Gallery is seeking to address this by organising exhibitions of his work both locally (The Lightbox, Woking 2017) and further afield (Chris Beetles Gallery, London earlier this year). The gallery itself restores and conserves work by Sime, displaying nearly 90 pictures (with another 500 held in the collection) and is open to the public free of charge, 2pm – 4pm, on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Often compared to William Blake (1757 – 1827) and his contemporaries Aubrey Beardsley (1872 – 1898), Arthur Rackham (1867 – 1939) and the Danish artist Kay Neilson (1886 – 1957) Sime's work ranged from large oil paintings to incredibly detailed black and white illustrations for books and magazines (like *Tatler*, *Punch* and *The Idler*), set designs for London West End theatres and caricatures of Worplesdon locals.

Always interested in fantasy landscapes, Sime became, after being invalided out of World War I, increasingly obsessed with depictions from the Book of Revelation, the Vision of St John the Divine and the Apocrypha.

His reclusive nature probably has much to do with his lack of recognition today. After his death his reputation languished, and his work was consigned to obscurity.

The phrase “a hidden gem” is often overused, but the Sime Gallery really is a place of undiscovered treasures. The gallery is a charitable organisation run by a team of volunteers, and their knowledge and enthusiasm ensure any visitor comes away knowing a lot more about this much forgotten local artist and his work. There is also the opportunity to purchase tea, coffee and cake after your visit. There is a heritage trail which features various local landmarks which have close links to Sidney Sime and his work.

Much more information and images of Sime's work can be found on the gallery's very comprehensive website – www.sidneysimegallery.org.uk where books, framed artwork and greetings cards are available to purchase from the online shop. If you can't visit in person do take some time to visit the website – you'll be amazed.

Sue Howson



Guildford St Mary's

Times of change

This Spring is a time of change and development at St Mary's, taking forward ministry and outreach. We're missing Paul Glass during his sabbatical but look forward to his return refreshed and renewed in July.

Our new Rector, Canon Simon Butler, is settling in well. Inevitably, after his predecessor's 27-year tenure, a fresh pair of eyes spots areas for change and improvement and we're very grateful that Simon values and supports the outreach work and opportunities which St Mary's undertakes. It's also pleasing that, as a hymn enthusiast, he enjoys making use of Singing the Faith, bringing him a range of hymns he hasn't used before.

Our relationship with the **Orthodox** congregation who worship in St Mary's fortnightly continues to grow in warmth and we can learn from each other. It was a privilege recently to host the first Orthodox funeral held at St Mary's. Very sadly, a Ukrainian refugee in her 50s died after a very short illness so her daughter, with the support of friends and neighbours, had to arrange her funeral not many months after coming to the UK. It was wonderful to see people rally round to support her. We learned of two Ukrainian traditions - one that people bring flowers to the funeral to be placed in the coffin and another that no one can leave feeling hungry. Tulips were a favourite flower of the deceased and many, many tulips didn't make it into the coffin and were left with us after the service. The tables were groaning with the weight of food. The service itself was very moving with the rite conducted entirely by the priest and a singer, so rather a passive experience for those from our tradition.

One thing which hasn't changed, unfortunately, is the world situation prompting our weekly **Vigil for Peace** – indeed, with Israel/ Palestine and Sudan having been added to the focus – its scope has sadly grown. We therefore continue to open each Friday from 9-11pm. By the end of April, we'd provided over 100 evening Vigils with total attendance exceeding 8,000 people. Our team of helpers (sincere thanks to them all) continue to give up most of their Friday evenings – whilst one might sometimes feel a little unenthusiastic about heading to church on a Friday evening, yet again, we all feel by the end of the evening that God has blessed us with more valuable encounters during our time there.

Most of our visitors continue to be surprised at finding themselves in a church during their Friday night out but, on entering, many exhibit a sense of wonderment at the atmosphere in the church and all leave expressing gratitude. Recent highlights have been youngsters coming back after earlier visits, with one young woman bringing other friends in for the first time and explaining to her friends that this is 'her church', just as a result of coming in for Vigils. Another visitor proved to be a teacher from another town who asked for a set of the PowerPoint slides we use as a prompt for prayers – so she could use it in lessons dealing with the world's conflict situations and in the school assembly.

We also value the overlap with **Street Angels** as they prepare to go out on their Friday night duties. We feel we're handing over the Christian 'baton' to them as they set out on their patrol at 11pm. They appreciate the atmosphere they find in the church when they arrive to prepare for their duties and the bonds between us are strengthening.

Guildford St. Mary's continued.....

In May we made history with the first Methodist-conducted **wedding** in the 1,000 year history of St. Mary's – quite a milestone to celebrate. The only downside was that Banns were not required - a task for Anglican Weddings which our Methodist preachers have always been quite excited to perform!

Practical Aspects of Spirituality comes under the umbrella of our Common Ground community and in recent years it's looked at a range of spiritual disciplines. On Saturday 22 June we home in on the Wesleys' ideas of spirituality. We're thrilled that the session will be led by Rev Allan Taylor, with the title 'real Christians' not 'almost Christians'. I'm confident that attending from 9.30am to 12 noon will be well worth your time.

On Paul's return in July, we'll be embarking on **Bible Month** – linked preaching and group discussions focussed on a particular book of the Bible. After the success of looking at Revelation last year, we expect to switch to the beginning of the Bible this year.

Busy and exciting times ahead!

Nigel Campion-Smith



**COFFEE
AND CAKE
AT ST. MARY'S
QUARRY ST. GUILDFORD GU1 3UP**

**MAY – AUGUST
2024**

10.30 – 12.00

Everyone welcome

**Thursday 23 May

**Thursday 27 June

**Thursday 25 July

Thursday 22 August

- each month features a different charity

Knaphill

We had lovely Easter services at Knaphill. We started with a simple meal and communion service on Maundy Thursday evening. Then on Good Friday, the ecumenical Walk of Witness through the village was well attended despite the rain. It was followed by a service at KMC led by Rev Paul Glass, but with contributions from members of other churches. Afterwards, there was a chance to chat over a warming cup of coffee or tea and a hot cross bun. We also raised £200 in a retiring collection for Christian Aid to use for humanitarian relief in the Middle East conflict. Finally, on Easter Sunday, Paul led a communion service for us, before starting his sabbatical on 1st April.

The Clothing Bank continues to be well used and we have received some very nice clothing in donations. Although it isn't officially designated as a warm space, visitors can stay and enjoy the refreshments and company for as long as they wish whilst we are open. This is also true of our monthly coffee mornings, which raise a significant amount for church funds. Many of our regular visitors are happy to sit and chat for some time. On Saturday 25th May at KMC we enjoyed our special Coffee Morning and Plant Sale.

We also marked Christian Aid Week, where on 11th May we gathered for a street collection outside Waitrose in Goldsworth Park, Woking. We were joined by helpers from the other Knaphill churches, where we prayed for success with the house-to-house collections.

On 23rd June, we are celebrating the Church Anniversary. Rev Nick Oborski is returning to preach and we are having a faith lunch afterwards, for people to enjoy fellowship. In July, we begin a preaching series on Genesis to mark Bible Month. The start of this coincides with Paul's return from sabbatical – much refreshed, we trust.

Lynda Shore

Coffee Mornings at Knaphill, 10.00 to 12 noon

- ❖ 22nd June
- ❖ 27th July
- ❖ 24th August

Clothes Bank at Knaphill, 2.00 to 4.00pm

- ❖ 15th June
- ❖ 20th July
- ❖ 17th August



Circuit Mission Supper

Really good numbers attended this year's circuit supper and we heard a challenging and moving assessment of the situation in Israel and Gaza by Deacon Angleena Keizer, who until recently was the member of staff in the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem. The evening started with a lovely fish and chip supper and then we heard of Angleena's experience as she told stories of the people and events that had shaped her time in Jerusalem. Thanks to the circuit mission group who organised such an interesting and important event.

Rev Paul Glass



Merrow

I am always amazed nowadays at how quickly the year goes – Merrow has already been planning our Harvest service!

Our sectional service was held on 26th May. It was lovely to share fellowship with our friends from Stoughton and West Horsley and hope that these services will become a regular occurrence.

On 21st July, Merrow will be celebrating its 68th anniversary. We have invited Rev Nick and Linda Holt back again to lead our Church Anniversary service – with the hope that this time they will make it to the church on time! Unfortunately, last year, they got stuck on the A3 due to an accident and only made it to Merrow in time for the lunch! As they now live in London, we are also praying very hard, that the National Highways does not decide to close the M25 that weekend!

The Annual Holiday at Home Afternoon Tea will take place on Tuesday 13th August. This is a popular event and places need to be booked. More details will be available nearer the time.

Merrow has been giving thanks for the lives of several members from Merrow over the past couple of months. John Allman, Marjorie Rye, Joyce Sturt, Joy Kendall and Rosemary Mills. Each served Merrow in many and different ways and all will be greatly missed.

The photo shows one of the raised beds from the Community Garden now hosted on the front lawn at Merrow. This garden has been aided by a Project Aspire Grant from Guildford Borough Council. Since its creation, it has inspired conversation from people passing by (including church members) and the local school has made use of it. Unfortunately, the peas have taken a buffeting with the rain (what hasn't!) but as you can see – vegetables are growing!

Julie Wallis

Coffee Mornings at Merrow 10.30am - 12.30pm

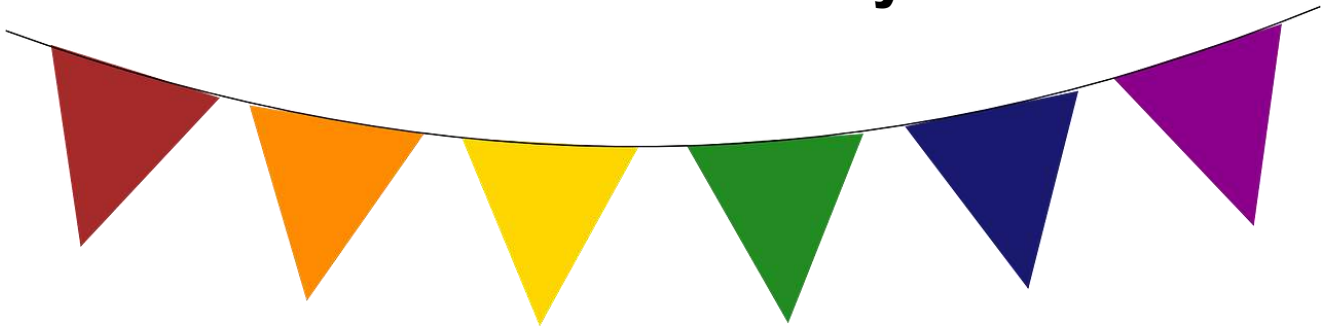
- ❖ Thursday 20th June, Action for Children
- ❖ Thursday 11th July, Merrow Scouts

Bible Study at Merrow 7.30pm

- ❖ Thursday 20th June
- ❖ Thursday 18th July



Kathleen M Benny



It was an absolute delight and privilege to present a certificate to celebrate 70 years of being a Local Preacher to Kath Benny, at Godalming United Church on 17th March. Kath was warm in her response and said to the congregation 'if anyone is thinking about preaching my response is "do it" - it's been a wonderful privilege.'

Rev Paul Glass



St. Michael's, Sheerwater

Where are we at with the building?

We reported in the previous issue of *Wey Forward* that, following the loss of their financial support, Woking Borough Council had encouraged us to pursue a funding application with SCC's "Your Fund Surrey".

I'm pleased to report we heard at the beginning of March that we can proceed to "Full Submission" to Your Fund Surrey. We have started to gather the necessary paperwork and we are exploring other grant applications to support the build. Please keep everyone involved in your prayers.

The Church:

We have welcomed our new Community and Families Worker Gracie Luke. Gracie joined us in April to continue with our outreach work with the families at Pop up Café, Tots Praise and the monthly craft sessions, also supporting with school assemblies and within the wider community together with our community partners.

We are always grateful to everyone who supports us in prayer, time and financial ways as we continue our work within the local community and working with our partners.

Tracey Francis



St Michael's

Feeding faith, growing community



Whitechapel Mission

Godalming United Church, Bridge Road, GU7 3DT will be holding its annual collection in support of the Whitechapel Mission which supports homeless people in London. We are collecting men's clothing, non-perishable breakfast foods and toiletries between 28th June and 8th July 2024. Please see church website to check items which are in need and the times when you can drop off any donations.

www.guc.org.uk

Any queries please contact Ryan Kelley 01483 423261 or Kate Parminter kateparminter@gmail.com

Information meeting

at Byfleet Methodist Church, 2pm on Sunday 14 July

(prior to the Circuit Service at 3pm)

for those interested in joining the

Circuit Pilgrimage to Iona in 2025



Pilgrimage Dates:

Thursday 28 August - Tuesday 2 September 2025

led by Rev Adam Payne

staying at the Argyll Hotel

<https://www.argyllhoteliona.co.uk/>

Please contact Helen Belsham for further details

helenebelsham@icloud.com

Stoughton

During Holy week we welcomed a local Indian congregation when they held a prayer meeting. Our Maundy Thursday communion and Good Friday services were times of reflection followed by a joyful celebration on Easter Sunday morning.

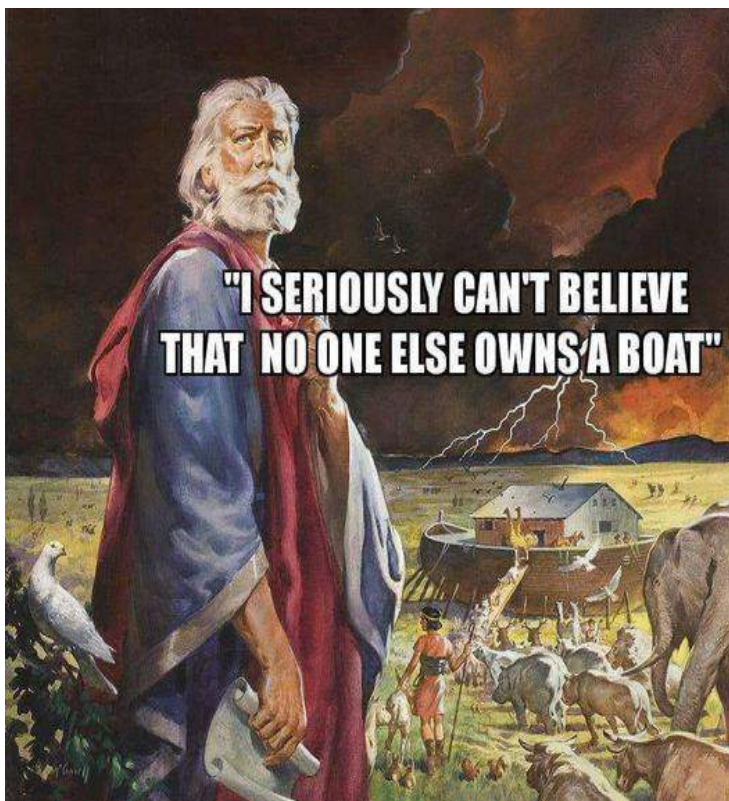
As I write this, we have two events in the same week of very differing emotions. We share the sadness of a funeral for the son of Mary Smith and then a few days later, the joy of a wedding for the eldest son of Philip and Evelyn Beastall.

We still have financial challenges at Stoughton but have been encouraged with a number of enquiries for hiring our premises following advertising on local websites. We hope to secure some additional activities to go along with a new fortnightly invitation to a "Coffee Corner" where you can chat, read, or play a game while enjoying a cup of tea or coffee.

Our Church Anniversary is at the beginning of June when Rev Allan Taylor will lead our service of thanksgiving for 129 years of witness in this area.

Springtime brought again the lovely sight of the daffodils but, much like us all, didn't seem to enjoy the rain and the gale force winds so they didn't "dance" for as long as usual. Hopefully our summer will bring calmer and warmer weather.

Linda Macbeth



The Life of Christ

The greatest story of all time

18 - 22 JUNE 2024

10.00AM - 3.30PM


WINTERSHALL
Experience the story

BOOK NOW!



Our powerful biblical outdoor drama takes you back in time to when Jesus lived on earth.

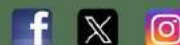
Follow over 100 actors in full costume moving through the beautiful grounds of the Wintershall estate with its lakes and ancient woodland re-enacting the remarkable events of Jesus' life.

This is a performance in three acts with a lunchtime interval.

Wintershall, Bramley, Surrey GU5 0LR
Registered Charity Number 1167111



Book tickets **now** on our website:
www.wintershall.org.uk
or call 01483 892167



Walton-on-Thames

The ripples from the conflict in Israel and Palestine reached Walton in March. Due to concerns from other local churches, we were pleased to step up into the breach and offer our sanctuary to host this year's World Day of Prayer in Walton. The service was beautiful, inspiring and profound as we learned more about the lives and spirituality of Christian Palestinians. The 55 people who turned up for it drew much from it. We kept the service book and have used elements from the prayers in a recent local arrangement service.

At Walton we have a tradition of running Lent groups and this year we picked Selina Stone's new book – *Tarry Awhile*. The book was not only a study for Lent but shared much wisdom gathered from Black Spirituality for any people of faith interested in this. An added dimension was that it gives a unique insight into a black theologians' view of Christianity and her faith. She explains that tarrying is a black Christian spiritual practice which answers 'yes' to the question Jesus once asked his disciples. Whether in the vibrancy of musicians singing, or in hushed silence, people of all ages actively "Tarry" for an encounter with God that will transform what we know, what we feel, and experience day to day.

We ran three lent groups. One afternoon and one evening studying the book, and an additional group which ran the Taketime contemplative meditations for the Lent lectionary readings meeting on a Thursday night, for a time of quiet Ignatian styled reflection. We Zoomed this out as well for those who preferred to stay at home. These groups offered much opportunity for deep reflection, vibrant discussion, and debate pushing at the edges of our experience, comfort zones and faith. Perfect Lenten Soul Food! It was interesting to see how the groups took on the challenges of what this book offered – especially the discussions about Healing, "Quiet", Weeping and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring people to God.

During Holy Week we had a reflective service on Maundy Thursday and for Good Friday it was good to share a service with Weybridge. Our Easter Service was taken by Dave Paterson and was preceded by another robust debate about "why local preachers cannot offer communion..."

Answers on a postcard please?

Although people were disappointed at not having a communion service on Easter Sunday, Dave planned an excellent service and took the congregation through the Easter story in a few different ways using our Easter Garden, a daffodil cross and a makeshift crafted cardboard empty tomb, creatively using these props to illustrate his sermon points.



Our Easter Garden

Walton-on-Thames continued.....



Dave Paterson's "brilliant" craft skills on display with his minimalist sketch in cardboard-box titled "Daffodils in Empty Tomb..."

Dave's Daffodil Cross



We are looking forward to two baptism services in June and a Cultural Heritage service and summer lunch in July.

Ross Richardson

West Horsley

It was very rewarding to have our church filled with fellow Christians from the two Horsley's for the World Day of Prayer at the beginning of March. The service was very poignant as it had been prepared by women from Palestine before the recent events in Gaza.

Good Friday was another opportunity to worship together as we met in the open air. The service was prepared by St Martins church East Horsley and involved members from all the local churches. Fortunately, the rain held off until the last moment!

We celebrated Easter Communion with our own minister Rev George Quarm.

On the weekend of 20th/21st April we celebrated our 148th Chapel Anniversary. Thank you to all those who attended our Songs of Praise evening on the Saturday. This was ably led by Janet and Graham England with wonderful accompaniment by Jean Kalikotti, who was unfazed by last minute requests! And then the Sunday service was celebrated by Rev Darlene McCarley, our minister from 10 years ago. It was great to see her again and her preaching was excellent.

Now we're looking to our own resources as we face three Local Arrangements in the next four months. Thanks to the circuit for providing the worship material from 'Twelve Baskets' through The Vine, I'm sure we'll manage!

Margaret Faulkner



Your circuit needs you.....

This was the title of an article in 'Flight Path' -the circuit magazine of the former Woking & Walton-on-Thames circuit – in March 2011. As I had recently retired from full time employment I decided to seek further information. The help needed was as a Circuit Secretary to take up responsibility for organising and recording meetings plus any other admin associated with the Circuit team. After meeting with the superintendent and senior circuit steward I was invited to take up the position which was ratified at the July circuit meeting in 2011. By September of that year the then Circuit Leadership Team invited me to become a full circuit steward whilst continuing with responsibility for the above tasks.

In 2015 the Woking & Walton-on-Thames circuit stewards began discussions with the Guildford team concerning the possibility of a merger. These initial talks failed but were reopened in 2016. This second round was considerably more structured and involved full consultation with all church members across both circuits and a formal vote at the March 2017 circuit meeting which supported a merger. The interim joint CLT then set about the process of full merger and the Wey Valley Circuit was formally recognised in September 2017.

Anyone who does the maths will see that by 2017 I had completed six years as a circuit steward – the usual term. However, Rev Dr Claire Potter, the first superintendent of the Wey Valley Circuit, decided to reset the clock and the majority of the circuit stewards from the constituent circuits continued for various terms in the new circuit. As members retired and with the lack of new volunteers, I have served an additional year in Wey Valley as ratified by the July 2023 circuit meeting.

The role of a circuit steward is varied, never static and also never solo! There is a circuit steward team!!! Our current Senior Circuit Steward, Jean Normington, has a list of tasks for which the circuit steward TEAM are responsible. It may look daunting, but it is always a team effort. The role gives the Circuit steward the privilege of working with our presbyters to run the circuit, to help decide and progress the direction of the circuit. To support the presbyters at all church council meetings, circuit meetings and the circuit invitations meetings. In addition, circuit stewards support the presbyters in their very busy lives (a presbyter isn't just for Sunday!) and help ensure that presbyters have a sensible work/life balance. They may also be requested to assist a presbyter who is taking a sabbatical by attending the sabbatical support team.

The CS team also lead the process for Stationing in the circuit (but with full support from the District team) whether for re-invitation of a presbyter or new incumbent, whenever the circuit circumstance's dictate. This is a complex but interesting area and it changes slightly every time so no chance to get bored.

Does this all sound daunting? It is at all times a team role and team members have different skills, your skill could play a vital part in the future success of the CS team. You don't have to be retired to volunteer for the team; one of the current team members is in full employment and others are in part time employment.

Weybridge continued.....

It has been my privilege to serve for so long and I expect that I shall miss it (until I find something else to fill the time). I have served with many lovely and talented circuit members and got to know many people I would never have come into contact with prior to the circuit merger.

Please consider very carefully if you can join Jean and the TEAM. You certainly don't have to serve for anywhere near as long as I have, an offer of a couple of years will be gratefully accepted But.....
YOUR CIRCUIT NEEDS YOU

Linda Weedon

Resourcing Local Arrangements

Local Arrangements are an opportunity for building up the congregation and releasing new gifts and creativity for the glory of God.

The Methodist Church website has lots of resources to help with planning a local arrangement service. On the website you will find:

- ❖ step by step guides on how to plan a service
- ❖ information on themed services
- ❖ information on Special Sundays, such as Bible Sunday
- ❖ worship materials
- ❖ order of services
- ❖ sermons

You may also be familiar with The Vine which is circulated every Wednesday with the circuit letter.

If you're in need of extra guidance, I recommend you have a look at:

www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources/leading-worship/resourcing-local-arrangements

Lucy Venmore

Trinity, Woking

We all like to 'belong' to things, don't we?

In my case various coffee shop loyalty card schemes, a Kindle Unlimited subscription, and the Crystal Palace FC mailing list!

I jest, but at Trinity we 'belong' to Churches Together in Woking, and Woking People of Faith, organisations which are both active in the town.

Pedagogues say we learn best by doing. So, we're learning by being Christian people of faith in Woking.

Once upon a time there was an NHS building in Woking, which housed some great charities working in an area of deprivation, with folk from minority and excluded groups.

The week before Christmas 2023, the ceiling of the building partially collapsed, and asbestos was found in the walls, so the charities were made homeless literally overnight.

We'd worked with Woking Mind a few years ago when the same unfortunate building had a car drive into its wall. So, Catalyst - the charity which took on Woking Mind's portfolio when it sadly closed last year- called us and asked if they could use our kitchen to cook Christmas dinner for 30+ people pretty much the next day. Of course we said yes, to that and to regular twice a week delivery and then we got a call from another of the groups Shifa, a charity working with women, most from the south Asian community, many of whom are Muslim. We quickly moved around furniture and turned our Kabin into a temporary office for them, with space for delivery twice a week. A lovely lady from the Richmond Fellowship, which offers 1-2-1 support for people with poor mental health to get back into work, came along and asked if we could accommodate her twice a week.

We look for God in all sorts of places, don't we? And God has made themselves known to us in this other way too; even if our relationship with these charities is 'temporary' in the sense that their building may be rebuilt, the relationships are hopefully enduring.

Yes, we are earning enough income from the additional hirers to make a meaningful contribution towards our running costs, but we are building relationships with people of all faiths, and none, and making a positive contribution to Woking's civic society.

Going forward, as we build on the successes of the Foundry project, Trinity hopes to continue to be at the interface of God, Church and Community in Woking, making intentional connections between all three, with God at the centre.

Dan Warr Schori

[Catalyst Support - Catalyst Support](#)

[Home - Shifa The Project for Women's Wellbeing \(shifanetwork.org.uk\)](http://shifanetwork.org.uk)

[Richmond Fellowship | Mental Health Charity Making Recovery Reality](#)



Picture: Rev Sam, Dan, Daisy Dog and the children of a colleague



The Cross, decorated during the Easter Sunday Service at Trinity

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 33 of The Wey Forward is:
midnight 2 August 2024**

Submissions to the newsletter are accepted at any time but we can only guarantee a submission **will be considered** for a particular issue if it is received by the corresponding deadline listed below. Pop them in your diaries now.

Issue 34 1 November 2024

Issue 35 31 January 2025

**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 2024			
9 June	10.30am	Church Anniversary Service	Cranleigh
9 June	10.30am	Church Anniversary Service	Godalming
9 June	10.30am	Church Anniversary Service	Stoughton
15 June	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
16 June	4.00pm	Pudding & Praise	Walton-on-Thames
18 to 22 June	10.00am to 3.30pm	The Life of Christ (see page 19)	Wintershall
20 June	10.30 to 12.30pm	Coffee Morning in aid of Action for Children	Merrow
20 June	7.30pm	Bible Study	Merrow
22 June	10.00 to 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
21 July	10.30am	Church Anniversary Service	Merrow
22 June	09.30 to 12 noon	Practical Aspects of Spirituality (see page 6)	St. Mary's Guildford
23 June	10.00am	Church Anniversary Service	Knaphill
27 June	10.30 to 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St. Mary' Guildford
28 June to 8 July		Whitechapel Mission Clothes Collection	Godalming
July 2024			
7 July	10.00am	Cultural Heritage Service	Walton-on-Thames
11 July	10.30am to 12.30pm	Coffee Morning in aid of Merrow Scouts	Merrow
14 July	2.00pm	Iona Pilgrimage Information Meeting	Byfleet
14 July	3.00pm	Circuit Service	Byfleet
18 July	7.30pm	Bible Study	Merrow
20 July	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
20 July	3.00pm to 5.00pm	Messy Church	Godalming
25 July	10.30am to 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St. Mary's Guildford
27 July	10.00am to 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
August 2024 (and beyond)			
17 August	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Clothes4U	Knaphill
22 August	10.30am to 12 noon	Coffee and Cake	St. Mary's Guildford
24 August	10.00am to 12 noon	Coffee Morning	Knaphill
1 September	3.00pm	Welcome Service for Rev. Shaun Sanders	Walton-on-Thames