

Hello...

It's good to be back! And what a busy time to come back to. This week we've got a General Election and the Methodist Conference has been meeting in Leeds.

I think we live at a time when it is quite easy to be negative about those who are in authority over us, whether it be the national Methodist Church or Parliament. I hear lots of gloom ridden comments about both. 'That connexional Methodist Church - always after our money.' Or are those comments I hear about the Government? Possibly both.

It's very easy to be cynical about both. As part of my sabbatical (more of which at another time) I went to see a number of plays - one of which was 'The Constituent' at the Old Vic. It's a play about an MP (Anna Maxwell-Martin) who is basically wanting to serve and be there for her constituents, and an ex-soldier who has mental health issues who comes to her office (James Corden). It's an unusual play in that it doesn't seek to poke fun at or be cynical about either character. Taking its lead from the tragic deaths of Jo Cox and Sir David Amess, the play asks a set of serious questions about what kind of society we have become where people who are genuinely trying to serve the public good are verbally and physically attacked to the point where they are in fear for the lives of themselves and their families. Too many of our MPs have horror stories to tell.

There's plenty of Biblical material to work with here - verses about the golden rule about doing unto others etc. etc.

A principle that Christian thought has been bringing to the table for 2,000 years is that if we are all created in the image and likeness of God and we are all loved by the God who made us, then we are all equal in God's eyes. All are worthy of dignity, inclusion, respect and love. Those ideas would not have been true of the thought processes of the Greeks or the Romans - the world into which Christianity was born.

So, in this week of the Methodist Conference and a general Election - let's keep in our prayers those who lead us. The new Government and the new President and Vice President of the Methodist Church - Revd. Helen Cameron and Mrs. Carolyn Godfrey. And when we're tempted to be overly negative about those in positions of leadership, let's remember that those roles of authority are never easy and bring with them pressures and difficulties we can hardly dream of.

By the way - some of you may know that I write a weekly piece on the Lectionary lesson for the following Sunday. I'm now putting them up as videos on YouTube as well (at least until I run out of time and/or energy!) - you can find the one for this coming Sunday here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0Zre5RnGOI> - there's a new one every week.

Paul

## **Resources/Good News**

### **Celebrating 50 years of women's ordination in the Methodist Church**

Sonia Hicks is a past President of The Methodist Conference. She shares her story and journey to ordination, the challenges she has faced and how her call by God has been the voice she has listened to above all.

['They didn't want me because I was black, and because I was a woman' | Sonia's Story \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

### **Festival of Music and Flowers, 6 and 7 July**

West Clandon Church is celebrating summer with displays of flowers, children's artwork and miniature gardens, information on the history of the church, musical interludes, tombola and refreshments.

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm the Clandon Schola Cantorum and acclaimed pianist Maureen Galea present *Songs for a Summer Evening* with fizz and nibbles from 6.30pm.

More information on the festival weekend can be found here:

[Festival of Music and Flowers – The Clandon Churches \(clandon-churches.org\)](https://clandon-churches.org)



## **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](http://www.guc.org.uk)

Any queries please contact Ryan Kelley 01483 423261 or Kate Parminter [kateparminter@gmail.com](mailto:kateparminter@gmail.com) or visit [www.whitechapel.org.uk](http://www.whitechapel.org.uk)

# **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

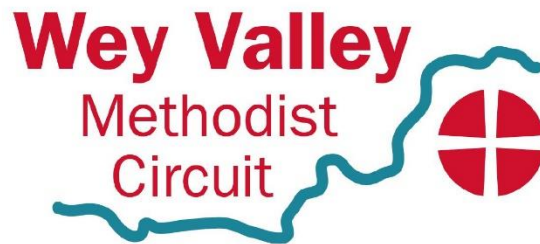
led by Rev Adam Payne

staying at the Argyll Hotel

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

Please contact Helen Belsham for further details

[helenebelsham@icloud.com](mailto:helenebelsham@icloud.com)



## **Circuit Service**

To bid a fond farewell to  
**Rev Sydney Samuel Lake**  
and  
**Mrs Anna Carrington**



**All welcome**

Refreshments will be served after the service

**Sunday 14th July 2024 3.00pm**

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



Join us in celebrating

40

FORTY YEARS

with

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Silent Auction • Raffle • Pond Dipping • And More!

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PRE-BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL, see [bit.ly/4cIXlyH](https://bit.ly/4cIXlyH) for  
tickets OR scan here;



WHEN

21st July 2024

WHERE

Juniper Hall