

THE VOICE

MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE



February 2024

Pastoral Message for February

From Revd Peter Hills

George has asked me to write the pastoral letter this month.

As I sit in my study (Margaret has another name for it), I look up at two small shelves. Instead of books – even though, like most ministers, I don't have enough bookshelves – they contain a variety of objects, objects which have travelled with me for many years. They remind me of the places I have lived in and visited.

There are reminders of my military service; and my ministry: icons; crosses, including a crucifix given to me many years ago by an Anglican priest and dear friend; a carved figure from Bethlehem representing Jesus, the good shepherd, carrying a lamb on his shoulders, reminding me of my sabbatical in the Holy Land in 2005; a chalice and pattern bought at a Methodist Conference (in Leeds, I think); a candlestick sent to me while serving with the UN in Bosnia by a Methodist Church in Sheffield (the minister happened to be one of my fellow students at Wesley House Cambridge, Mike Hill, and I was later able to visit the church to say thank you and share some of my stories with them); and amongst these lovely items, a rather battered card. The words on this card, which I brought back from Cyprus, are in Greek capitals:

KYPIE IHΣΟΥ XPIΣTE EΛEΨON ME: 'Kyrie Iesou Christe eleison me'.

They are the words of the 'Jesus Prayer':

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

It is a prayer said daily by millions of Christians all over the world. We sometimes include part of it, the 'kyrie eleison', in our prayers, usually during the Prayer of Confession: 'Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.' Orthodox Christians often say the prayer as a kind of mantra, again and again, almost breathing in the words. In the days when I was required to show that I could still run three miles in a certain time, I used to say it on my training runs! Another way to use it is to say it slowly, pausing over each word, and ponder what it means to me.

Sometimes, when we don't know how to pray, or can't pray; when travelling, when wandering, when sitting at home, when lying in bed, it is one of two prayers which can help us to pray. The other is, of course, the Lord's Prayer. But the Jesus Prayer, said on the breath, has a special place in my heart, and has sustained me, alongside the 'Our father' through the years. Never let a day go by without a prayer! And it could be as short as the Jesus Prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me

Blessings, Peter

EDITORIAL NOTE



My February Musings

Our Christmas celebrations and the ones to mark New Year
Are now a fading memory of merry festive cheer.
But though the Christmas season, once more, has come and gone,
The message sung by angels will surely linger on.

The turkey and plum pudding, the yule log and mince tarts
Have filled us to repletion, but have they filled our hearts?
Use well that Christmas present, wrapped in a baby's birth,
The gift of love, for sharing, which came from heav'n to earth.

Any items for inclusion in the March. issue of "The Voice" should be sent to me by:

Feb.23rd 2024

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

by hand:

or by post to: **Gillian Varley - 4, Merrow Croft, Guildford. GU1 2XH**

USEFUL ADDRESSES

SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER:

REV. DR. PAUL GLASS **01483 575667**
revpaulglass@gmail.com

MINISTER:

REV. GEORGE QUARM **01483 575432**
unclegeorge.quarm@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE:

Bushy Hill Drive, Guildford, GU1 2SH. **01483 537655**
office@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk

PROPERTY LETTINGS

ADMINISTRATOR: **01483 537655**
lettings@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk

PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP:

This is a small group willing to put time aside for praying each day for special needs within the Church community. Your request will be passed on to other members of the group, where it will remain confidential.

The prayer contact for February will be:

DOREEN SIAME **01483 578214**

EDITOR - 'The Voice'

GILLIAN VARLEY **01483 495567**
gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

Important: It is our practice at Merrow to publish THE VOICE on the website. This is an important source of information about the life of our church and we want to share it with others. However, if you feel uncomfortable with a mention on our web page we will be happy to omit your name and any other personal details in any future issue if requested to do so. Please advise at the time of submitting the copy.

WHAT'S HAP

Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date	Time	Vestry	Worship Leader	PA/AV	Door
Feb 4 th	10.30am	Iris Walker		Cari Rayner	Janice Marshall Joyce Goodall
Feb 11 th	10.30am	Suzanne Burnham		Jane Vinal	Sheila Shackleton Glenys Magill
Feb 18 th H.C.	10.30am	Helen Belsham	Doreen Siame	Glenys Magill	Maggie Woolcock Margaret Hyam
Feb 25 th H.C.	10.30am 6.30pm	Hugh Bradley Suzanne Burnham		Cari Rayner Glenys Magill	Wendy Bradley Ruth McCulloch

Communion stewards:

	<u>Preparation:</u>	<u>Assisting:</u>
Feb.18 th	Doreen Siame & Suzanne Burnham	Helen Belsham
Feb 25 th	Glenys Magill	

Flower Rota:

Feb 5th : Sheila Shackleton; Feb. 12th : Jan Kemp;
Feb.19th: Cari Rayner; Feb. 26th : Doreen Siame

Sunday Morning Coffee Rota:

Glenys Magill and Suzanne Burnham. 4th Feb.
Maggie Woolcock and Margaret Hyam 11th Feb
Pauline Daniels and Sheila Shackleton 18th Feb
Joan Wells and Jan Walker. 25th Feb

Charity collection

JMA. Hugh Bradley
Christian Aid Hugh Bradley

Organ Rota:

Gillian Varley: Morning services

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship on Monday 5th February 2.30 pm. The speaker will be Helen Belsham speaking on her pilgrimage to Iona last year. All are welcome Suzanne

Action for Children - the Methodist children's charity

We raised £320 in vouchers for the Fostering Wessex Centre at Fareham.

Jamie Heane the manager was delighted with the amount which I delivered before Christmas. They will have been given at Christmas, then for birthdays and also to young people starting college.

As a Church we raised £944.50p in 2023. Many thanks for all your support over the year
Suzanne

Church Bible Studies

All are welcome.

Please contact Gillian Varley for further details

Morning Bible Study

at Lavender Cottage, Marlyns Drive, Burpham.

On Tuesdays Feb.13th & 27th at 11.00am

continuing our study of the book of Esther

Evening Bible Study

No information at present

Outlet

We had another successful and entertaining 'Journey to Christmas' for our December meeting followed by a finger buffet supper. Donations raised £45 for the Salvation Army!

Our next meeting is on the 12th February

Guildford The Rock 'n' Roll years

when David Rose from the History society will give a talk on the Rock 'n' Roll scene in Guildford in the 50's & 60's! Two musicians from the local scene at the time will share memories and play a few hits from the era!

All welcome, and bring friends.

7.30 refreshments 8pm start - £3

Number 5 and Mulberry House

Thank you for all your generous donations for Number 5 and Mulberry house.
They are very appreciative of the support we give to them.

Number 5 specifically asked for Biological washing powder
when I dropped donations off this week
so please leave any donations in the foyer as usual and I can pass them on.

The collection for Number 5 men's hostel on Christmas Day raised £110.12. Thank you for everyone who supports this charity. In the Winter, scarves and gloves are usually welcome along with the usual washing powder, shower gel and shampoo.

Mulberry house for young women have new residents and I am still waiting to hear about what they would need us to collect for them.

Thank you
Ruth McCulloch

Weekly Coffee Morning

on Thursdays from 10.30 - 11.45

If you are free, do drop in for a drink and a chat with others from the
church and local community.

There is no charge.

On the 2nd Thursday each month
this is usually

A Charity Coffee Morning

when a delicious selection of cakes is served for you to enjoy.

Come along to help us support a different charity each month

In February our Charity Coffee Morning will



**Transform
Trade** —
So everybody benefits.



Charity Coffee Morning February Thursday 8th 10.30 – 12.00

Our charity coffee morning this month is raising money for Transform Trade, whose mission is to campaign in the UK and also Europe to make trade more people centered – a different way of thinking about trade and business. The charity believes in fair trade – and as an organisation their roots are in the alternative and fair trade movement. It is a member of the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) and were founders of the Fairtrade Foundation in the UK. However, they also want to look beyond fair trade at the structures and systems which regulate all trade. People centred trade is an aspiration not a certification. They believe there is a difference between businesses which attempt to practice justice in all they do, and profit driven multinationals which licence only a few products with the Fairtrade Mark.

It's collaboration with the University of Aberdeen investigated whether the prices paid for clothes produced in Bangladesh for European businesses during the pandemic were below the manufacturing cost – the report found many examples of unfair practices and was quoted in several newspaper articles in Jan.2023. Since then, they have been working to gain Parliamentary support for a Fashion Watchdog and so far, 62 MP's are publicly supporting the idea. Another petition and campaign this year has led to the introduction of new legislation, the Business and Human Rights bill, at the end of the year to stop businesses getting away with human rights abuses and environmental destruction. Over 120,000 signatures were collected and polling showed that 4 in 5 Britons support a new law.

Over the past forty years, the fair trade movement has focused much-needed attention on models of trade and exactly where the benefits accrue. Fair trade businesses like Liberation Nuts, Zaytoun, Divine Chocolate and Tropical Wholefoods and many others, ensure that the growers, artisans, and workers get a fair share of the price we pay. A Fair price is one of ten principles of fair trade agreed by the movement. The Fairtrade Foundation licence and champion the Fairtrade Mark in the UK, as part of the Fairtrade International certification network. The Mark is awarded to products which meet agreed criteria. A key element is the payment of a 'Fairtrade premium' over and above the price. Representatives of producers agree how to spend the premium – and over the years this has funded local healthcare facilities, schools, fresh water, transport and much more.

Glenys Magill

DIARY DATES & NEWS

Circuit Mission Supper

Saturday 2 March 2024. 6 for 6.30pm Trinity Methodist Church, Brewery Rd, Woking (parking across the Rd)

Tickets £10 to include a Fish & Chip Supper

(Fish & Chips, Sausage & Chips, Veggie burger & Chips)

Tickets are available from your church contact:

Helen Belsham

n.b please bring your own crockery & cutlery

Speaker



Deacon Angleena Keizer, formerly the Methodist Liaison officer in Jerusalem, will talk to us about the challenges of the role in relative peacetime and how it may differ at this time of conflict.

Songs of Praise

The **evening service** on **Sunday May 5th** at **6.30pm**
will be a

‘Songs of Praise’

You are all invited to choose a hymn which celebrates a special person or occasion in your
life.

If you would like to say a few words about your choice this would be a welcome addition to
this
service of praise.

Please submit your requests before the end of March
to Gillian Varley (Details on Address P.5)



The Community Garden



With the aid of one of Guildford's Community Engagement Officers, Jo Packman, three women from Merrow have come together to start creating a small community garden. Merrow Methodist Church had offered the use of the lawn outside the church and with the award of an Aspire Guildford grant from Guildford Borough Council the project is beginning to take shape. The aim is to start small so that local people can influence the development of the garden, starting with a couple of raised beds for vegetables, herbs and a few flowers, growing bigger as funds allow. The area chosen gets a lot of footfall as pedestrians, including parents and children walking to Merrow Junior School, cut across the corner of Bushy Hill Dive and Sheeplands Avenue.

Helen, one of the team says 'It is widely acknowledged that gardening can improve both physical and mental health and we hope that local people will want to get involved in any way they choose, participation is open to all'.

Look out for further details in future editions of this magazine.

LADIES BEWARE!

Last September Derek & Gillian Varley visited the beautiful town of Ludlow and had morning coffee in the Methodist Church Coffee Shop. We were served by the two gentlemen (with sandals and aprons) in the photo below.



Not to be outdone, on Thursday 14th December, at our own Thursday Charity Coffee Morning, cakes were served by Keith and Derek, (sadly no photographic evidence is available) but they were also suitably aproned.



Another frequent coffee morning helper and server of biscuits is Peter Walker, pictured above.

Our thanks to all these gentlemen.

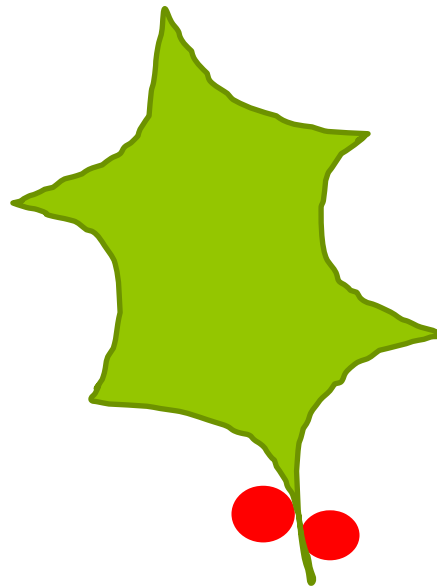
JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart

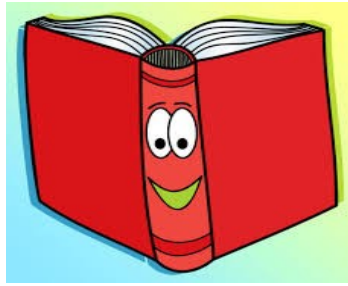
A Winter Wordsearch

G	I	E	E	G	D	E	L	S
L	L	I	L	E	A	E	N	L
H	O	E	E	C	O	L	D	E
O	O	R	R	N	I	V	E	R
L	T	T	A	R	N	C	R	R
L	S	S	L	E	I	Y	I	I
Y	R	A	U	R	B	E	F	U
E	D	O	S	N	O	W	S	Q
I	T	T	S	O	R	F	R	S

Words to find:

- Berries
- February
- Cold
- Deer
- Frost
- Holly
- Ice
- Icicle
- Noel
- Robin
- Sledge
- Snow
- Squirrels
- Toast





Story time

The proud rose

Once upon a time, in a desert far away, there was a rose who was so proud of her beautiful looks.



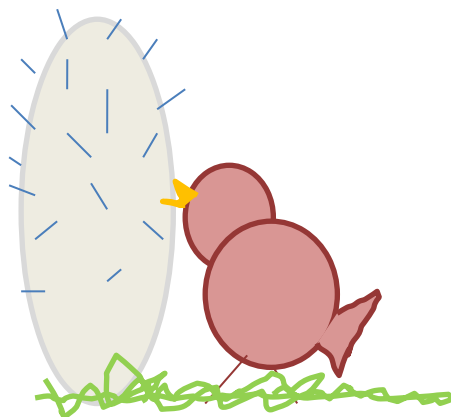
Her only complaint was that she was growing next to an ugly cactus.

Every day, the beautiful rose would insult and mock the cactus about his looks, but the cactus remained silent. All the other plants nearby tried to make the rose see sense, but she could only think of her own beauty.

One scorching summer, the desert became so dry that there was no water left for the plants. The rose quickly began to wilt. Her leaves shrivelled and her beautiful petals dried up, losing their rich colour.

Looking to the cactus, she saw a sparrow dip his beak into the cactus to drink some water. Thoroughly ashamed, the rose asked the cactus if she could have some water too. The kind cactus readily agreed, helping them both through the tough summer as friends.

The Moral - Never judge anyone by the way they look.





Gill's trills

The Bean Goose and Bewick's Swan are the first of the winter visitors to leave our shores, typically at the end of February, to head north and east to their breeding grounds in Siberia. The Bewick's swan is the smallest of the swan species found in Britain, sheltering here in farmland, freshwater wetlands and coastal bays. They travel 2,500 miles from Siberia, facing a number of challenges along the way; predators, illegal hunting, power lines and, of course, adverse weather. In February 2021, a flock that had started their migration back to the Arctic were forced to return to Gloucestershire due to Storm Darcy.

But why do our summer visitors, such as the swallow, return to Britain year after year in the first place? There are two main factors that compel them to do this.

First, there is plenty of room to hold onto their own territory without being crowded out by African birds.

Secondly, the long daylight hours allow birds to feed their young for longer every day, helping them to grow quickly before beginning their long flight. It is this, on a February morning, that beckons the swallow northward.

Ken's Pen

Years ago, Horatio Bottomley, a popular man and editor of periodical, made a fortune. But, he was soon tried and imprisoned for embezzlement. Captain Tyler of the Church Army visited him in prison. Not sure what to say, he decided to tell Bottomley of his conversion to Christianity "I went to a meeting in Bristol, where Canon Aitken was preaching on the text "You must be born again". "Was that in the year so and so?" specifying the year. "Yes" "And was it on a Friday night?" "Yes, it was, but how did you know?" "I, too, was there but I walked out saying "It's not for me. I'm going to run my life in my own way, and shan't let anyone else manage it."

He had made a fortune, but also made a big mistake at that meeting.

Was it Frank Sinatra who sang "I did it my way?" At the end of our life, will we say "I did it my way, or I did it God's way?"

Ken's pen continued

A minister was giving a children's address. He was using squirrels to illustrate industry and planning ahead. The children were told to raise their hand if they guessed what he was describing." It is grey and has a bushy tail ." Still no hand went up. "It jumps from branch to branch and chatters when it gets excited – pause- it lives in trees and buries nuts for the future." No reaction. After a while a little girl put her hand up and said "I suppose the answer must be Jesus, but it seems more like a squirrel to me."

With greetings from Puddletown, keep smiling. Ken Mills

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Pete's tweet

from Peter Radcliffe

Given the oncoming USA presidential campaign I submitted in 2023 a list of past presidents and applicable quotes. Most of us, including Americans, know little of their respective running mates. I have added the serving vice-president (in italics) to each incumbent with a short note about the individual. When I look at the selected list of those dignitaries I deduce more than ever that :

"...*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..*"! Romans 3 verse 23

USA President Quotes

Quote 1: I have noticed that nothing I never said has ever done me any harm. Calvin Coolidge

Charles G Dawes – Nobel Prize Winner

Quote 2: When the president does it that means it is not illegal. Richard Nixon
Spiro Agnew – resigned in 1973 over corruption charges

Quote 3: Nothing was ever done so systematically as nothing is being done now. Woodrow Wilson

Thomas R Marshall - What this country needs is a really good five-cent cigar

Quote 4: Whenever a man has cast a longing eye on office a rottenness begins in his conduct. Thomas Jefferson

Aaron Burr – killed a man in an illegal duel thus ending his VP status

Quote 5: Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder. George Washington
John Adams – succeeded to President

Quote 6: This is the last of earth but I am composed. John Quincy Adams (on his death bed)
John C Calhoun – served under two presidents

Quote 7: I know only two tunes, one of them is Yankee Doodle and the other isn't. Ulysses S Grant

Schuyler Colfax – instrumental in abolition of slavery

Quote 8: No President who performs his duties faithfully and conscientiously can have any leisure.

James K Polk

George M Dallas – Ambassador to UK (1856 – 1861)

Quote 9: The point is that you can't be too greedy. Donald Trump
Mike Pence – fell out with Trump over White House riots

Walker's talk

A TRIP AROUND THE MONOPOLY BOARD

Inventor Maggie Magie

Have you heard about the man who has more than 3000 unopened boxes of the Monopoly game?

And do you recognise this as a description of the game?

“It is a practical demonstration of the present system of land-grabbing with all its usual outcomes and consequences. It might well have been called the ‘Game of Life’, as it contains all the elements of success and failure in the real world, and the object is the same as the human race in general seem[s] to have, ie. the accumulation of wealth.”

No doubt most of you have spent pleasant evenings or winter afternoons throwing the dice and moving around the Monopoly board without ever wondering about how it came into being.

Iris and I spent an equally pleasant afternoon recently at Grayshott Arts Society listening to a lecture by Roger Mendham that took us on an hour-long trip round the Monopoly board and taught us something about its origins, spelled out in greater detail in *The Monopolists: Obsession, Fury, and the Scandal Behind the World's Favourite Board Game* by Mary Pilon.

Its history is a mixed and sad one, going back to a left-wing Scottish immigrant living in Washington, USA, named Elizabeth Magie. As Pilon says in her book: “To Elizabeth Magie the problems of the new century were so vast, the income inequalities so massive and the monopolists so mighty that it seemed impossible that an unknown woman working as a stenographer stood a chance at easing society's ills with something as trivial as a board game. But she had to try. “Night after night, after her work at her office was done, Lizzie sat in her home, drawing and redrawing, thinking and rethinking. It was the early 1900s, and she wanted her board game to reflect her progressive political views – that was the whole point of it.”

To emphasise this, she called her invention *The Landlord's Game* and described it as I set out at the beginning of this article. She added: “From its inception, the *Landlord's Game* aimed to seize on the natural human instinct to compete. And, somewhat surprisingly, Lizzie created two sets of rules: an anti-monopolist set in which all were rewarded when wealth was created, and a monopolist set in which the goal was to create monopolies and crush opponents. Her vision was an embrace of dualism and contained a contradiction within itself, a tension trying to be resolved between opposing philosophies.

However, and of course unbeknownst to Lizzie at the time, it was the monopolist rules that would later capture the public's imagination.”

The original board was not unlike today's but taking the place of the Electricity and Water Works were services offering food and shelter, with gamers performing tasks

and earning wages. If you ran out of money the Poor House awaited, as did the jail for those who trespassed upon property. Landlords, on the other hand, were portrayed in a different light. The defining event that led to the game gaining world-wide recognition and commercialised is somewhat dark and is dealt with in the book.

One of the few people who had an early copy of the game recognised the opportunity it presented and sold the copyright to a firm known as Parker Brothers.

The question whether he had the right to do this remains. Regrettably, Maggie Magie did not benefit from this transaction.

However, this was not the end of the story. Subsequently contact was made with Waddingtons, leading to the purchase of the game by that firm and its launch in this country in 1936.

Because the locations on the original board were in the USA, they had to be changed to those that would be familiar to a UK public. Accordingly, Mr Waddington and his secretary set out from Leeds on a trip to London where they spent some time wandering around the capital, assessing locations. Using this background and his photographic skills Roger, an accomplished photographer, and the President of the Surrey Photographic Association, created an hour-long lecture that took us around the board.

Each location was dealt with in some detail - and illustrated with numerous photographs displayed on the vast village hall screen.

And the collector with over 3000 unopened boxes of the game? He works at Heathrow, and presumably has an understanding wife!

Peter Walker

POETRY

'The Brook in February'

by Sir Charles George Douglas Roberts

A snowy path for squirrel and fox,
It winds between the wintry firs.
Snow-muffled are its iron rocks,
And o'er its stillness nothing stirs.

But low, bend low a listening ear!
Beneath the mask of moveless white
A babbling whisper you shall hear—
Of birds and blossoms, leaves and light.

'I'm Not Just February'

by Annette Wynne

I'm not just February
With winds that blow
All day, and piled-up snow;
I'm Washington and Lincoln, too,
Who kept our country's flag for you!
I'm Valentine of airy grace—
With golden hearts and hearts of lace
And pretty cards that people send,
Quite as a secret, to a friend.
Though I am short of days and small,
I'm quite a big month, after all!

'Leap Year'

by Annette Wynne

Little month of February,
You are small, but worthy—very!
Will you grow up like the others,
Like your sister months and brothers?
Every four years with a bound
With a leap up from the ground,
Trying to grow tall as they—
All you stretch is one small day!
Even then you're not so tall
But just the shortest month of all.

SCAMS

NB

- **If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!!**
- **Never give out personal banking details, especially PIN numbers.
If you are asked for these you are almost certainly being scammed.**
- **Do not click on links in Emails if you are not absolutely certain who they are from.**
- **Fraudsters masquerade plausibly as your Bank/ the Police/Tax and Pensions offices etc.....If a caller purports to be the police or your bank about fraudulent activity on a debit /credit card and suggests that you phone the Customer Services number on the back of your card to confirm that they are who they say they are - do not do this.
The fraudster keeps the line open and you will only be speaking with them again, not your bank!**

Prayers worth sharing



A winter prayer

Lord: In the midst of winter, when the days are cold and wind can pierce, remind us of the warmth of your love. In the midst of winter, when days are short, dawn comes late and dusk arrives early, remind us that in the darkness your light still shines. In the midst of winter, remind us that winter is but a part of nature's wondrous cycle of new birth, growth, fruitfulness and death:
cold and bare as nature takes stock, rests, unwinds, sleeps
until the time is right.
An endless cycle
and yet a perfect model.
Thank you.
Amen