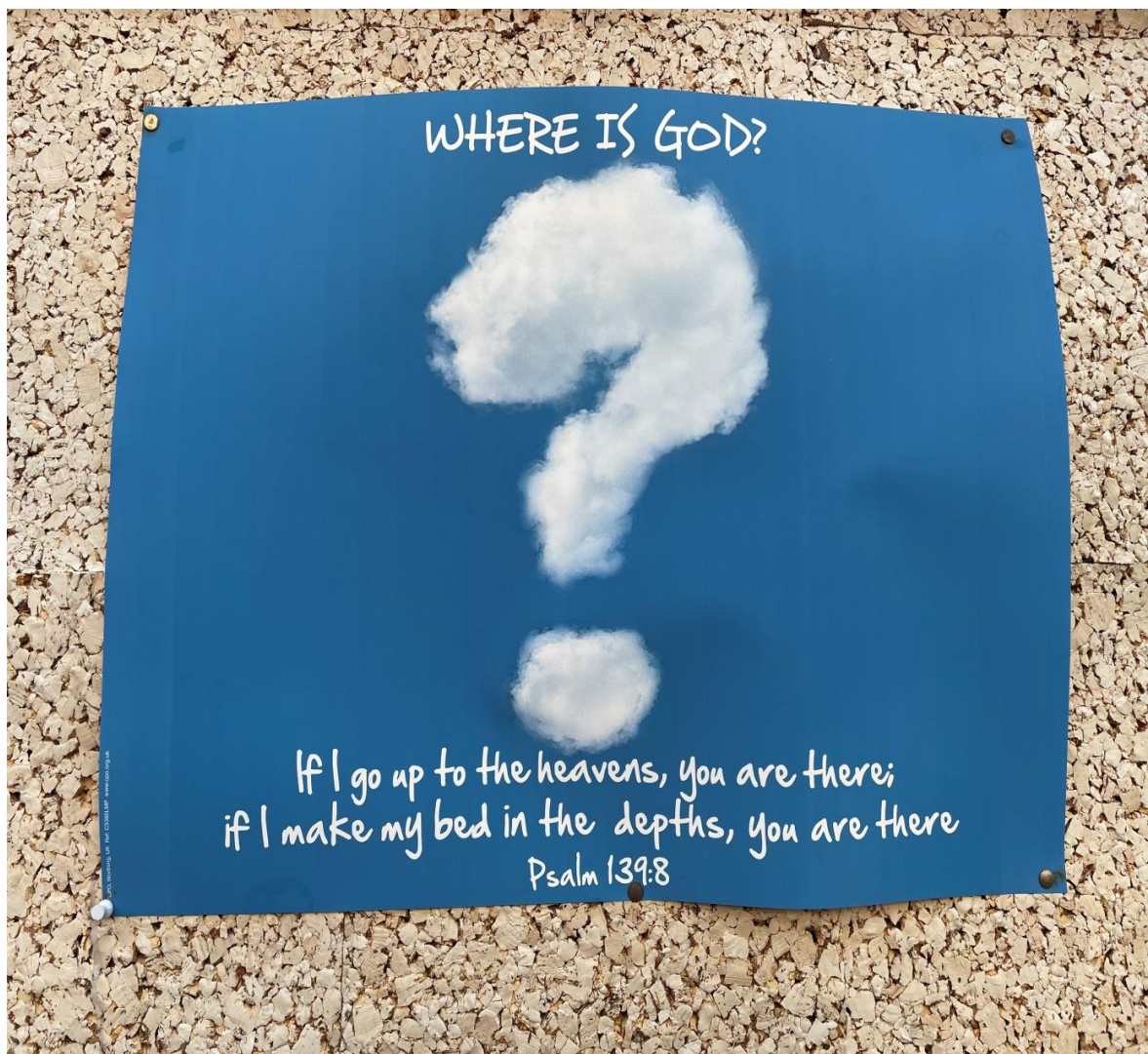


# THE VOICE

## MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE



February 2026

## Message from the Manse

Dear Christian Friends, Happy New Year!

As we welcome 2026, we stand at the threshold of a new journey—one filled with promise, purpose, and God’s unfailing presence. A new year is more than a change of date; it is a sacred invitation to renew our commitment, deepen our walk with Christ, and refocus our hearts on what truly matters.

For me, this year begins with a deliberate focus on commitment—looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. By God’s grace, I have reached the final stretch of my academic journey, having completed 98% of my studies following my PhD dissertation and defence. I now look forward with joy and readiness to the new appointment ahead, eager to serve, to help others, and to “work, speak, and think” for the Lord. I desire to labour tirelessly and preach boldly, always with love.

Before we step forward together, may I ask:

- What is one area of your life where you sense God calling you to grow or change this year?
- Is it in your faith, your relationships, your service, your priorities, your hope, or the legacy you are building?

Great transformations often begin with one honest question.

This year, I offer six brief perspectives to guide our shared journey:

1. Faith: Begin with God at the Centre.

Let Christ be our starting point. When he is central, everything else finds its place.

2. Church Community: Walk Together, Not Alone.

We are called to strengthen one another. May 2026 be a year of unity, support, and shared joy.

3. Service: Let Compassion Lead.

Service is a posture of the heart. Let kindness, generosity, and compassion mark our steps.

4. Discipline: Focus on What Builds You.

Not everything deserves our attention. Choose what nourishes your soul and strengthens your purpose.

5. Hope: Expect God to Do New Things.

Hope is confident trust in God's unfolding work. Even in unfamiliar places, He goes before us

6. Legacy: Live Today with Tomorrow in Mind.

Our choices shape the faith of those who follow. May our lives reflect Christ in all we do.

As we step into this new year, may these perspectives guide us toward deeper commitment, greater care, and unwavering focus. Let us move forward with courage and expectation, trusting that the God who has brought us this far will carry us faithfully into all that lies ahead.

May God bless your life this year in all you do, wherever you go, and in every word you speak.

Thank you.

Yours devotedly,

Rev. George

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## A SPECIAL REQUEST TO YOU

The Voice is not just for your information and entertainment, but for you to share news with us.

Do you have any news about -  
family,

holidays,

hobbies,

outings,

poems you love

or books you've read?

Are there any special birthdays we should note, or exam results?

(yours, your children's, grandchildren's, even great grandchildren's)

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## **USEFUL ADDRESSES**

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REV. DR. PAUL GLASS

**01483 575667**

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

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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 contacts for February will be:

Ann Carpenter 01483 535282

Pauline Daniels 01483 958905

Cari Rayner 07887 692598

Doreen Siame 01483 578215

**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.

## EDITORIAL NOTE



January brought the frost,  
Heating up, and blow the cost!  
February's here at last,  
Wind and rain and icy blast.  
Yet in spite of winters' cold  
Nature's mysteries unfold,  
Waiting, hidden, in the earth,  
Miracle of life's re-birth.



### MMC PRAYER GROUP

After losing Helen from our Prayer Group, we are very pleased to have Cari join us.

Requests are kept confidential within this small group - so please contact one of us if you would like prayers for yourself or a loved one.

Ann Carpenter	01483 535282
Pauline Daniels	01483 958905
Cari Rayner	07887 692598
Doreen Siame	01483 578215

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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> 2026**

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

by hand:

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

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY

## Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date	Time	Vestry	Worship Leader	PA/AV	Door
Feb 1st	10.30am HC	Hugh Bradley	Gillian Varley	Glenys Magill	Joyce Goodall Wendy Bradley
Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am L/A 6.30pm ATS	Suzanne Burnham  Hugh Bradley		Cari Rayner  Glenys Magill	Ruth McCulloch Julie Wallis
Feb 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Joan Wells		Glenys Magill	Joyce Goodall Maggie Woolcock
Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am	Iris Walker	Doreen Siame	Cari Rayner	Wendy Bradley Ruth McCulloch

## Communion stewards:

Feb.1st	<u>Preparation:</u> Suzanne Burnham Doreen Siame	<u>Assisting:</u> Doreen Siame
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## Flower Rota:

Feb 1st : Glenys Magill  
 Feb. 8th : Wendy Bradley  
 Feb.15<sup>th</sup>: Ruth McCulloch  
 Feb.22<sup>nd</sup>: Joan Wells

## Sunday Morning Coffee Rota:

1st Feb. Joan Wells and Jan Walker  
 8th Feb. Ruth McCulloch and Margaret Hills  
 15th Feb. Pauline Daniels and Julie Wallis.  
 22nd Feb. Glenys Magill.

## Organ Rota

Gillian Varley : morning services;  
 Hymnal+ : evening services

## **Women's Fellowship**

On Monday 2nd February 2.30 pm

The speaker from Cherry Trees Home-from-Home short break respite care for children with complex disabilities.

All are welcome

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## **Action for Children**

the Methodist Children's Charity

I became the representative for AFC in the year 2000. I have had huge support over the past 25 years with raising money for AFC from the congregation of Merrow Methodist. Times have changed over the years as one of the biggest fund raisers was the House to House collection in the month of June. Also the collecting at Sainsbury's one Saturday a year. We also had Covid in that period.

The total we have raised through your generosity in 25 years is the magnificent total sum of £63,322. Since 2020 we have donated our Christmas gift cards to the Fostering Wessex Centre at Fareham this is a total of £1,900, for which they are extremely grateful, as they are given to the children and young people 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. 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> from 10.45am – mid-day

Please contact Gillian Varley for further details

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### **Evening Bible Study**

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February

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

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**

to support a different charity each month

On February 12<sup>th</sup> our **Charity Coffee Morning** will be

### **BIG BREW at 40**

### **Transform Trade**

From 10.30-11.45am

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

Come and join us for a cuppa that changes lives



To everyone at Merrow Methodist Church, Guildford

Thank you so much for your generous gifts to Embrace the Middle East totalling £261.00, raised at your carol service. We are deeply grateful to everyone at Merrow Methodist Church, Guildford for your kindness and for choosing to stand with communities across the region who are living through conflict, poverty and displacement.

Your support helps ensure our local Christian partners can continue offering healthcare, education, trauma support and practical help to those who need it most. Your generosity enables our partners to offer dignity, hope and compassionate support where it is needed most.

Our latest magazine features the challenges our partners are facing and the lives that are being transformed through your support. Because of you families affected by war receive urgent medical care, food and practical support. Because of you children and adults can access education, therapy and community programmes that rebuild confidence and give opportunities to those who need it most. Because of you staff working on the front line receive mental health support to help them continue their life changing work. Your generosity sends a clear message to our partners in the Middle East and all those that they serve, they are not forgotten.

As we look ahead to the spring, please know how grateful we are to have you walking with us. Your kindness is transforming lives every day.

Best wishes

The Revd Su

McClellan

# DIARY DATES

## ‘Time Out’ Autumn Break

A small group from Merrow Methodist Church has enjoyed taking ‘Time Out’ over several years to share in a Christian short break organised by Flame Trust, a Christian charity based in the Midlands. It would be lovely if we could be a larger group this year.



‘Taking a break with Time Out at Paignton’

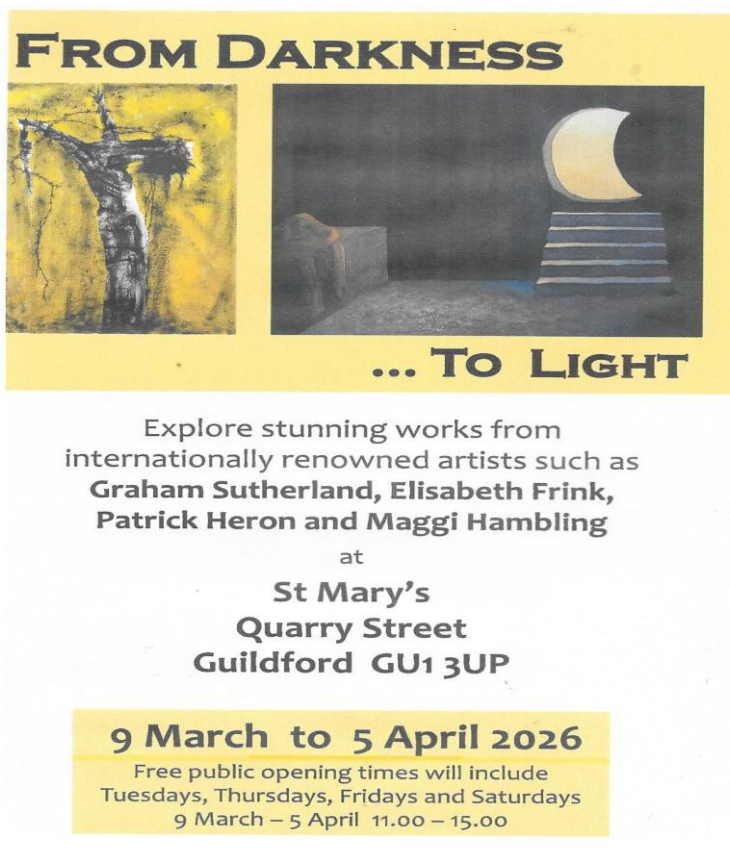
Plans are developing well for another few days of fellowship, teaching and worship, as well as free time to explore the area from **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2026**. We have confirmation that the Livermead Hotel, Torquay, Devon is delighted to host this event and the Rev. David Coffey, a former President of the Baptist Union, has accepted the invitation to be guest speaker.

Flame plan to issue a brochure in the next two months, which will give full details of how to book, particularly as booking early can achieve some considerable saving when using public transport. Details will include an insight into all that is planned, so please put the dates in your diary.

Derek, Pauline or Gillian will be delighted to tell you more, and they have already put the dates in their diaries.

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Your chance to see the world renowned  
**Methodist Modern Art Collection**  
read on.....



**Wednesday 11 March \* Ticketed event 19.00** A Journey through the Passion: Prof. Ben Quash in conversation with Rev. Karen Case-Green

**Thursday 12 March 12.30** A Lunchtime Lent Reflection: Rev Sarah Hutton introduces three water-themed images

**Saturday 14 March 09.30 to 11.30** Practical Aspects of Spirituality: Dark ... Light ... the Spirit in paint: Rev. Paul Glass

**Thursday 19 March 12.30** A Lunchtime Lent Reflection: Rev. Karen Case-Green introduces Lee-Elliott's Crucified tree-form – the Agony.

**Friday 20 March \* Ticketed event 19.30** From Darkness ... to Light: Reflections in music and poetry, with poet Alwyn Marriage and 'cellist Annalies Terry.

**Wednesday 25 March \* Ticketed event 19.00** A Door to the Holy: Contemporary Art & Faith A talk by Laura Moffatt

**Thursday 26 March 12.30** A Lunchtime Lent Reflection: Rev. Brian Roberts introduces Cazalet's Fool of God and Brokenshire's Pentecost

**Sunday 29 March 18.00** Shadows of the Cross - a Palm Sunday Reflection including music from In Nomine Choir

**30 March – 5 April** Programme of events for Holy Week to be published on the website

\* Ticketed events: £10 each see Eventbrite for MMAC Guildford

More details at [www.htsmguildford.org/mmac-2026](http://www.htsmguildford.org/mmac-2026)

For further enquiries: [MMAC2026@htsmguildford.org.uk](mailto:MMAC2026@htsmguildford.org.uk)

# Volunteers needed

Methodist Modern Art Collection - St Mary's, Guildford

## Can you help, please?

To successfully host the exhibition and have it open to visiting groups and the general public, we will need to have a number of volunteers each session; these fall into 2 categories,

Stewarding and Hospitality, although there is some inevitable crossover as we welcome people into St Mary's.

Stewards have 5 key roles

- To welcome
- To inform
- To help provide oversight and security
- To enable the exhibition to be open to visitors
- To listen and watch

The exhibition runs for 4 weeks, but will not be open to the public all the time; our first focus for volunteering sessions is on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

If you would like to volunteer, or find out more about what it entails, please email [MMAC2026@htsmguildford.org.uk](mailto:MMAC2026@htsmguildford.org.uk) for further details

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## On the 22 March the visit of Rev the Lord Leslie Griffiths

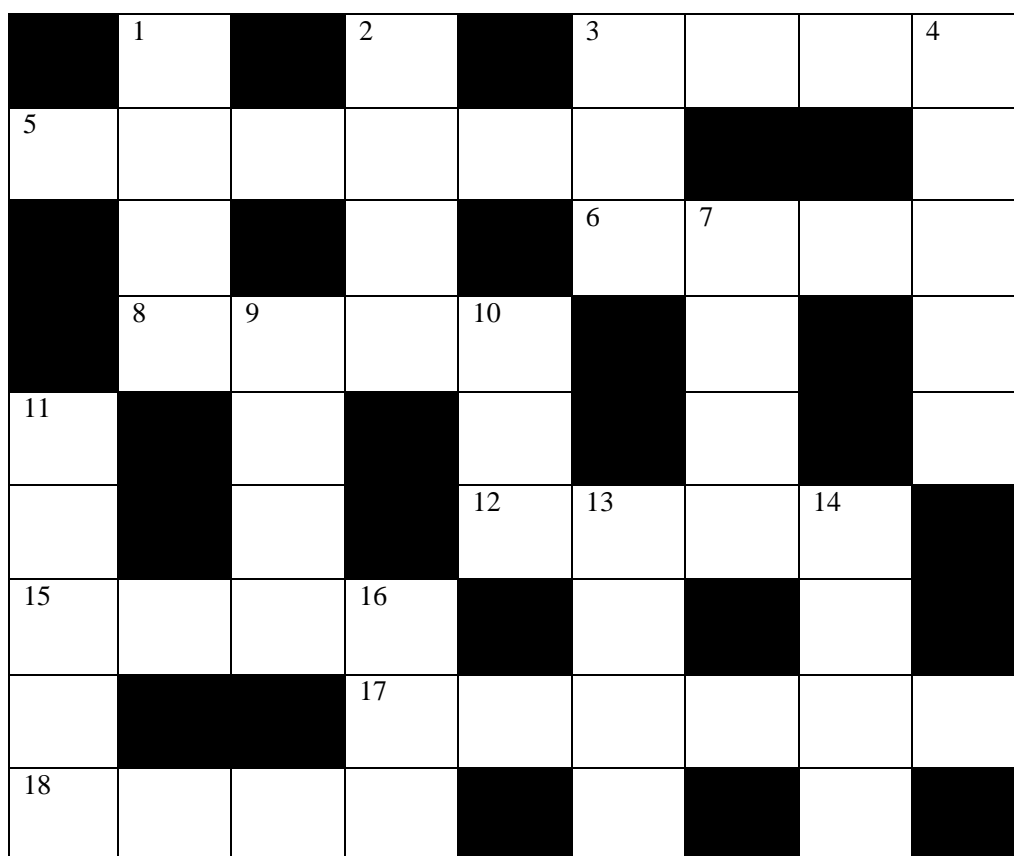
This will be a special event for the Circuit  
for which free tickets will be required

**These will be available from 1 pm on Sunday 25 January –**  
search on Eventbrite with the keyword afternoonlordgriffiths

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# JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart

## A seasonal crossword



### Clues across:

3. You need wellingtons for  
,

this sort of '14 down'

5. The 4<sup>th</sup> season of the year

6. February - the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the - - - -  
together

8. Twilight period before sunrise

12. Blue tits like to eat these

15. Another word for 'unfasten'

17. Frost makes patterns on this  
nostrils

18. Kitchen wrapping paper or a  
light sword.

### Clues down:

1. 'Blow, blow thou winter w - - -

2. A warming meal in winter

3. Opposite of wet

4. A Christmas celebration get

7. Where the sun rises

9. Dry barren ground is this

10. Pet name for grandma

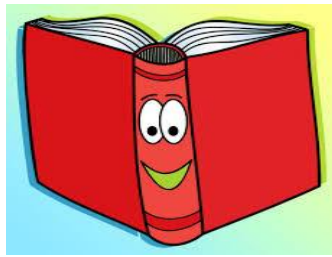
11. A pinch of this clears the

13. Milk containers before bottles

14. It falls in winter

16. A hooting night bird

Answers on last page



## **Story time**

### **Daniel and the lions**

When Darius was king of Babylon, his servant Daniel worked hard for him and so he decided to put Daniel in charge of the whole country. This was a great honour, but it made the other servants jealous.

Although they couldn't find anything against Daniel, as he was an honest man who obeyed God they found a way to make the king angry with him, but it was kept a secret from Daniel. They said to king Darius, "O king, live forever. You are great and no one should pray to anyone or anything else but you. If they do they should be thrown into the lion's den." The king was flattered and agreed to pass a law that this should be so.

In spite of the new law Daniel did not stop praying to God three times a day. The other servants found him praying to God for help and straight away went and reported him to the king for breaking the law.

The king couldn't change the law he had passed and though he had always liked Daniel and didn't want him to die he could do nothing else but have Daniel thrown to the lions. However he said to Daniel "I hope the God you serve will rescue you!"

The King had a huge stone rolled in front of the den and sealed it shut, then he king went back to his palace. That night he couldn't eat or sleep. As the next day dawned the king ran to the lions' den shouting "Daniel, has your God who you serve been able to rescue you from the lions?" As he waited he heard Daniel reply "O king, live forever! My God sent an angel who shut the lion's mouths. They knew I had done nothing wrong and did not hurt me."

The king immediately had Daniel lifted out of the den. He punished the other servants for their trickery and made a new law "I order that everyone in my kingdom must respect the Lord God, who rescued Daniel from the hungry lions." Daniel had been saved because he trusted in God.



## Gill's trills

Remember, remember, last year in December,  
The frosts still to come and the weather quite mild;  
'Twas not the Spring season, and yet for some reason  
This primrose was by the warm weather beguiled.



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## Ken's Pen

In "The sound of music", shown yet again just after Christmas, Maria said "When God closes a door, sometimes He opens a window."

In Maria's case, her life was completely changed. As for me, 3 doors were closed, and two windows opened. I retired from Barclays Bank Trustee Department in 1988. Soon after, I volunteered my services for free with 3 different charities, thinking I would be most welcome. It transpired that, for different reasons, I was not needed.

Not long after, I had a call from Biblelands (now Embrace the Middle East) inviting me to become a Trustee, and, later Hon. Treasurer. Then I was asked by the Circuit Superintendent to become a Circuit Steward. Because those 3 windows were closed, I was able to accept both invitations. Surely God had a hand in both the "doors" and "windows". I believe so.

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A little girl heard her Grandma say that the cold weather was bad for her rheumatism. That night, the youngster ended her usual prayers by saying "and, please God, make it hot for Grandma."

## Ken's pen continued

A well-educated missionary was preaching in India, with an interpreter. His first words were "The beatific familiarity of this chapter, traditionally appointed for Quinquagesima Sunday, must not cause us to neglect its profundity." The Indian interpreter put it somewhat differently "So far the preacher has not said anything worth remembering. When he does, I will let you know".

With greetings from Puddletown, God bless, Ken Mills

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## Pete's tweet

Quote: Champagne for my real friends and real pain for my sham ones. Francis Bacon

Joke: Pet-Friendly Hotel

A man decided to go away for the weekend with his dog. However, he noticed that none of the hotels said if they were pet-friendly or not. So, being polite, he decided to write a letter to the small hotel he planned to visit.

"I would very much like to bring my dog with me," he wrote. "He is well-groomed and very well behaved. Would you be willing to permit me to keep him in my room with me at night?"

An immediate reply came from the hotel owner who said, "I've been operating this hotel for many years. In all that time I've never had a dog steal towels, bed clothes, silverware or pictures off the walls. I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. And I've never had a dog run out on a hotel bill. Yes, indeed, your dog is welcome at my hotel. And if your dog will vouch for you, you're welcome to stay here too."

# Julie's News

## Travels 'Up North'

My return journey from 'bonnie Scotland' proved to be rather eventful due to what is politely known as the 'white stuff' plus a diversion through the Cumbrian and Yorkshire Moors – due to a junction closure on the M6 (a new bridge was being erected apparently!).

Although, slipping and sliding up and down the hills was a little scary, I may be a little biased to say that the scenery was out of this world.

### Glencoe



### Rannoch Moor



Unfortunately, I was unable to get any photos of the Cumbrian and Yorkshire Moors as by the time we got there, it was rather dark!

If anyone has been watching the 'Highland Cops' series on BBC2, this frequently features the area where my mother resides. The last episode of the recent series specifically featured Ardnamurchan (and the Corran Ferry) and the village of Strontian which is 12 miles from my mother's village. Strontian's 'claim to fame' is that the mineral Strontium was found near by and was named after the village.

# POETRY CORNER

Christmas Bells (1863 ) by H W Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
And with the sound  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth stones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
"For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The Wrong shall fail,  
The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

## The Weaver Poem by Grant Colfax Tullar (1869 -1950)

My life is but a weaving  
Between my God and me.  
I cannot choose the colours  
He weaveth steadily.

Of times He weaveth sorrow;  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper,  
And I the underside.

Not 'til the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas  
And reveal the reason why

The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.

He knows, He loves, He cares;  
Nothing this truth can dim.  
He gives the very best to those  
Who leave the choice to Him

The above poem was frequently used by Corrie Ten Boom.  
But, co-incidentally, Julie read it for the first time on the same day that it  
appeared in her husband John's bible reading notes for that day.



# SCAMS

Even when an advertisement appears to be  
promoted by a well-known face,  
and seems to be asking you  
to support a good cause,  
remember that, unfortunately,  
Not everything is as it seems.

Even voices can be cloned  
and used for fraudulent purposes.

So  
TAKE CARE

\*\*\*\*

Never click on a link about which you are unsure.  
Never transfer money from a cold-call request without  
double checking with your bank  
that the request is not a scam.

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*Editor: I receive one or two Emails in my SPAM folder each week purporting to be sending me photographs if I click on a link. These seem to be from people I know with local church connections.*

*If you get these, delete, and do not proceed. They are indeed SPAM!*

---

## Prayers worth sharing



Creator God, as we step forward into this New Year,  
when thoughts turn again to beginnings, starting afresh, new leaves  
and turning skeletons free from cupboards,  
Be with us.

As we gaze into the distance of fresh mission grounds  
of hopes and dreams, opportunities for service,  
challenges and uncertainties,  
Take our fears and turn them into strengths.  
Take our lack of faith and empower us through the Spirit  
who breathes life into this world;  
whose presence is reflected in the icy chill of winter's breath  
as well as the comforting warmth of a summer breeze.  
Walk with us through this New Year of opportunity

Amen

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.

\*\*\*\*\*

Answers to crossword:

Across: 3. Deep; 5. Winter; 6. Year; 8. Dawn; 12. Nuts; 15. Undo;  
17. Window; 18. Foil

Down: 1. Wind; 2. Stew; 3. Dry; 4. Party; 7. East; 9. Arid; 10. Nan;  
11. Snuff; 13. Urns; 14. Snow; 16. Owl.