Dear Friends,

I used to visit a delightful man at his home. This was during my first Circuit appointment: we got on so well, being not dissimilar in age (he was 50, I was 44), but he had heart trouble. I don't remember what we talked about, but I always left with a smile. He had another heart attack, and I began to visit him in hospital. Sadly, he died there, and I was asked to take his funeral. When I went to the house, the door opened and three very attractive women in their 20s rushed out and embraced me: all at once. I wouldn't want you to think that this is a normal experience of presbyters in the Methodist Church, and nothing like it has happened to me since. They were his daughters, and I sat down with them and her mother (after another embrace, but I knew her quite well) and everything returned to normal. After the funeral I shook their hands. You see, that close (and, I confess, pleasurable) embrace was of the moment; and the moment had passed.

People in ministry, and in other caring professions, can draw close to people, and an occasional hug is neither unknown nor inappropriate at certain times. But knowing it is 'of the moment' and that such moments pass is so important. Sadly, as we have been reminded in the media recently, there have been ministers – fine ministers and highly respected – who have failed to recognise that. Some have started affairs. Some have exercised a ministry of touch which was neither requested nor welcomed. Boundaries are important. There is something, too, about not showing favouritism but being equally available when needed by all – not that a minister can't have friends, of course. Margaret and I are still in touch with some members of the churches we have served over the years.

Jesus valued his friends, the ones he could confide in, the ones who stayed by him through thick and thin, the ones he could relax with, and feast with. Mary Of Magdala, the 'disciple he loved' according to John's gospel, Mary, Martha and Lazarus, and Peter the fisherman, were amongst these. Paul soon surrounded himself with friends like Barnabas and Timothy and Apollos – though he could be unforgiving if he felt that one of them had let him down. We are members of a community of love. We may not think of ourselves as brothers and sisters, but that is what we are. And our belonging to each other does not stop at the church door: an open door, as we 'go out into the streets and invite everybody [we] find to the wedding banquet'. Our calling is to look the forgotten ones in the eye so that they may learn that they are loved, to offer hospitality to beggars, prisoners, migrants, and all those whom society tries to keep hidden. To make friends of enemies in a world which hates them. In other words, there are boundaries we must keep, and boundaries we must break down.

A prayer of Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy (1883-1929):

> Give me for Joy, O Christ, the drying of another's tears;
> give me for light the sunshine of healing their sorrows;
> give me for shelter the shadow of your cross
> and for my heart's content the glory of your presence. Amen.

Blessings,

Peter

Resources/Good News

Dog finds God: Lance the Lab-Cross Joins Clergy

A guide dog has been made a member of a church clergy in recognition of how he enhances the life of his blind owner during her service within the community.

Lance the golden retriever and Labrador cross has become an honorary canon in celebration of how he supports the Reverend Canon Emerita Stephne van der Toorn.

Dog finds God: Lance the Lab cross joins church clergy - BBC News

Christmas Fair at Guildford Cathedral

Friday 20 and Saturday 21 November 2026 10am to 4pm

Step into the serene beauty of Guildford Cathedral for an exceptional Christmas shopping experience. Our Christmas Fair brings together over 50 independent stalls – carefully selected makers, artisans, and specialists offering gifts you won't find on the high street.

Entry: £3 per person.





Saturday 21st November 2026
2pm

At Walton Methodist Church Hall
A maximum of 6 people per team
Refreshments being served at half time.
Email:
waltonmethodistchurchsecretary@virginmedia.com
to book your place!

tearfund.org/quiz
Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, United Kingdom
+44 (0)20 3906 3906 info@tearfund.org /Tearfund

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tearfund



St Mary's Church

SHARING HOPE

at Christmas

- a series of reflections for Advent 2026

The Christmas message is one of hope, but how do we find it and share it with others? This series will look at opportunities from everyday life to relate to that message. This week we will find inspiration from a ***Christmas season movie****.*

St. Mary's Church Quarry Street
Guildford GU1 3UP

12.15 for 12.30

Thursday 26 November:

Rosemary Lee

- followed by a Bread & Soup lunch


ADVENT REFLECTIONS
Journey to the Light
Take a little time out from the busyness of the season
to pray, reflect and prepare for the coming of Christ.
Fridays at 7.00pm on Zoom
27 November ✦ 4 December ✦ 11 December ✦ 18 December
Each gathering includes:
Evening Prayer
A Bible Reading
Meditation
Quiet Reflection
Everyone Welcome
"The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light."
Isaiah 9:2
Trinity Methodist Church, Woking
For Zoom joining details please contact:
samfunnell24@btinternet.com
ALL ARE WELCOME

We warmly invite you to the matrix

with young people, for young people

Christmas Quiz 2026

Team sizes of 2-6



Ages 14+ welcome

Tickets £10 each

...or £54 for a team of 6!

IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL YOUTH WORK!

27TH NOVEMBER 2026, FROM 7PM

ALLEN HOUSE PAVILION, EASTGATE GARDENS, GUILDFORD, GU1 4AZ

WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE TOWN CENTRE, OR PARKING AVAILABLE NEXT DOOR AT YORK ROAD CAR PARK - £2.10 FLAT RATE AFTER 6PM (EXIT ON FLOOR 9 OR 11)

TICKETS INCLUDE NIBBLES AND A FREE MULLED WINE / NON-ALCOHOLIC OPTION



BRING-YOUR-OWN DRINKS (ALCOHOL PERMITTED)



PRIZES FOR QUIZ WINNERS, BEST TEAM NAME & BEST JUMPER

FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT AS A COMMUNITY & RAISE FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Quiz Tickets:

WE ALSO HAVE A FUNDRAISING RAFFLE WITH LOADS OF PRIZES INCLUDING AFTERNOON TEA, PUB VOUCHERS, DISTILLERY AND BREWERY TOURS, GOODY-BAGS, FREE PRODUCTS AND MORE!

Raffle Tickets:

Visit 'linktr.ee/matrix_trust' if you cannot scan QR codes

Knaphill's Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday 28 November



STOUGHTON METHODIST CHURCH

(On the corner of Stoughton Road and Grange Road)

COFFEE CORNER

Tuesdays from 10 am – 12 noon



6th October	3rd November
13th October	10th November
20th October	17th November
27th October	24th November

2026



Enjoy Coffee & a Chat, Coffee & a Game, or Coffee & a Book

The choice is yours!

Everyone welcome – bring a friend!

A joyful start to Christmas

Carols for All





Saturday Nov 28th

7.00- 9.00 pm

Horsley Methodist Church

(next to W. Horsley Village Hall)

Come and sing your favourite carols with a break for refreshments and mince pies.

Phone requests to

01438 282474

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

at

Merrow Methodist Church

Sunday 6th December 6.30 pm



Advent *is a time of . . . .*

- *Expectancy*
- *Waiting*
- *Hope*
- *Preparing*

for the coming of the King.

Come on 6th December to a service of **readings** and **Advent carols**, to celebrate this short, special season of Advent, during we can prepare ourselves for the joy of Christmas and all that it will bring.

Hot drinks & biscuits will be provided after the service



Join us this Christmas

Churches Together
in Byfleet
Advent Group 2026

For more
information and
resources:

https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/christmasresources/

All Saints, New Haw
Woodham Lane KT15 3DH
Tues 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd December
7.15pm for refreshments
7.30pm start.

St Michael's Church, Sheerwater
Dartmouth Avenue, GU21 5PJ
Wed 2nd, 9th, 16th 23rd December
9.45am for refreshments
10am start.

The **Methodist** Church

itsawayoflife.org.uk/Christmas

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WEYBRIDGE MALE VOICE CHOIR
INVITE YOU TO THEIR

CHRISTMAS Concert

FRIDAY 11 DECEMBER, 7.30PM

St. James' Church, Weybridge, KT13 8DB

With special guests

St. James' Primary School Choir

Retiring collection for

white lodge

Adults - £15 Under 12s - Free



Tickets from Choir Members, by QR Code or ticketsource.com/weybridgemvc


GASKIN'S FREE
CHRISTMAS LUNCH
2026
25th December - Christmas Day
FREE CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH
RESERVE YOUR MEAL BY 20TH DECEMBER.
INFO@FREECHRISTMASLUNCH.COM.
MARTA 07855846957.
FREE DELIVERY TO YOUR HOME.
WITHIN 15 MILES OF GUILDFORD.
DELIVERY 12PM TO 3PM.
VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED
OPEN TO EVERYONE IN NEED.
LONELY, STUDENTS, HOMELESS, VULNERABLE.

Tea/Coffee and Cake

Pay as You Feel

every Saturday, 10.00 - 12.00pm



Addlestone Methodist Church

(Next to Subway on Station Road)

Free Prize Bingo & Games Mornings

on 1st and 3rd Saturdays of month!



We always need donations and volunteers to keep serving the Addlestone community. Please help us!

Play Chat. Connect