

THE VOICE

MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE



May 2025

Message for May

From The Reverend Peter Hills

He was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. (Isaiah 53.8)

For you will not abandon my soul to death, nor suffer your faithful one to see the pit. (Psalm 16.10)

Jesus is risen, alleluia! Worship and praise him, alleluia! Now our Redeemer bursts from the grave; lost to the tomb, Christ rises to save. (StF 304 v.1)

The cheering crowd's 'Hosanna!' is now an echo. The baying crowd's 'Crucify him!' is silenced. We have gazed upon the man on the cross and wept tears of sorrow. We have stood beside Mary in the Garden, looked with her upon the risen Lord and wept tears of joy. In the church's life we are now in the fifty days of Easter, and every prayer is lifted by an Alleluia! The climax at the end of these fifty days will be Pentecost.

The readings for the Sundays following Easter Day continue to celebrate the Resurrection: the coming of the risen Christ to the disciples, and later his Ascension into heaven – in other words, the moment when Jesus said his final farewells to those who loved him, with the promise of return – and the coming of the Holy Spirit, transforming, teaching, enlightening, sanctifying, beautifying, strengthening and loving.

During these fifty days, we also hear readings from the book of Acts, and the intention is that these should always be included, if necessary replacing the Old Testament reading. It is very much a season of 'what happened next'. Of Peter and John healing in the name of Jesus: the choosing of seven deacons, to distribute food and minister to Greek-speaking Jews; of martyrdom: James the brother of John is beheaded, Stephen, one of the new deacons, is stoned; and of mission: Philip to Samaria and towards Gaza; and Saul the Pharisee, sent to capture followers of Jesus and himself captured, body and soul, by the risen Jesus – leading to the spreading of the Good News to gentiles and pagans.

These readings describe the crucible in which our New Testament was fashioned, from the memories of those who were there, passed on to a new generation. They remind us of our birth as a church. Through it all, Jesus is still at work, the risen Jesus, for ever scarred and pierced, as present as he ever was, though now invisible. It is our story, as much as the story of Peter and Paul and the rest.

The story is rooted in history: real people, real places. Yet it is a Truth for today. It is a truth for those suffering in war, under despotic rule, grieving deeply, struggling to stay afloat, wondering whether life is worth living at all; for people of faith and no faith.

I have been enjoying a documentary series following a diverse group of 'celebrities' along a pilgrim route in Austria and Switzerland. As well as enjoying scenery I know

well and love, it has been uplifting to hear people talk of faith and life. They include an agnostic and a Muslim, and share their beliefs and doubts in a respectful and – there's no other word for it – loving way.

That may be all that we are able to do;

but we have a treasure to share which I think trumps all others:

Go and tell others, Christ is alive! Love is eternal, faith and hope thrive. What God intended, Jesus fulfilled; what God conceives can never be killed. Christ is arisen!

Now all can see how humankind is meant to be free. Though powers of darkness threaten their worst, through every barrier, Jesus has burst. (ibid. verses 4 & 5)

Every blessing in this Easter period.

Peter



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PROPERTY LETTINGS

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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 May will be:

PAULINE DANIELS **01483 958905**

EDITOR – ‘The Voice’

GILLIAN VARLEY **01483 495567**
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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.

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EDITORIAL NOTE



May

My poems each month may not be to your taste,
For they are short and sometimes penned in haste.
Each month I try to vary what I write,
Make sure it scans and get the spelling right;
Yet words cannot begin to compliment
The Hawthorne-blossom's sweet and heady scent,
The bridal white of hedgerow's Spring array,
The glory of "the darling buds of May."



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

May 22nd

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

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

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There is a heavy fine for publishing such material without permission.

70th Anniversary

This year is the 70th Birthday of Merrow Methodist Church and we will be holding a special Anniversary Service on Sunday June 22nd. We will also be getting together at many events throughout this year as you will read about here in The Voice.

In this anniversary year we would also invite each one of you to pause, ponder and reflect, at a personal level, on your own experience at this Church. We thought the following questions may help guide this reflection.

What brought you to Merrow Methodist Church in the first place?

Why have you stayed?

How has your faith been influenced and expressed?

What is your hope for this church now and in the years to come?

This is designed as a personal exercise for you.

Some people may find it helpful to have a conversation with someone of their choosing, there will be people happy to do this with you.

Some of you may wish to write your initial thoughts down, returning to it at intervals during the year.

Please use these questions as you see best. They are designed to start you thinking. Do add more if this helps.

If you feel you would like to share your reflections more widely, there will be opportunities for doing this later in the year but this is certainly not a requirement. This exercise is simply designed for your own personal benefit.

To assist you with this, we will produce and circulate some cards containing these key questions, as above, so you can keep a focus on your reflections throughout this 70th Anniversary year.

Hopefully we can all discover something through this exercise!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAY

Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date	Time	Vestry	Worship Leader	PA/AV	Door
May 4 th HC	10.30am	Hugh Bradley	Gillian Varley	Glenys Magill	Wendy Bradley Julie Wallis
May 11 th	10.30am	Iris Walker		Jane Vinall	Jan Marshall Joyce Goodall
	3.00pm	Helen Belsham		Glenys Magill	Wendy Bradley Julie Wallis
May 18 th	10.30am	Hugh Bradley		Cari Rayner	Maggie Woolcock Ruth McCulloch
May 25th	10.30am	Combined	Service at West	Horsley	

Communion stewards:

May 4 th	<u>Preparation:</u> Suzanne Burnham & Glenys Magill	<u>Assisting:</u> Julie Wallis
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Flower Rota:

4 th May	Doreen Siame;
11 th May	Sheila Shackleton
18 th May	Suzanne Burnham
25 th May	Jan Kemp

Sunday Morning Coffee Rota & Charities:

4th May. Glenys Magill	Coffee Funds	Hugh Bradley
11th May. Hugh and Wendy Bradley	Christian Aid.	Hugh Bradley
18th May. Joan Wells and Jan Walker.	JMA.	Hugh Bradley
25th May. Julie Wallis and Helen Belsham.	Transform Trade	Glenys Magil

Organ Rota:

May 4 th	10.30am	Gillian Varley
May 11 th & 18 th	10.30am	Hymnal +
May 11 th	3.00pm	Mark Hargreaves
(Circuit Service)		

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship on Monday 2nd May 2.30 pm

Afternoon Tea to commemorate VE Day

All are welcome

Morning Bible Study

Continuing our study of Mark's Gospel

at Lavender Cottage, Marlyns Drive, Burpham.

On Tuesday May 27th, led by Gillian Varley

All are welcome

Evening Bible Study

May 15th at 7.30pm

at Merrow Methodist Church

led by Julie Wallis

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 March 27th everyone at the coffee morning were able to share in
a very special occasion: John Martin had just celebrated his 100th birthday



Jan gave him a birthday card from us all and we sang "Happy Birthday"
as John blew out his candle.....and the cake was very tasty!

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

This month you are invited to a
COFFEE MORNING
in aid of



on Thursday 8th May
10.30am to 12pm

at Merrow Methodist Church



Delicious homemade cakes – Bring your friends and family!

DIARY DATES & NEWS

The Merrow Scout Tea Party



The hall was full of people getting to know each other whilst being treated to a delightful afternoon tea. Sandwiches, cakes and biscuits were served and in many cases prepared by the scouts who were attentive to our every need.



A well deserved break after all their hard work.
A lovely afternoon, enjoyed by all.



70 years at

MERROW METHODIST CHURCH

Yes – it is true – Merrow has reached 70 and it won't be long before the celebrations will be kicking off.

Prepare to join in the fun!

Please **NOTE** the following dates for your diary and celebrate with us all!

1. CHURCH ANNIVERSARY – SUNDAY 22ND JUNE 2025 – 10.30am

This will be led by Rev. David Coote.

There will be a buffet meal afterwards

2. FAMILY PICNIC – SATURDAY 2ND AUGUST 2025 (2.30pm – 5pm)

This will be for ALL ages

3. SONGS OF PRAISE SERVICE – SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (6.30pm)

(continued on next page)

4. CHURCH QUIZ – SATURDAY OCTOBER 18TH 2025 (7pm)

Get your thinking caps on and your teams ready – theme is on 70 years!

5. CHURCH CONCERT – SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15TH 2025 (7pm)

Prepare to be entertained by the Merrow Methodist Singers and other acts. There may well be some surprises!

6. CHRISTMAS FINALE – MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2025

Come to some or come to all – but let's make this a joyous celebration.

The Church Concert on Sat.15th November.

Now that our choir is small in number we would like you to augment it for this occasion so that we can have an item by 'The Merrow Methodist Singers.'

No auditions and very little rehearsal required, only the ability to 'sing something simple' and in tune! Gillian Varley (editor/organist) is planning the programme and is eager to hear from any 'would-be' participants.

Several people have already offered to take part but perhaps you have a 'party-piece' to offer.

SKETCHES

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ANY OFFERS CONSIDERED

The Community Garden



The April Coffee Morning raised £186 for this community project. Coffee and cake was enjoyed in the foyer, whilst the workers, Charlotte and Helen, worked on planting up the beds outside. We were delighted to see Catherine and Frank Winder Who were able to come along to see how the garden flourishes.

Last month we congratulated Judith Kyeremeh on her graduation.



The news reader Reeta Chakrabarti presented Judith with her degree.



THY KINGDOM COME

Thursday 29th May - Sunday 8th June 2025

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that has spread from a dream of possibility into a movement. Christians from 172 countries and more than 85 denominations and traditions have taken part. It is now that time of year when we can start to think of the five people that we might pray for this year during the period of The Kingdom Come, that they might come to know Jesus.

Thy Kingdom Come celebrates it's 10th anniversary this year. As in previous years there will be two booklets to help us focus our thoughts - a Novena written by Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York and a Prayer Journal written by a different contributor each day. The theme this year is the Lord's Prayer, the prayer that Jesus shared with his disciples which we still use regularly today. Copies of the booklets will be available shortly and can also be viewed online. You might like to focus on one or use both!

In our circuit Adam Payne has kindly offered to produce some short videos to accompany the booklets and more details will be published in due course.

Number 5 and Mulberry House

Your donations for Number 5 and Mulberry house are always gratefully received.

Please continue to support and pray for these local charities

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FAMILY NEWS

Happy family news for the Winders earlier this year - Chris Winder pictured with his daughter Zoe following her marriage to Mike Ryan on 18th January 2025.



Zoe and Mike were married in their home church of St Mary's, Andover but due to building works, photo opportunities at the church were limited! They chose to get married on what would have been Cynthia and Frank's 78th wedding anniversary in tribute to Zoe's grandparents and their enduring marriage - Zoe wore a brooch belonging to her beloved Gran (given by Christine). Unfortunately Frank wasn't well enough to attend but the service was live-streamed for us and Mike's family in South Africa, and Frank's other grandchildren and their families represented us.

Anuonyam's first Birthday

On Sunday 27th April, Merrow joined with Solomon and Judith Kyeremeh to celebrate the first birthday of their daughter, Anuonyam.



It is amazing how quickly time flies though as it seems only yesterday that we were all celebrating her birth and christening.

JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart

A May word-game

Can you answer each category with a word beginning with **M**?

Country _____

Town or City _____

Boys name _____

Girls name _____

Person in the bible _____

Bible place name _____

Fish _____

Fruit _____

Flower _____

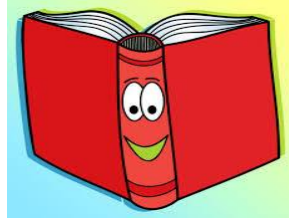
Animal _____

Bird _____

The Anglo-Saxon name for May was 'Tri-Milchi' because cows could be milked three times a day due to eating the lush new Spring grass: but who were the Anglo-Saxons?

The Anglo-Saxons were a mix of tribes from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

The land they settled in became known as 'Angle-land' - England.



Story time

'George' somehow missed the April edition but here he is in May!
People of a nervous disposition are advised not to read this Hilaire Belloc poem

George

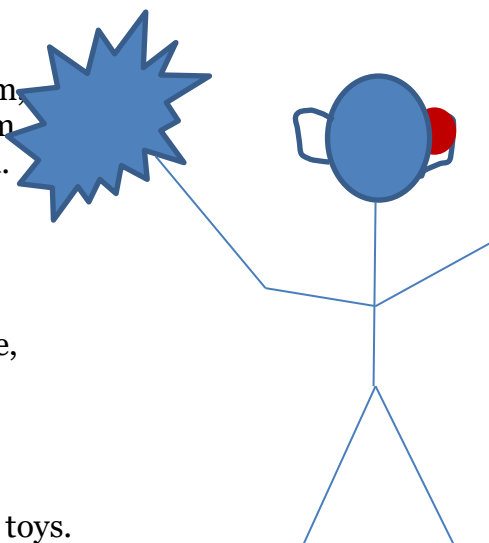
Who played with a Dangerous Toy, and suffered a Catastrophe of considerable Dimensions

When George's Grandmamma was told
That George had been as good as gold,
She promised in the afternoon
To buy him an Immense BALLOON.
And so she did; but when it came,
It got into the candle flame,
And being of a dangerous sort
Exploded with a loud report!

The lights went out! The windows broke!
The room was filled with reeking smoke.
And in the darkness shrieks and yells
Were mingled with electric bells,
And falling masonry and groans,
And crunching, as of broken bones,
And dreadful shrieks, when, worst of all,
The house itself began to fall!
It tottered, shuddering to and fro,
Then crashed into the street below-
Which happened to be Savile Row.

When help arrived, among the dead
Were Cousin Mary, Little Fred,
The Footmen (both of them), the Groom,
The man that cleaned the Billiard-Room,
The Chaplain, and the Still-Room Maid.
And I am dreadfully afraid
That Monsieur Champignon, the Chef,
Will now be permanently deaf-
And both his aides are much the same;
While George, who was in part to blame,
Received, you will regret to hear,
A nasty lump behind the ear.

Moral: The moral is that little boys
Should not be given dangerous toys.





Gill's trills

May is the month of the flowers and the month of two Bank-holidays.
Some traditional celebrations take place this month including.

May 1st – May day is still celebrated in towns and communities all over England with the crowning of the May Queen and the May Queen's procession. She may ride in a horse drawn carriage or even on horseback accompanied by floats decorated by local businesses and churches.

In Hawai May Day is "Lei Day". Leis are garlands or wreaths that are often made with native Hawaiian flowers such as plumeria.

Folklore and Fun

*A dry May and a leaking June
Make the farmer whistle a merry tune.*

"A warm January, a cold May."

*Among the changing months, May stands confessed
The sweetest, and in fairest colours dressed* – James Thomson - Scottish poet

Ken's Pen

Josephus a non-Christian Jewish historian AD33 to 100, wrote this, about Jesus:-
It was at that time that a man appeared (if man is the right word) who had all the attributes of a man but seemed to be something greater. His actions were superhuman, for he worked such wonderful and amazing miracles that I for one cannot regard him as a man; yet in view of his likeness to ourselves I cannot regard him as an angel either.
If, at any time, we begin to doubt the stories of Jesus, read this again.

.....

Mum walked into her young son's bedroom and saw him trying to bandage his finger. "What's happened?" she said. "I cut my finger and it hurt" "But I didn't hear you crying." "No, I thought you were out." the lad replied

.....

The Junior church teacher had explained the story of the Prodigal Son. She asked "Now who was not pleased when he came back?" "The fatted calf" a bright girl replied.

With more greetings from Puddletown, God bless, Ken Mills

VARLEY'S PARLEZ

This is an old story which has appeared many times over the years, but is well worth another airing:

A company chairman was given a ticket for a performance of Schubert's Symphony No8, 'The Unfinished. He had another appointment that evening and so passed the ticket on to the company's 'work-study consultant'. The next morning the chairman asked how the consultant had enjoyed it, but instead of a few words of thanks and comments the consultant handed him a memorandum which read as follows:

- a) For considerable periods the four oboe players had nothing to do. Their number should be reduced and their work spread over the whole orchestra, thus eliminating peaks of inactivity.
- b) All twelve violins were playing identical notes. This seems unnecessary duplication and the staff of this section should be drastically cut. If a large volume of sound is required, electronic amplification could be used.
- c) Much effort was absorbed in the playing of demi-semi-quavers. This seems an unnecessary refinement and it is recommended that all such notes should be rounded up to the nearest semi-quaver, thus making it possible for trainees and lower grade operators to be used.
- d) There is no useful purpose in the horns repeating the passage already handled by the strings. If all such redundant passages were eliminated, the time taken for the work could be reduced from two hours to twenty minutes.

Conclusion:

If Schubert had attended to these matters, the symphony would probably not have needed to remain unfinished after all.

Hugh's News

Birding with Hugh (Part 2)!

In the last edition of The Voice we left Tommy and Tina starting to prepare a nest on the 19th March. I say Tommy and Tina but in truth since then Tina has done all the work?

I hear some say " Isn't that always the case....." but I could not possibly comment!
(continued on next page)

I have shared my nest box App with my nine year old grandson and he could not believe how industrious Tina was over the next few days and it gave him a real insight in to something he had previously taken for granted.

To assist in the nest building I left a pile of straw on one of the bushes in the garden and Tina selected some pieces for the initial structure. She then added lots of leaves and moss and finally diverse feathers as a lining. In just five days she had filled the box!



It is difficult to say for sure when Tina laid her first egg but I spotted one for the first time on March 28th. Female blue tits typically lay one egg per day until their clutch is complete, which usually consists of 8-12 eggs.



At a hefty 1 gram each, a blue tit egg weighs in at a tenth of its mother's total body weight. She does not begin incubating her eggs until the last one is laid, which means her first could lie dormant for a fortnight before development of the embryo inside begins. Tina did a good job in keeping them well hidden, but I managed to count at least eight with the possibility of a couple more.



The female spends up to 15 days incubating using a featherless area of skin on her tummy called a brood patch to keep the eggs warm. Her partner is meant to bring her deliveries of food during this time but unfortunately there seemed to be no sign of Tommy, and Tina occasionally left the eggs to feed herself.

She also decided to incubate the eggs right at the bottom of the box so it has been difficult to follow the action over the last couple of weeks.

(Note to myself to adjust focus of camera before next year!)



I was beginning to worry that with Tommy apparently gone AWOL, Tina might struggle to successfully incubate the eggs, but I was thrilled when the chicks began to hatch on Easter Saturday with others following on Easter Sunday. And lo behold Tommy suddenly reappeared passing food to Tina to feed the babies....



I still do not know how many there are but all will be revealed in next month's edition of The Voice.... HRB 22/04/25.

POETRY CORNER

It is with great sorrow that I report the death of Peter Youngs who had contributed several poems to this page over the last few years.

Watched a Blackbird

by Thomas Hardy

I watched a blackbird on a budding sycamore
One Easter Day, when sap was stirring twigs to the core;
I saw his tongue, and crocus-coloured bill
Parting and closing as he turned his trill;
Then he flew down, seized on a stem of hay,
And upped to where his building scheme was under way,
As if so sure a nest was never shaped on spray.

Love and Friendship

by [Emily Brontë](#)

Love is like the wild rose-briar,
Friendship like the holly-tree --
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms
But which will bloom most constantly?
The wild-rose briar is sweet in the spring,
Its summer blossoms scent the air;
Yet wait till winter comes again
And who will call the wild-briar fair?
Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now
And deck thee with the holly's sheen,
That when December blights thy brow
He may still leave thy garland green.



Parcel deliveries

These scams often begin with text messages or emails claiming to be from delivery services stating that you have a package waiting, or that there's an issue requiring your attention and pre-payment is required.

Engaging with these can lead to identity theft and/or financial loss.

- **Verify delivery notifications:** Always check directly with the delivery company through their official website or app rather than clicking on links in unsolicited messages.
- **Avoid unsolicited packages:** If you receive a package you didn't order or a request to pay for an unsolicited delivery, be cautious. Report any such incidents to the delivery company and avoid interacting with suspicious messages.

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.
- Telephone scams: Fraudsters often masquerade as your Bank/ the Police/HMRC etc.....

If a caller suggests that you phone the Customer Services number on the back of your bank card to confirm that they are who they say they are – DO NOT do this. The fraudster keeps the line open and you will be speaking with them again, not your bank!

Instead, hang up, then check with your bank to confirm that it was a scam.

My most recent scam email purported to be re. my TV license, saying that I needed to renew it immediately through a link, as it would expire in 2 days. This was not true, and on checking the email address it came from, it was that of a Moroccan Travel Agency!!!!!!

I also got a parcel delivery scam text this month pretending to be from EVRI.

Prayers worth sharing



A prayer of **Francis Drake**

Disturb us, Lord,
when We are too well pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord,
when with the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst for the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth
We have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord,
to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars.
We ask You to push back the horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love. Amen

A prayer of **Reinhold Niebuhr**

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.
Living one day at a time; Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right If I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him Forever and ever in the next.

Amen