

# **THE VOICE**

## **MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE**



**February 2025**

Message from the Manse

## **My Sabbatical Journey: October To December 2024 A Journey of Discovery: Europe and Beyond Ghana**

I had the privilege of embarking on a sabbatical journey, a time for renewal and reflection after 38 years of dedicated service in ministry. This precious period allowed me to step back, recharge, and return with renewed energy and insights to serve our community.

### **Ghana: A Focus on Pastoral Care**

My sabbatical began with a deeply enriching seven weeks in Ghana. I had the opportunity to work with theological seminary students, Churches and groups, focusing on crucial aspects of effective pastoral care:

- **Self-Care:** We explored the importance of pastors prioritizing their own well-being, recognizing that they cannot pour from an empty cup.
- **Safeguarding:** I emphasized the critical need for robust safeguarding practices to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable individuals within the church. Even though the concept seems new and may take years to take root within organisations, workplaces and in Churches.
- **Sexual Ethics:** I engaged in thoughtful discussions on human sexuality, navigating challenging topics with sensitivity and respect. While discussions on transgender issues and cohabitation presented unique complexities, they provided valuable opportunities for learning and growth.

### **A European Odyssey: From Alpine Peaks to Irish Shores**

My sabbatical then took me on a journey of discovery across Europe.

I marvelled at the breath-taking beauty of the Swiss Alps in Zurich, the Austrian Alps in Salzburg (birthplace of Mozart), and the Krimml waterfall (the fifth largest in the world). I also explored the Jura Mountain range, extending over 225 miles across France and Switzerland, experiencing the serenity of the mountains and valleys.

In Northern Ireland, I was captivated by the awe-inspiring power of the rivers and the rich history reflected in the architecture of Belfast. I spent three days in a Catholic Monastery and two days in a Retreat centre before returning to the UK.

## **Exploring the UK: From the Midlands, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire to the Fens in Cambridgeshire.**

While in the UK, I visited various locations, including Coventry, Leamington Spa, Birmingham, Rugby, Warwick, Dudley, Walsall, Rusden, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Luton, and the picturesque village of Stone in Buckinghamshire. I spent two days in the Fens, driving through Wisbech, Kings Lynn, Swaffham with the finest of Georgian buildings, and the town of March in Cambridgeshire, admiring the rivers and flatlands. These visits provided valuable opportunities to share my experiences of ministry with churches and groups, learning from them while simultaneously reflecting on the joys and challenges of 38 years of service. I also learned that the Midlands were once part of the Kingdom of Mercia in the early medieval period.

The final 12 days of my sabbatical were dedicated to rest and reflection. I used this time to process my experiences, to reconnect with my own spiritual journey, and to discern God's calling for the next chapter of my ministry.

I return from my sabbatical with renewed strength, a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our world, and a renewed commitment to serving our Church community with compassion, integrity, and wisdom.

I am deeply grateful to each of you for your prayers and support during my sabbatical. Your encouragement and well wishes would have meant the world to me, especially from the members of my sabbatical committee who helped put all the pastoral care arrangements in place. Indeed, sabbatical is a gift, and I am eternally grateful to God, the church, and my family.

On behalf of my family and on my own behalf, I say "Merci beaucoup" "Danke" – Thank you.

God bless.

Your Friend and Servant,  
Rev George.

## EDITORIAL NOTE



January and December  
Came together, you remember!  
What this magazine will do  
Is cover just one month not two:  
Full of rotas, news, and views  
Favourite writers, who enthuse,  
Educate and entertain,  
Yet, I need to rack my brain  
On how to get more contributions.  
Readers! What are your solutions?  
Write or phone with your suggestions:  
Stories, quizzes, twenty questions.  
Send them in, no bar on age.  
Lots of things to fill each page.

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

**Feb.21<sup>st</sup> 2025**

via email: [gillianbrierley13@gmail.com](mailto:gillianbrierley13@gmail.com)

by hand:

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

## **USEFUL ADDRESSES**

### **SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER:**

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[revpaulglass@gmail.com](mailto:revpaulglass@gmail.com)

### **MINISTER:**

REV. GEORGE QUARM **01483 575432**  
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### **CHURCH OFFICE:**

Bushy Hill Drive, Guildford, GU1 2SH. **01483 537655**  
[office@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk)

### **PROPERTY LETTINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR:** **01483 537655**  
[lettings@merrowmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto: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 **07966 428222**

### **EDITOR – ‘The Voice’**

GILLIAN VARLEY **01483 495567**  
[gillianbrierley13@gmail.com](mailto: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 HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY

## Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date	Time	Vestry	Worship Leader	PA/AV	Door
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am HC	Iris Walker	Doreen Siame	Cari Rayner	Sheila Shackleton Ruth McCulloch
Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am 6.30pmATS	Hugh Bradley Helen Belsham		Glenys Magill Glenys Magill	Joyce Goodall Julie Wallis
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup> L/A	10.30am	Suzanne Burnham		Jane Vinall	Maggie Woolcock Jan Marshall
Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10.30am	Joan Wells	Gillian Varley	Cari Rayner	Sheila Shackleton Julie Wallis

## Communion stewards:

	<u>Preparation:</u>	<u>Assisting:</u>
Feb.2nd	Doreen Siame	Doreen Siame

## Flower Rota:

Feb 2nd : Joan Wells

Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> : Doreen Siame

Feb.16<sup>th</sup>: Sheila Shackleton

Feb. 23<sup>th</sup> : Doreen Siame

## Sunday Morning Coffee Rota:

2nd Feb. Hugh and Wendy Bradley.

9th Feb. Joan Wells and Jan Walker.

16th Feb. Julie Wallis and Helen Belsham.

23rd Feb. Maggie Woolcock and Margaret Hyam.

## Charity:

Christian Aid

Bible Society

Embrace the Middle East

Action for Children

## Organ Rota

Gillian Varley – morning services Feb.2nd; 16<sup>th</sup>; 23<sup>rd</sup>

Mark Hargreaves Feb 9<sup>th</sup>

Hymnal+ - evening services

# Women's Fellowship

on

Monday 3rd February 2.30 pm

The speaker will be Helena Burke,

The Community Fundraiser for Phyllis Tuckwell.

We will be presenting Helena with £115 which was collected at our Carol Service in December. All are welcome to hear the work of Phyllis Tuckwell.

Tea and biscuits will be served afterwards.

## Drivers needed!

I am putting out a request for drivers to bring the ladies to Church for our meeting. More and more are needing transport. Could you let me know if you are available on the first Monday of the month.

The meetings start at 2.30 pm and we are normally finished by 3.45 pm.

Many thanks Suzanne

## Action for Children

raised £921 for the year 2024. Thank you to everyone who supports the Methodist Children's Charity throughout the year. Suzanne

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## Church Bible Studies

All are welcome.

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## Morning Bible Study

at Lavender Cottage, Marlyns Drive, Burpham.

On Tuesdays Feb.11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am

continuing our study of Paul's letter to the Romans

Please contact Gillian Varley for further details

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## Evening Bible Study

Thursday February 20th

led by Julie Wallis in the church at 7.30pm

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## 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.

## Weekly Coffee Morning

on Thursdays from 10.30 - 11.45am

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.

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On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each month this is usually

### **A Charity Coffee Morning**

Come along to help us support a different charity each month

On February 13<sup>th</sup> our **Charity Coffee Morning** will be in aid of

## TRANSFORM TRADE

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

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## NEWS & VIEWS

### **Whatever happened to Yellow Pages?**

Revd. Allan Taylor's circuit letter about the nineteenth century poet and hymn writer, Dora Greenwell, who was a friend of Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, had a special resonance for me. She lived in Lanchester, County Durham and I used to live near her, but not in the nineteenth century!!

This circuit letter from Allan led me to reflect how, unwittingly, many of you contributed to a lasting memorial to her. How?

At the beginning of the 21st. century we were encouraged to pass in our old Yellow Pages directories for recycling. The Woodland Trust was a beneficiary of this scheme and received almost £500,000 from Yell. Working with the Woodland Trust, a project was created and designed by the local community of Lanchester. Over 2,000 native trees and shrubs plus wild flowers were planted in more than 8 acres just a few hundred metres from where Dora Greenwell had lived, and it was named DORA'S WOOD.

Sadly, with the passage of time, now my connection with the village is limited to Christmas card news, but DORA'S WOOD will last forever. Thank you Allan for stirring some memories.

IRIS



# DIARY DATES & NEWS

## Upholstery Classes at Merrow

[janet.rowland](mailto:janet.rowland)

I have been running Upholstery and Soft Furnishing courses at Merrow Methodist Church for some years. Why not come along and explore the craft of upholstery and learn to do traditional and modern techniques depending on your project, whether you're restoring an heirloom or upcycling a piece of furniture such as a foot stool, chair, headboard, etc.



Alternatively, you can learn to make curtains, Roman blinds, cushions etc. to a professional standard. All done in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

The classes are suitable for all abilities, from complete beginners upwards. So it doesn't matter if you've never picked up a tack hammer or used a sewing machine, as you work on your own project at your own pace with my help and guidance.

The new term starts again in January so please contact me for more information and to book your place.

Email [janet.rowland@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janet.rowland@yahoo.co.uk) or phone 07789 744070.

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## The Women's Fellowship Carol Service on December 2<sup>nd</sup>

was led by the Rev. Darlene McCarley

and was followed by tea in the foyer.

....and when it was all over and the tables cleared, some just took time to relax!

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## The Carol Service on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>

was led by the Rev. Peter Hills

There were carols and readings by the children of the Chinese Church  
and more carols from our own choir as well  
as many favourite carols for the congregation

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## The Church Family Afternoon Party

took place on January 12<sup>th</sup>

It was a great success in spite of the cold weather  
and there were activities to suit all tastes

read on ....

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Games for the active.....

.....the less active



.....the thoughtful

.....the puzzlers

.....and the rest!

I'm told that is a game on the table





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**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025**  
**Friday 7 March**  
A service for everyone!

**Emmanuel  
Church**

**2 pm**

**Shepherds Lane  
Guildford, Surrey  
GU2 9SJ**

**Cook Islands** *I made you wonderful*

**INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION**  
24-7, 365 Days a year. Prayer movement. Ecumenical. International. Women-led

Please put this date in your diaries  
and support the women of the Cook Islands  
who have prepared this service

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## **JUNIOR PAGE** – for the young and young at heart

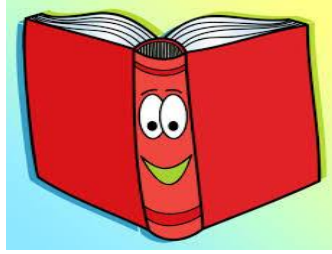
### A February word-search

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

Words to find: Berry; Boots; Bulb  
Cold  
February; Frost  
Gloves  
Hat  
Ice  
Leaf  
Robin  
Skating; Ski; Sleet; Snowdrop  
Umbrella  
Vest

### **February facts:**

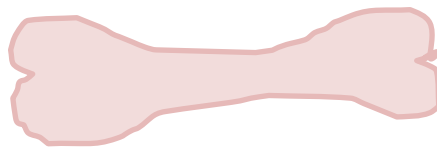
- **February 13** is **Mardi Gras**, **Fat Tuesday** or **Shrove Tuesday**, which is the final feasting day before the Christian tradition of Lent begins on the following day, Ash Wednesday.
- **February 14** is **Ash Wednesday**, which marks the start of Lent.
- **February 14** is always Valentine's Day. Today, the holiday is celebrated with love, flowers, and chocolate.



## Story time

### The dog and the bone

Once, there was a dog who wandered the streets night and day in search of food. One day, he found a big juicy bone,



and he immediately grabbed it in his mouth and took it home.

On his way home, he crossed a river and saw another dog with a bone in its mouth. He was jealous and wanted that bone for himself too, but as he opened his mouth, the bone he was biting dropped onto the ground, rolled down the river-bank and fell into the water, where it sank out of sight.

The dog ran to the water's edge but the river was deep, and he howled with frustration. The other dog, hearing the noise ran off to enjoy his bone somewhere else and so, that night, the greedy dog went home hungry.

#### **Moral of the story:**

If we always *envy* others, we may lose what we already have, just like the greedy dog.

### What is ENVY?

Envy is when someone feels sad or upset because someone else has something they want and they wish it was theirs. It can involve wanting a possession, like a toy, or a skill, like running fast or being good at maths.

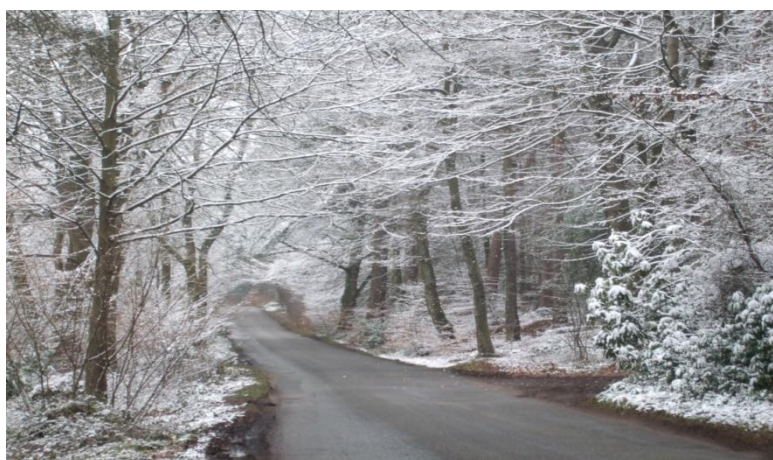
(Jealousy is the feeling you have against the person who has something that you have not got.)

# Gill's trills



As the years pass and the joys of winter,  
sledging, building snowmen and snowballing are behind me,  
I find the comforts of staying warm and snug at home far more enticing.

Yet, to look out on untrodden snow, or scenes like this, awakens in me a great  
thanks-giving to our God, who created such beauty.



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# Ken's Pen

Eight years' old Jenny was asked by her Mum to pop along to the local shop for some bread. Nearly two hours later, with Mum very anxious, Jenny came home safely. "Why have you taken so long?" Mum asked. "I'm sorry, Mummy" she replied. "I met my friend Mary; her lovely pet dog has died. I know I couldn't replace her pet, but I stayed to help her cry"

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There are many times in our life when we hear of a friend or relative who has lost a loved one, or who has received bad news about their own health. We offer help. "You've only got to ask" we may say. Perhaps the best thing we can do is to visit them; not to give them advice or verbal support, but just "to help them cry"

.....

## Ken's pen continued

A little girl was sitting on her grandma's lap, listening to a bedtime story. From time to time she touched grandma's wrinkled face, and then felt her own face.

"Grandma, did God make you?" "Why, yes, he did, a very long time ago."

"Did God make me too?" "God made you not long ago, my love."

Feeling both faces once more, the little girl said "God's getting better at it, isn't he."

.....  
After church one Sunday, having listened to a rather dull sermon from the elderly vicar, a boy asked him "Did you say that our bodies came from dust?" "Yes, I did" said the vicar. "And when we die we all go back to dust?" "That's right. So glad you paid attention, but why do you ask?" "Well" the boy replied, "you had better come and look under my bed, because someone is either coming or going."

With Greetings once again from Puddletown.

Keep those smiles going. Ken Mills

## JULIE'S NEWS

The church poster for February 2025





# Walker's talk

Here they are!

The answers you have all been waiting for to the Christmas Quiz.

## ANSWERS TO IDIOMS QUIZ

<b>Section A : Inanimate objects</b> eg A Fuel TTF 1 .Fall ATFH 2 T Last S 3 L A T End OTT 4 Let OTH 5 T At W 6 G O O J Free C 7 Put ASII 8 T Ship HAS 9 TMB In TA 10 KTC Down TR	Add fuel to the fire Fall at the first hurdle The last straw Light at the end of the tunnel Let off the hook Tilting at windmills Get out of jail free card Put a sock in it The ship has already sailed Too many balls in the air Kick the can down the road	<b>Section D : Parts of the body</b> 1 C O O N T Spite O F 2 With E B T Y S 3 T O n Y F 4 O f f T T O Y H 5 K O n e s F C 6 A A R O f T 7 A P O f F 8 G M T A l i k e 9 . T G T B i T B Y T 10 H I n T C	Cut of ones nose to spite ones face With eyes bigger than your stomach Thinking on your feet Off the top of your head Keep ones fingers crossed As a rule of thumb A pound of flesh Great minds think alike To get the bit between your teeth  Head in the clouds
<b>Section B : Animals</b> 1 D Like F 2 In T Dog H 3 K Two B W O S 4 B Up TWT 5 L A C With I H Cut O 6 C G Your T 7 G Y D I A Row 8 C P Before S 9 L A D With A B 10 P T Cat A T P	Dropping like flies In the dog house Kill two birds with one stone Barking up the wrong tree Like a chicken with its head cut off Cat got your tongue Get your ducks in a row Cast pearls before swine Like a dog with a bone Put the cat amongst the pigeon	<b>Section E Food</b> 1 T K Which S Y B I B 2 B Home T B 3 P A I L Y E I O B 4 T I With A P O S 5 T C R To T T 6 T S S O f A P 7 T W I s Y O 8 A K A s M 9 T M C S The B 10 . F W B No P	To know which side your bread is buttered Bringing home the bacon Put all your eggs in one basket Take it with a pinch of salt The cream rises to the top Two sandwiches short of a picnic The world is your oyster As keen as mustard Too many cooks spoil the broth Fine words butter no parsnips
<b>Section C : Money</b> 1 P Up TT 2 From RTR 3 I F A P I For A P 4 A P For Y T 5 All T G I N G 6 G For B 7 A B P Always T U 8 H W P The P C T T 9 K N T G That L The G E 10 P T The N	Pick up the tab From rags to riches In for a penny in for a pound A penny for your thoughts All that glitters is not gold Go for broke A bad penny always turns up He who pays the piper calls the tune Kill not the goose that lays the golden egg Pay through the nose	<b>Section F Random</b> 1 T F O f f T W 2 With A F T C 3 I T F O f T 4 L To F A D 5 T B e A A E A 6 . 5 Your T C 7 A G M I s H T F 8 A P D 9 To S W T 10 M L o v e s C	To fall off the wagon With a fine toothed comb In the fullness of time Live to fight another day The be all and end all Show your true colours A good man is hard to find  A pipe dream To sink without trace Misery loves company

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Notes for the following Poetry page

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in 1850 and died in 1894 in his island home in Samoa.

He was a Scottish novelist, poet, essayist, and travel writer, but is probably best known for the classics: *Treasure Island*, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, *Kidnapped*, and *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

The poems overleaf capture the days before the luxury of central heating, when Victorian children (and grown-ups) endured getting out of their beds into icy bedrooms, but found their imaginations captured, once fires were lit later in the day, gazing at the flickering flames.

# POETRY CORNER

## Winter-Time

by Robert Louis Stevenson

1. Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,  
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;  
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,  
A blood-red orange, sets again.
2. Before the stars have left the skies,  
At morning in the dark I rise;  
And shivering in my nakedness,  
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.
3. Close by the jolly fire I sit  
To warm my frozen bones a bit;  
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore  
The colder countries round the door.
4. When to go out, my nurse doth wrap  
Me in my comforter and cap;  
The cold wind burns my face, and blows  
Its frosty pepper up my nose.
5. Black are my steps on silver sod;  
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;  
And tree and house, and hill and lake,  
Are frosted like a wedding cake.

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## Armies In The Fire

1. The lamps now glitter down the street;  
Faintly sound the falling feet;  
And the blue even slowly falls  
About the garden trees and walls.
2. Now in the falling of the gloom  
The red fire paints the empty room:  
And warmly on the roof it looks,  
And flickers on the back of books.
3. Armies march by tower and spire  
Of cities blazing, in the fire;--  
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,  
The armies fall, the lustre dies.
4. Then once again the glow returns;  
Again the phantom city burns;  
And down the red-hot valley, lo!  
The phantom armies marching go!
5. Blinking embers, tell me true  
Where are those armies marching to,  
And what the burning city is  
That crumbles in your furnaces!

# SCAMS

**Texts** – purporting to be from people you know, asking you to buy gift cards on their behalf for a friend or relative in need. These are now common scams.  
Do not respond.

from the post office or delivery-firm re. an undelivered parcel, asking you to contact them to arrange a new date – DON'T

OR

asking for payment for re-delivery – Don't Respond

**Phone calls** – cold calls, apparently from your bank or the police, asking you to contact them immediately because of fraudulent use of a card.  
- DON'T

IF IN DOUBT – DON'T

NEVER GIVE PERSONAL OR BANKING DETAILS

Your bank, or the police, will never call you and ask you to move money to a new account on any pretext, however plausible.!!!!!!

Hang up and then phone your bank on a number you know to be correct so that you can confirm that all is well.

## Scam Parking-fine texts

The text says a parking charge notice was issued by a local council and provides a link for online payment. It asks for immediate payment and threatens prosecution if the fine is not paid.

**delete** the message

**don't click** on any payment link

**don't give** any personal information.

What to do if you think you have been a victim of this scam - Report it to Action Fraud by:

- visiting [the Action Fraud website](#)(opens new window)
- calling 0300 123 2040

You can also report scam websites to the National Cyber Security Centre. Texts can be forwarded to 7726.

If you have any questions about parking in the borough visit our [Parking and Travel](#) pages.  
Published on: 20 September 2024

## Prayers worth sharing



A prayer by Andrew Pratt  
from the Methodist Church Prayer Handbook

God, inspire prophetic action far beyond the words we pray,  
set the institutions tumbling, letting in the light of day.  
Take away our greed and grasping, feathering nests of self-concern,  
where we harbour in an instant more than others ever earn.  
Teach us how to share the bounty you have given to our hands  
till all poverty is ended, wealth is shared though all your lands.  
Amen

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God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;  
Courage to change the things I can;  
And wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

(prayer attributed to Reinhold Neibuhr, 1892-1971)

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May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you.  
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

(A Judeo-Christian Blessing, based on Numbers 6:24-26)