

THE VOICE
MERROW METHODIST
CHURCH MAGAZINE



March 2026

Message from the Manse for March

Dear Christian friends,

As we enter the season of Lent and look ahead to the joy of Easter, we find ourselves journeying through a world that often feels heavy with uncertainty, division, and hardship. The challenges of our time, be they economic instability, the shadow of war on our continent, or the persistent ache of loneliness, can weigh upon our spirits and dim the light of hope within us.

Yet, lent itself is a journey through darkness toward light. It is a time for reflection, repentance, and renewal, not merely for the sake of ritual, but to prepare our hearts for the great hope of Easter: the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the triumph of life over death, and love over fear.

Let us recall the story of the great Chartres Cathedral in France, whose construction began in the 12th century. Though it was ravaged by fire and rebuilt, battered by wars and threatened by revolution, the faithful of each generation continued to build, to repair, and to worship. Even during times of plague and famine, when hope seemed lost, candles still flickered in the vast, vaulted halls, and the songs of worship echoed through the stone. Chartres stands today as a beacon, not only of architectural grandeur but of unyielding faith, a reminder that, through the storms of history, the light of Christ endures.

In our own lives, we are called to be such beacons, carrying the flame of faith, however small it may seem, into a world longing for meaning and hope. Lent invites us to lay aside the distractions and burdens that weigh us down, to examine our hearts, and to seek God's mercy. It is a time to remember that the cross, once a symbol of defeat, has become for us the sign of ultimate victory.

As we approach Easter, let us do so with renewed courage. Let us lift one another in prayer, reach out to those in need, and proclaim by word and deed the good news that Christ is risen. The empty tomb is

God's answer to the world's despair: hope is alive, and nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

As churches, families, and communities, this season calls us to embody the hope we proclaim.

We are invited to:

- Pray more deeply for our world and for one another.
- Serve more generously, especially those who feel forgotten.
- Forgive more freely, releasing old burdens.
- Worship more wholeheartedly, remembering that Christ is our centre.
- Live more boldly, as people who believe that resurrection is not just an
- event, but a lifestyle.

The world needs Christians who carry the fragrance of Easter: gentleness in a harsh age, compassion in a divided society, and joy that cannot be stolen.

May this holy season fill you with peace, strengthen your faith, and inspire you to shine as lights in the darkness.

Yours in His service,
Rev. George Quarm

EDITORIAL NOTE



Marching through March

A month of change from Winter into Spring.
It may come in as lion or as lamb,
With roaring wind, or gently whisp'ring breeze,
The warming of the air, and budding trees,
The sparrows twitter, butterflies take wing.
New life! The gifts of heaven's great "I AM."

Items for inclusion in the April of "The Voice" should be sent to me by: March 23rd

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

by hand

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

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PROPERTY LETTINGS

ADMINISTRATOR:

01483 537655
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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 every month will be:

Ann Carpenter	01483 535282
Pauline Daniels	01483 958905
Doreen Siame	07966 428222
Cari Rayner	07887 692598

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.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH

Stewards for Sunday worship:

Date	Time	Vestry Steward	Worship Leader	AV/PA	DOOR
March 1 st	10.30am	Iris Walker		Jane Vinall	Joyce Goodall Ruth McCulloch
March 8 th HC	10.30am	Hugh Bradley	Gillian Varley	Cari Rayner	Wendy Bradley Maggie Woolcock
	6.30pm	Hugh Bradley		Glenys Magill	
March 15 th	10.30am	Joan Wells		Jane Vinall	Joyce Goodall Glenys Magill
March 22 nd	10.30am	Suzanne Burnham		Cari Rayner	Glenys Magill Julie Wallis
March 29th PALM SUNDAY	10.30am	UNITED SERVICE	STOUGHTON		
 NO	MORNING SERVICE	AT MERROW		

Communion stewards:

March 8 th	<u>Preparation:</u> Suzanne Burnham & Doreen Siame	<u>Assisting:</u> Julie Wallis
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Flower Rota:

March 1 st	Doreen Siame
March 8 th	Joyce Goodall
March 15 th	Pauline Daniels
March 22 nd	Suzanne Burnham
March 29 th	Jan Kemp

Sunday morning Coffee Rota

15th March. Margaret Hills.
22nd March. Pauline Daniels

Organ Rota:

Gillian Varley: morning services
Hymnal + : evening services

Women's Fellowship

Monday 2nd March 2.30 pm
Rev. Barrie Tabraham will give a talk about 'Numbers'
All welcome

Church Bible Studies

all are welcome

Morning Bible Study

Tuesday March 10th

A study of the book of Jude

and

Tuesday March 24th

A Lenten study

at Lavender Cottage, Marlyns Drive, Burpham

10.45am for coffee and a prompt start at 11.00am

led by Gillian Varley

Evening Bible Study

Thursday March 19th 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.

Each month, usually on the 2nd Thursday, this will be a Charity Coffee Morning which will raise funds for a different charity every month

There is always a tempting selection of cakes on offer.



The Charity Coffee Morning on March 12th

will be in aid of

The Guildford Talking Newspaper

delivering the written word in words to blind and visually impaired people in Guildford and Waverley since 1976.

Run entirely by volunteers, they record local news items from the Surrey Advertiser and Guildford Dragon, transfer the recorded material to memory sticks and distribute those. They also supply players for the USB sticks.

They are considering extending the service to people with other disabilities but obviously that requires more volunteers and money!

So please come and support this good cause

A representative of the charity hopes to attend to demonstrate the equipment.

DIARY DATES & NEWS

Following our Thanksgiving service for Frank Winder's long and well lived life,

a short service for the interment of Frank's Winder's ashes was led by the

Rev. James Hanson on the 28th of January
at St. Luke's Church, Burpham



Frank and Cynthia are together once again in their final resting place,

Poster for the month



You never know who you will meet!
by Julie Wallis

On Valentine's Day, John and I went out for the day. We started off with a walk around the gardens at Wakehurst Place. For a change, it was a lovely day – no rain in sight. The birds were singing, the snowdrops were out (I could even recognize them!), there were irises everywhere and I was feeling very relaxed. As anyone who knows me – knows I love sheep – I had to have a selfie taken!



..... as I said....

“You don't know who you will meet when you go down to the woods!”

The Easter week services are:

Maundy Thursday - April 2nd 7.00pm - Tenebrae - led by Rev. Barrie Tabraham

Good Friday - April 3rd 2.00pm – ‘The Way to the Cross’

- *A quiet hour reflecting on the happenings of the week leading up to the crucifixion, with readings, hymns and dramatic interludes led by members of the congregation.*

Easter Day - April 5th 10.30am – Holy Communion



JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart

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

Can you find these words in the word square above?

Autumn

Bulbs

Eggs

Fog; Frost

Ice

March

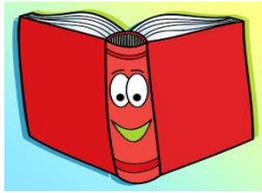
Nut

Picnic

Shower; Snow; Spring; Summer; Sun

Wet; Wind; Winter

Words can be read up, down, from left to right or in reverse and diagonally



Story time

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The people were happy to see him. They thought he was a king who would save them from the Roman rulers and waved palm branches, shouting “Hosanna”

Some important people were jealous of how much the people loved Jesus. And they gave Judas, one of Jesus’ special friends, money to tell them where they could find Jesus away from the crowds so they could arrest him.

Jesus had a special evening dinner with his friends to celebrate Passover, when, long before, God had saved his people from cruel rulers. Jesus gave his friends bread and wine and told them that one of them had turned against him.

Jesus also told his disciple, Peter, that he would pretend not to know him before the cock crowed the next morning. Peter didn’t believe Jesus, because he had followed him and been his close friend.

After the meal Jesus went to pray in the garden of Gethsemane and it was there that Judas brought people, armed with sticks and swords, to arrest Jesus.

Most people Jesus ran away when Jesus was led away to be tried by the High Priests, but Peter followed at a distance. When he was asked if he knew Jesus he was afraid too and said “No.” The cock crowed and Peter remembered what Jesus had said and felt very sad.

The High Priests took Jesus to the Governor, Pontius Pilate, and egged on by the crowd, he set a criminal, Barabbas free instead of Jesus.

The crowd wanted Jesus punished and put to death.

Jesus had to carry a heavy cross through the streets of Jerusalem.

A passer-by was made to help him carry the cross to the hill where Jesus was nailed to it and then it was put up between two other crosses.

Jesus died on the cross surrounded by mocking crowds, Roman soldiers and his family and friends. As Jesus died, the earth shook and the Temple curtain, which was there to separate everyone except the High Priest from the presence of God, was torn in two.

On the third day, Mary and some of Jesus’ other friends went to the tomb. Jesus’ body wasn’t there and the stone sealing the entrance had been rolled away. An angel told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. He was alive.

He had shown us all that death could no longer be something that separated us from life with God.



Gill's trills

- Monopoly, was invented on March 7th, 1933.
- Coca-Cola was invented in March 1886.
- In March 1889, the Eiffel Tower was completed
- In Ancient Rome, the Ides of March was celebrated by the Romans to mark the New Year. They made sacrifices to the gods, and paid their debts.
- On March 1st the Welsh honour St. David. He is considered the Patron Saint of Wales.
- March 17th - St. Patrick's Day commemorates the death of Ireland's patron saint.

Ken's Pen

A young girl was telling her Dad that her two brothers were setting traps to catch birds. "What have you been doing about it? " Dad asked "I prayed that the traps wouldn't work". " Anything else?" "I then prayed that God would keep the birds out of the traps." "Anything else?" "Then I went and kicked the traps to pieces. "

There may well be times when our prayers might need US to be the answer.

.....

You will be both interested and possibly surprised that, on March 13th I will be moving from Puddletown in Dorset

TO

The Fairways Methodist Home in Chippenham.

My address will then be:-

The Fairways, 1, The Fairways, Malmesbury Road, CHIPPENHAM, Wilts, SN15 5L J

My granddaughter, Bryony lives in Chippenham, my son, Peter lives in Gloucestershire, so he won't have so far to travel, and Ángela and Mark may well move nearby a bit later. I am looking forward to the move.

.....

With every good wish, Ken Mills

Pete's tweet

Desiderata

M A X E H R M A N N , 1 9 2 7

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even to the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons;
they are vexatious to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.
Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love,
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

*But now a
21st century comparison*

CONSIDERATA

Always make a great noise and you
will be noticed. Always shout
the other fellow down, especially
the dull and the ignorant, they are not
worth listening to.

Always mix with loud and aggressive persons.
Compare yourself constantly with others,
and make sure that you're on top. There will always
be lesser persons than yourself to beat.

Be careful in business and make sure you crook
the other person first. Be blind to virtue,
it only covers the guilty heart.
Don't be yourself, be whatever is expedient.

Be cynical about all things, especially love.
Don't give in to old age, keep pushing. You may be
a child of the universe, but the only right you
have to be here is at the expense of the other man.

With all it's glitter, money, palaces, fast cars,
smart clothes, good food and wine,
the world is a pretty rotten place,
so keep screwing it up,

and above all – show a profit.

POETRY

Lines Written in Early Spring By William Wordsworth

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

SCAMS

Scammers are getting smarter, but you can stay one step ahead of them on your holiday by knowing what tricks and traps to watch out for.

1. Be aware of counterfeit currency exchange

In many tourists' hot spots, you might see people walking the streets or small booths offering currency exchange for local currency at rates that sounds too good to be true. Be cautious, as they could be using a mix of counterfeit bills with the real ones.

Remember, it's always safer to use a well-known bank or an official exchange kiosk inside a shopping centre where your money is guaranteed to be exchanged honestly.

2. The hidden costs of dynamic currency conversion (DCC)

When you're paying for something or withdrawing money in a foreign country, you might be given the option to pay in your home currency. While this might seem convenient, it often comes with higher fees and poor exchange rates so you could end up paying more than necessary.

3. Beat card skimming and ATM fraud

A common money scam that happens regularly on holidays is card skimming. This is where scammers fit ATMs with devices that steal your card information, including your PIN, so they can access your account. To protect yourself, use ATMs in secure locations like inside a bank or a shopping centre rather than on the street.

Check for any signs of tampering around the card slot and keypad. And always shield the keypad with your hand when entering your PIN.

4. Be familiar with taxi and transfer scams

Some taxi drivers may claim their meter is broken, quote inflated rates or even switch to a higher tariff without informing you. Research typical fares before you arrive and only use reputable taxi apps or official taxi stands. Always confirm the fare before you drive off and make sure the meter isn't running before starting the journey. If possible, track your route on a map app to avoid detours and keep receipts for any disputes later.

Prayers worth sharing



Be to us at all times, O Lord,
Our joy, our bliss and our comfort.

Be light in our darkness,
Strength in our temptations
And refreshment in the desert.

Penitent may we know your peace,
Faithful may we behold your glory.

Amen

Creator God, forgive our moments of ingratitude,
the spiritual blindness that prevents us
from appreciating the wonder that is this world,
the endless cycle of nature,
of life and death and rebirth.
Forgive us for taking without giving,
reaping without sowing.

Open our eyes to see,
our lips to praise,
our hands to share,
and may our feet tread lightly
on the road that, together, we travel.

Amen

