THE VOICE MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE





MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND HOPE

I am 64 years old. There are more years behind me than before me, and that is scary. I do not want to die, but I will have to die, an inevitable call for the majority of us by the year 2099. You may not be where you are now, a new generation would spring up to take that place. Think about it? Life is full of struggles.

Doctor M. Scott Peck wrote a book called "The Road Less Travelled." It is a worthwhile read.

In the first paragraph, Dr. Peck discusses how life is difficult and that this is a great truth that many of us try to avoid, pretend does not exist, or believe only applies to others. He says the acceptance of this basic fact of life is what opens the door to dealing with life's difficulties and problems in a healthy and effective way. It is the starting point for personal growth and development.

We struggle in life, and that's okay. We struggle no more in death. Our biological journey from birth to death is where all the problems are. At the same time, while the journey from birth to death undoubtedly involves pain and difficulty, I believe it also holds the potential for profound beauty, meaning, and fulfilment. The fleeting nature of our existence can make the joys and connections we experience all the more precious. Knowing that our time is limited can inspire us to live more fully, love more deeply, and strive to make a positive impact during our brief stay on this earth.

Ultimately, each of us must find our own way to make peace with the big questions of life and death. For some, this comes through faith and spirituality. For others, it's about living according to their values, cultivating meaningful relationships, or leaving a positive legacy. There is no easy answer, but I believe the quest to find purpose and contentment in the face of life's struggles is one of the things that makes us human.

Life will always involve hardship, but it can also be a beautiful, meaningful adventure. And perhaps, as you suggest, there is some comfort in knowing that when the journey ends, the struggles end too, and we can finally be at peace. These are just some thoughts, but I appreciate you raising such a deep and important topic. It is something I think we all grapple with at times. There's no one-size-fits-all answer to finding peace with life and death. Some find solace in faith, some in relationships, others in leaving a positive mark. The human spirit's search for purpose and contentment despite challenges is truly what defines us.

Life's hardships are real, but so is its potential for beauty and adventure. And as I said above, there might be a strange comfort in knowing that the struggles will eventually rest.

Death can be seen as both a loss and a release from struggle. It can be scary to think about the end of our lives, but perhaps there is some comfort in knowing that when the journey ends, the struggles will too, and we can finally be at peace. I believe those called to glory since the beginning of the year are at peace, free from the tribulations and heartaches of our world. May their souls rest with the Lord.

Let us remember their families at all times in prayer.

Prayer to the Lord for the gift of confidence, as there should be no room for doubt with Him watching over us. "God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love and of sound mind" 2 Timothy 2 v 7 and Psalm 23 & 27.

Heavenly Father

Thank You for continuously blessing me throughout my life. But sometimes, doubt clouds my perspective and all I see are my imperfections. I pray that I may have the strength and courage to not only face my insecurities but to also shut them down. I pray that from now on, I may have the confidence to put myself out into the world so that I may share my talents and blessings with other people. You believe in me, Lord, so I too should believe in myself. Help me to live a day at a time. I praise Your most Holy Name, Amen.

Peace be with you. Enjoy the season with every blessing from God.

Devotedly Yours, Rev George.

EDITORIAL NOTE

June



- Originates from the month of Iunius in the original Roman calendar.
- The sixth month of the Gregorian calendar and was named after Juno, the wife of Jupiter, king of the gods.
- Marks the start of summer in the Northern Hemisphere and contains the summer solstice, the day with the most daylight hours.
- Never begins on the same day of the week as any other month, but always ends on the same day .

Items for inclusion in the July issue of "The Voice" should be sent to me by:

June 20th 2024

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com by hand: or by post to: Gillian Varley - 4, Merrow Croft, Guildford. GU1 2XH

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Written, dramatic, musical and artistic work - 70 years after the end of the year of the author's death

Please check that any submission, not your own work, is 'out of copyright.'

USEFUL ADDRESSES

ACTING SUPERINTENDENT (During Paul's Sabbatical)REV.SAM FUNNELL01483 727038samfunnell24@btinternet.com

MINISTER: REV. GEORGE QUARM unclegeorge.quarm@gmail.com	01483 575432
CHURCH OFFICE: Bushy Hill Drive, Guildford, GU1 2SH. office@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk	01483 537655

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 June will be: PAULINE DANIELS 91483 958905

EDITOR – 'The Voice' GILLIAN VARLEY gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

01483 495567

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 HAPPENING IN JUNE

Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date/Time	Vestry Steward	Worship Leader	PA/AV	Door
June 2nd	Helen Belsham		Jane Vinall	Julie Wallis
10.30am HC	Helen Belsham		Jane Villan	Joyce Goodall
June 9 th	Iris Walker	Gillian Varley	Cari Rayner	Margaret Hyam
10.30am				Maggie Woolcock
June 16 th	Joan Wells		Glenys Magill	Sheila Shackleton
10.30am				Ruth McCulloch
6.30pm HC			Glenys Magill	
June 23 rd	Suzanne Burnham		Jane Vinall	Julie Wallis
10.30am				Joyce Goodall
June 30 th	Helen Belsham	Doreen Siame	Cari Rayner	Margaret Hyam
10.30am				Maggie Woolcock

Communion stewards:

<u>Date</u>	Preparation:	Assisting:		
June 2 nd am	Suzanne & Doreen	Helen Belsham		
June16 th pm	Glenys	ТВА		

Flower Rota:

June 2nd – Joan Wells; June 9th; - Glenys Magill; June 16th – Wendy Bradley; June 23rd – Suzanne Burnham; June 30th – Sheila Shackleton

Sunday Morning Coffee Rota & Charities:

June 2nd Maggie Woolcock & Margaret Hyam June 9th Pauline Daniels and Sheila Shackleton June 16th Joan Wells and Jan Walker June 23rd Julie Wallis and Helen Belsham June 30th Gill Vinall and Jan Kemp. Transform Trade (Glenys) MHA (Hugh) Bible Society (Joan Wells) Christian Aid (Hugh) Mission Aviation Fellowship (Hugh)

Organ Rota: morning services

Mark Hargreaves - June 2nd Gillian Varley – June 9th; 16th; 23rd.

Women's Fellowship

Monday 3rd June 2.30 pm - the speaker will be Chris Parrott. Chris is a speaker for the charity MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) which is a Christian Charity serving isolated Communities in 27 developing countries operating 128 light aircraft. MAF's pilots transport essential medical care, food, water, relief teams and Christian workers to those in desperate need. All are welcome.

<u>Church Bible Studies</u> Morning Bible Study

at Lavender Cottage, Marlyns Drive, Burpham. On Tuesdays June11th & 25th at 11.00am Please contact Gillian Varley for further details

Evening Bible Study

June 20th at 7.30pm at Merrow Methodist Church Please contact Julie Wallis for further details

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.



A Charity Coffee Morning Usually on the 2nd Thursday each month supports a different charity each month with a delicious selection of home-made cakes for your to enjoyment.

In June our Charity Coffee Morning will be on the <u>3rd</u> Thursday Thursday 20th June 10.30 pm - 12 noon for Action for Children. The Methodist children's charity.



Action for Children - the Methodist children's charity

On Sunday 14th July 10.30 am we will be celebrating AFC with gift aid envelopes in the church. The theme this year is 'Justice for vulnerable families'. Suzanne

Afternoon tea.

This year we will be hosting our annual Afternoon tea on the 13th August 2.30-4.30

Places limited so if interested please have a chat to one of the following!

Joan Wells G.503737; Ruth McCulloch 07702541644 Maggie Woolcock G.502942; Margaret Hills G.576192

The Church Anniversary

will be held on Sunday 21st July 10.30 am. Rev Nick Holt will be leading our service. This will be followed by a buffet lunch in the hall. Details to follow

Lovely news

from Pauline Daniels:

'I have become a Foster great-great-grandmother to Elijah who arrived on 2nd May!

My foster daughter sent a message in the middle of the night with photos saying she was now a great grandmother and I said does that make me a foster great-great-grandmother and she said definitely!!!

I fostered young Mums with babies in the eighties!'

Congratulations Pauline!

The new church bench



Suzanne and Gordon enjoying the sunshine on the new bench. The plaque on the bench bears a quotation from a poem entitled "Prayer" and was suggested by Gordon McConnell, please 'take a seat' and read it for yourself.

The other responses we received were:

- 1. 'For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea' Habbakkuk 2 :14 (from Peter Radcliffe)
- 2. 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, ' plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' Jeremiah Ch. 29 :11 (from Julie Wallis)
- 3. 'A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another.' John Ch. 13 &14 (3. & 4. from Iris Walker)
- 4. 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever'. John Ch. 13:8
- 5. 'One is nearer God's heart in a garden, than anywhere else on earth' From Frances Gurneys poem "God's Garden" (from Gillian Varley)

Pastoral News

This year we have said goodbye to several of our long-standing church members. Although their deaths have been a great loss to us all, we have a 'sure and certain hope' of everlasting life –' *an anchor for the soul, firm and secure*' (*Hebrews 6:19*) Let us rejoice in the Easter affirmation of the Resurrection truth, that Jesus is alive and 'goes to prepare a place for us.' (*John 14:2-4*)

Cynthia Winder died peacefully at home on Monday 6th May following a long period of failing health. She was a founder member of this church and will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Please remember Frank, Chris, Catherine and all her family in your prayers. A service of thanksgiving for Cynthia's life will be held on June 26th

In April we held a 'Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving' for the life of **Joyce Sturt**.

A fitting memorial and example of her craftsmanship will be in the "I am" banners and some of the pulpit/lectern falls which are displayed in the church.

The Thanksgiving Service for the life of **Joy Kendal**, who died on April 21st, will form part of our morning worship on July 7th.

We have recently heard of the death of Eileen Jackson

<u>Unlock Walk 20th April 2024</u> - Maggie, Suzanne, Joan, Jan and our friend Steve

We were a small number of 5 this year. The walk from the Unlock map looked very interesting covering the area of Kensington, Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham On an unseasonably cold day threatening rain, we took a train to Clapham Junction, then one to Shepherds Bush and then finally a bus to join the start of our walk at St Clement's, Notting Dale. St Clements is an Anglo-Catholic church built in the 1860's to serve what was then the worst slum in London and service to the local community has always been at the heart of the church's activities.



We were struck by the closeness of the church to the now heavily shrouded remains of the Grenfell Tower block. St Clements was one of the buildings that opened up in the early hours of Wednesday June 14th 2017 to offer sanctuary and support as the Grenfell Tower fire raged. There is a beautiful "Butterfly Memorial" in the church. It is made up of large and small different coloured butterflies representing the 72 adults and children who lost their lives in the tragedy.

Next to the Butterfly Memorial is a painting by a local artist Mark Cazalet. The artwork is a triptych and portrays the Holy Family - Joseph with a heavily pregnant Mary amidst the Notting Hill Carnival. This was painted and hung in the

church before the fire but the vicar told us that some of the characters in the painting included local residents of Grenfell Tower who died in the fire.

We walked to our next church, Notting Hill Methodist Church where, as we would expect there were tasty homemade cakes! They too are sitting in the shadow of the Grenfell Tower. They stand alongside the community as it seeks justice for all those affected by the tragic fire. It is still a crime scene. This church had been extended in more recent times and hosts many different local groups and activities. The Church is fortunate to jointly own property with a Housing Association in Ladbroke Grove which provides valuable income.

We then walked for what seemed like miles down Ladbroke Grove, somehow missing a left turning and adding an extra mile to our route! We were so busy looking at the lovely houses and expensive cars that it took us a while to realise that we were lost! Attempting to get back onto the correct route we came across Notting Hill book shop, (famous from the film) which had a huge crowd outside. We eventually asked a local man for directions as he left his house. He was rather surprised we wanted to know where the Portobello Road Salvation Army was! We told him we were on a sponsored walk. The church building was opened in 1924 by Florence Booth, the wife of Bramwell Booth the second General of the Salvation Army and seeks to serve the local community. One of the Salvation Army's most popular slogans is: "Soup, Soap and Salvation" which is demonstrated here in very practical ways by offering free food and soap and shower facilities to those sleeping rough. Community worship is held on a Friday morning when the locals are out and about (before the tourists descend at the weekend!)

We had quite a walk after that along the Grand Union Canal till we reached St Thomas Kensal town. Kensal Town used to be called 'Chelsea-in-the-Wilderness'. It is a vibrant and active parish but sadly the area is marred by gang violence. The church has responded with a knife amnesty bin and is working with young people in the area to provide an alternative community for them to be a part of. In August each year, the church is the starting point for the Notting Hill Carnival.

Our next stop was St Helen's Church North Kensington. Grenfell Tower is just south of the parish boundary. The fire is still very much felt in the community and St Helen's has been a part of the ongoing care in the community by hosting memorial services. The church describes itself as a vibrant, diverse and multi-cultural family church.

We then walked around the rather grim exterior of Wormwood Scrubs prison and Hammersmith hospital till we reached St Katherine Westway a C of E church in the Kensington area. The parish is in the most deprived Ward of Hammersmith and Fulham and sufferers from multiple interlinked problems.

We completed the very last section of the walk by bus, returning to Shepherds Bush having already covered 9 miles due to our extra mileage along Ladbroke Grove. The rain thankfully only really started once we were homeward bound on the train from



Clapham. We returned to Guildford tired but all agreeing that it had been an interesting and worthwhile day. As with previous Unlock walks, we walked through very contrasting areas and additionally this year there was the poignancy of walking in the shadow Grenfell Tower and hearing how the local churches responded to the tragedy. All the churches we visited produced fact

sheets showing the many ways in which they are supporting the local community. This included shower facilities and free refreshments and food for rough sleepers, food banks, organising local community events and activities, community gardens, etc. All the churches welcomed prayers for their ongoing work reaching out to local people and communities.

Thank you to all who sponsored us on this very interesting walk. We look set to raise a record amount of approximately £800 this year- a truly fantastic result! This will help Unlock to pay for another part time project worker based in an Urban area of social need. This project worker would work in partnership with a local church or churches to help bring the bible to life in practical and relevant ways to those who would not normally read the bible or go to church.

Finally, a note for your diaries. Next year's walk will be on the 12th April 2025.

Esther – Protestant & Roman Catholic (RC) submitted by Peter Radcliffe

The book of "Esther" is longer in RC renderings. Our recent bible study covered it so I got intrigued about the 'extra.' Prompted by Gillian, I have outlined the additional details interspersed with our own shortened story (*Italics are direct RC quotes*.) It should be mentioned that most apocryphal writings are complete books, not padded inclusions.

Introduction:

Mordecai was prominent in the royal court of Jeconiah, King of Judah, cited in Jeremiah. Both were exiled into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar with Mordecai still retaining some high respectability. He has a disturbing dream, which implies that King Ahasuerus will be assassinated by two of his eunuchs:

On awakening from this dream and vision of God's designs, Mordecai thought deeply about the matter, trying his best all day to discover what its meaning might be.

Mordecai overhears the plot and informs Ahasuerus. Both eunuchs are executed and Mordecai is rewarded by elevated status to the king's court. *Haman who enjoyed high favour with the king* seeks bitter revenge for the deaths.

Protestant "Esther" now begins -

for us and save us from death.

Both Mordecai and Esther then offer heart felt prayers for salvation, too long to print here, but one line suffices to capture the atmospherics: And all Israel cried out with all their might, for they were faced with death.

Esther's preparation and presence before the king:

Here, the protestant reading simply gives a smooth account. Fear and trembling are there but lightly described along with the king's response. The reality is very different. A précis of quotes should suffice:

... she invoked God who watches over all men and saves them. Then she took two maids with her. ... she leaned on one maid's arm ... because her body was too weak to support her; the other followed her mistress, lifting her robes ... Her face radiated joy and love but her heart shrank with fear. King Ahasuerus shows mixed emotions:

... afire with majesty, he looked on her, blazing with anger. The queen sank down. She grew faint and colour drained from her face. But God changed the king's heart. He sprang from his throne in alarm and took her in his arms until she recovered.

In the closing narrative of this compelling history the king has to issue a decree of rehabilitation annulling his original proclamation engineered by Haman. RC prints it in full. Here is a taste:

... But we find that the Jews, marked for annihilation out by this arch scoundrel, are not criminals; they are in fact governed by the most just of laws. They are sons of the Most High, the great and living God to whom we and our ancestors owe the continuing prosperity of our realm. ...

Finale - Praise from Mordecai:

The praise parallels a worship Psalm which perhaps is expected but surprising that it is not recorded in any Protestant version:

... The single nation, mine, is Israel, those who cried out to God and were saved. Yes, the Lord has saved his people, the Lord has delivered us from all these evils, God has worked such signs and great wonders as have never happened among the nations. ...

The RC version of this delightful book gives a proper dramatis persona about the histrionics displayed throughout the narrative. Our own story is a little jaded but not down-graded because of detail absence. Perhaps there should be another "Council of Trent" to re-examine which apocryphal offerings are, or are not valid?!

Quote: God bears with the wicked, but not forever. Cervantes

NB 1: Grateful acknowledgement to "The Jerusalem Bible"

NB 2: Additional thanks via support from Rev Peter Hills, Gillian and Julie Wallis

JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart Word-search for June

	woru-search for June							
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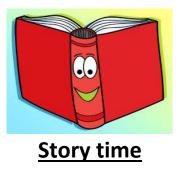
14 Words to find:

Bluetit

Dew; Ducks

Exams

June; Juno; Lawnmower May Nest Roses Summer; Sunshine; Swan; Sixth



The Boy Who Was Always Angry

There was once a boy who got angry at anything and everything and was always saying mean things. His father tried telling him to control his anger, but he never listened.

One day, the father gave him a bag of nails and a hammer. He told him to hammer nails into the fence each time he was angry. The first day, the boy hammered half the nails in the bag into the fence. The next day he hammered fewer nails.

Each day the number of nails that he hammered into the fence got lower.. One fine day, he went up to his father and said he didn't feel the need to hammer any more nails into the fence.

Then the father told the son to remove a nail from the fence for each day he didn't feel angry. After a few days, the son told the father he had finished removing the nails. The father then took the son outside and showed him the holes that were left in the fence. "You may have taken out all the nails, but the holes are still there," said his father.

Then he explained that mean things said in anger can wound people and will always leave a scar.

Moral Of The Story:

Wounds might heal but a scar always remains. Things said in anger can hurt people.

Gill's trills



Welcome to June

No longer can I see the squirrels play. The tree, now clothed in canopy of green, Conceals from sight beneath its leafy shade A myriad lives continuing unseen. Now summer comes and Springtime ebbs away; Thank God for every season's rich display.



I write this on holiday, with my son Peter, in Babbacombe, Devon. Thanks to all to those who sent cards, and said such lovely things about Rosemary. So many mentioned her lovely smile.

Although we may not realise it, simple things like a smile, a word of encouragement, a letter, word, or e-mail of thanks, or just the proverbial pat on the back, can make such a difference to the recipient. We can't all be leaders, preachers, or important "doers ", but, in a small way, we can make others happy. So, KEEP SMILING.

Ken Mills

"In a very popular and well attended church, a visiting local preacher spoke to a lady after the service. He said it was good that she was always present when he came to preach. "Yes" she replied, "when you preach there is always plenty of room."

Pete's tweet

Quote 1: Equal opportunity is good but special privilege even better. Anna Chennault

Quote 2: Change must be measured from a known base line. Evan Shute

JULIE'S NEWS



BIBLE BOOK SEARCH

The Junior Church had some fun on Sunday locating the Bible books hidden within this paragraph. We thought you might like the challenge as well. To help you out, the books to find are listed on the back page. (The Junior Church did not have this helpful aid).

Please note that the books can be spread across sentences.

HAVE FUN!

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. A certain fluke, kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others, it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to numbers of our readers. To others it was a job. We want it to be a most fascinating little moment for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help find them. I will quickly admit it usually takes the preacher to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how you will compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen books of the Bible in this paragraph. HAPPY Hunting

POETRY CORNER

A red, red rose By Robert Burns

O my Luve's like a red, red rose That's newly sprung in June; O my Luve's like the melodie That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass, So deep in luve am I: And I will luve thee still, my dear, Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear, And the rocks melt wi' the sun: I will luve thee still, my dear, While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only Luve And fare thee well, a while! And I will come again, my Luve, Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

and a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

'The Best thing in the World'

What's the best thing in the world? June-rose, by May-dew impearled; Sweet south-wind, that means no rain; Truth, not cruel to a friend; Pleasure, not in haste to end; Beauty, not self-decked and curled Till its pride is over-plain; Love, when, so, you're loved again. What's the best thing in the world? --Something out of it, I think.

SCAMS

HMRC QR code scam

HMRC have identified a new VAT email scam, which may encourage you to scan a QR code. HMRC will never ask you to submit personal information via a QR code. If you have received this email, do not engage.

Report this SCAM to HMRC

Gatwick Airport parking

Police and trading standards officials are warning Gatwick Airport passengers to "do their research" when using meet and greet parking companies.

Sussex Police said customers using the firms continued to report damage to vehicles, vehicles returned dirty, or with more mileage on the clock.

Gatwick Airport reiterated that it had "no relationship with rogue meet and greet parking companies".

Richard Sargeant from WSTS said: "In recent years, we have had to deal with a number of rogue meet and greet companies at Gatwick Airport and it can be very difficult for travellers to decide which parking operator is best to use when you go on holiday or business.

"We would recommend travellers either park with Gatwick Airport direct or use a Trading Standards approved business."

And, as always, **NEVER** give out Personal or Banking details

Prayers worth sharing



Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you for adding one more new month into our lives. As we step into June, we remember all of the blessings that you have showered upon us in the month of May.

Father, you've always fulfilled our sincere prayers and comforted us with abundant love, everyday!

As we come before you today, we pray for all the people who are in need all around the world.

Lord, we pray especially for the basic amenities that have become a challenge for so many people globally, due to varying conditions such as civil wars, drought, poverty, epidemics, natural disasters and so on. Guide your suffering children O Lord and protect them under your wings.

> We thank you for hearing our prayers Father, and we ask all this in the name of Jesus, our Saviour. Amen

> > *******

Answers to the Bible book challenge: Books to Find (in alphabetical order)

Acts; Amos; Esther; Hebrews; James; Job; Judges;

Kings; Lamentations; Luke; Mark; Numbers; Peter

Revelation; Ruth; Titus