

Shirley Methodist Matters



Wassailing in the Wilderness

February 2023



www.shirleymeth.org.uk



80p

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

MORNING SERVICES START AT 10.30AM

- SUN 5 FEB
HOLY COMMUNION
REVD RICHARD LOWSON
- SUN 12 FEB
HABIB NADER
- SUN 19 FEB
REVD JENNIFER POTTER
- SUN 26 FEB
LEPROSY MISSION
WENDY PICCININI

Our morning services are available on Zoom - you can watch on your screen or listen on your phone. To get the link - email smchurchzoom@gmail.com.

An audio recording is available on the website. Many thanks to those who are making these different forms of worship possible.

Front cover photo - Tom Sherrin
Croydon Camera Club See p 18

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Minister Revd Richard Lowson
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07311 390 636



Shirley Methodist Church Eldon Ave, Shirley, CR0 8SD

Revd Gylula writes our Circuit letter

Hello Croydon Methodist Family!

When I was thinking about what to write, someone reminded me that Valentine's Day was just around the corner.

Valentine was a 3rd century saint, who might have been a priest or a bishop back then. His name has been associated with "courtly love" where the lady's knights in shining armour were proving their love to the ladies of their hearts. The 'good ol' times when men made some serious efforts to prove their love, in more than words. Women often say 'We would love to see actions and not just words'.

Actions speaks volumes, right?

St Valentine, though associated with courtly love ministered to persecuted Christians and later he was martyred himself. Helping persecuted Christians was a very risky business. You could have already signed your death warrant - it would be just a matter of time before you would be taken out.

The world has not changed much since that 3rd century injustice towards Christians. Dictators always hated Christians because those faithful to the Almighty could not be brainwashed; they could not break their faith; they had their own mindset - the mindset of Christ. Christ who loves everyone regardless of the colour of their skin, nationality, religion, or sex. In God's eyes, everyone in the whole world is his child – he loves them all. In his eyes, they are all equal and he watches over them.

St Valentine ministered to the persecuted and everyone else as well, because of that love he received from the Lord. That Love is our driving force too. We are to watch out for each other, as brothers and sisters in God's family.

This is why we open our churches, where we can, to offer that shared place of warmth; this is why we donate funds to help those who



cannot afford their heating bills; that is why we help refugees, and any people coming from an unfortunate background. It is God's love that compels us to do these things.

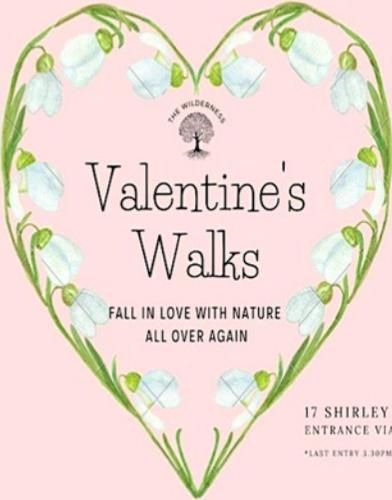
St Valentine's Day gives us a good opportunity to remember what this saint did for others and to follow his footsteps. England has this wonderful tradition where people are constantly getting involved in different charities by volunteering, donating and more.

And since those actions are generated by Love from above, the work itself becomes infectious – people become excited to join another new initiative and they are happy and feel blessed when they see the good results.

For us Christians, it is a good reminder why we are here – to be the extended hands of Jesus.

May God bless you all!

Gyula



Valentine's Walks

FALL IN LOVE WITH NATURE
ALL OVER AGAIN

17 SHIRLEY CHURCH ROAD, CR9 5AL
ENTRANCE VIA GATES TO THE RIGHT OF CARE HOME
*LAST ENTRY 3.30PM **LAST ENTRY 2.30PM

COME AND EXPLORE THE WILDERNESS THROUGHOUT FEBRUARY AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIND OUR HEARTS AMONGST THE TREES.

MON - FRI - 9AM - 4PM*
SUNDAY 5TH - 10AM - 3PM**



Offertory

You can now go online to donate to our Church.

www.shirleymeth.org.uk



This is one of the very few hymns that relate directly to Lent. It was written in 1873 by Claudia Hernaman. Her words encourage us to face our conflicting temptations and desires and to be mindful and spiritual during the forty days of Lent

*Lord, who throughout these forty days,
For us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins,
And close by you to stay.*

*As you with Satan did contend,
And did the victory win,
O give us strength in you to fight,
In you to conquer sin.*

*As you did hunger bear and thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and always live
By your most holy word.*

*And through these days of penitence,
And through your Passion-tide,
Forevermore, in life and death,
O Lord, with us abide.*

*Abide with us that when this life
Of suffering is past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last!*

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday - 22 February

Family News

Elizabeth Smart writes:

It is a busy time for the Hunt family... not only are Steve and Alison organising the Book Sale - they also have a family wedding! Kate and Dan Warr will have celebrated their wedding by the time you read this. I am sure everyone will have had a wonderful time, including grand parents Maureen and David. We wish Kate and Dan every blessing in the years ahead.

The Church family has been saddened by the deaths of two of our members. Brian Cantrell died just before Christmas after a long illness, so bravely borne. He will be missed not just at Church but in the local community. Everyone knew Brian - in so many ways he was 'the face of our Church'. He was always there to sort out a problem, move furniture or open up the Church. He and his late wife Jean joined our congregation 53 years ago. They worshipped with their family - Ian and Helen (Blu). Brian was actively involved



in so much of the life and work of the Church - as a worship leader, reader, member of the choir and served on various committees. He was invaluable at the Lunch time concerts, Floating Shelter, Book Sales and Jumble Sales. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ian, Blu, and with his grandchildren Amber and Loki.

On 4 January it was with sadness that we heard that Reg Young had died - just a couple of days before his 99th birthday. Reg had been living for the last few months at Hall Grange and it was lovely that some of our Church members were able to visit him there and have a chat. The staff helped him to settle in so well. It was also good to see him back in Church - in 'his' seat! Reg had been a member at Shirley for 64 years, ever since he Edna, Valerie and Terry moved to Shirley. Reg was a 'hands on' person and was a valued member of the property committee over many years. Reg told me he loved rice pudding (baked in the oven not out of a tin!) and so when the Harvest lunch came along I made it specially for him - I can still



see his smiling face. And there was enough left for the next day! Our thoughts and prayers are with Valerie, Terry and all their families.

May Brian and Reg rest in peace and rise in Glory.

Thank you for your generous gifts to Nightwatch which you brought to the Christmas Gift Service on the 18 December. There were so many bags and a monetary gift of £100. The Nightwatch team received the gifts with thankfulness on a bitterly cold evening. The volunteers were preparing to go out with hot drinks and sandwiches (Jonathan Baxter was delivering our sandwiches at the same time). These volunteers go out every night to befriend those who are homeless. In the longer term they are helped find accommodation and employment. Nightwatch are always looking for volunteers and if this is something that you feel able to do, Jad Adams

and Nicky Edwards would be so glad to hear from you. croydonnightwatch@btinternet.com
0208 699 6718 07828 144645.

We hold in our prayers those who are unable to come to Church and we remember Thelma, Brian, Eunice, Jose, Vicky, Lambert, Alan, Anthony and Lesley, Gwen, Sureya and Macos, Adele and her brother John.

We continue to remember in prayer the residents, families and staff at Hall Grange and for the staff and volunteers at The Wilderness.

Robert and Rebecca, and Charlotte and Robert send their warm greetings to all as they enjoy their time in sunny Ghana (32deg!).



Please contact us if you would like someone - or yourself - to be prayed for by members of our Prayer Chain. Names are only taken with the consent of the person concerned and stay on the chain for a week. Elizabeth Smart 020 8777 2055 or via the 'contact us' form on www.shirleymeth.org.uk.

Reg Young

Jean Beecher writes

Reg was a man with a firm Christian faith who gave so much of his time to our Church. He was such a practical man - always ready to do whatever was needed. He and his wife Edna were enthusiastic members of Guild. Reg was Chairman for many years. The annual Guild Social gave him a chance to take part in several amusing sketches ensuring people went home with a smile on their faces. He was also Father Christmas at Brownie parties - asking the children if they could hear Rudolf on the roof!

Reg ran the Senior Youth Club many years ago and made a difference to so many young lives - something that has not been forgotten by any of those teenagers all these years later.

He was a devoted family man; every summer the Young family would set off in their caravan - always returning with a story to tell.

You may not know that Reg worked at Bletchley

Park during the war as an engineer, building the top secret machine that broke the Enigma code. His family and friends were totally unaware that he had been recruited by the Foreign Office at 19 years old. His remained secret for many years. After the war he joined the army for 4 years before working for British Telecom. While watching the film *The Imitation Game* I thought of Reg and felt very emotional when the film concluded by saying that the work of the code-breakers had shortened the war by two years, thereby saving millions of lives. Thank you Reg.

If you visit Bletchley Park look out for the display which includes Reg's photo and hear Reg 'talk' about his work. When he was allowed to speak of his time at Bletchley Park he gave illustrated talks to local organisations. Incredibly, aged 98, he gave a talk only last year to fellow residents of Hall Grange.

We at Shirley give thanks for Reg's Christian faith and his strong sense of duty.



Brian Cantrell

Lorna Bennett writes from Australia

It's always hard to say goodbye to an old friend, but when you are around the other side of the world and not even able to attend the funeral, it's doubly sad.

I knew Brian for about 30 years and in that time he was always really supportive of everything I attempted to do at our church.

Softly spoken and encouraging, he worked tirelessly in the background. He worked for the Lord by serving him daily in the church



and offering help and assistance to anyone who needed it.

If ever chairs needed to be moved or tables needed to be set up, Brian would be there, never complaining nor seeking praise.

He was modest and unassuming, and a gifted organiser who had an

inbuilt ability to get things done and achieve goals.

Goodbye Brian, rest now in the presence of your Father in heaven.



It has been wonderful to welcome quite a few new folk to our services. If you are one of these - we hope you have felt at home. Hopefully you have found our monthly magazine helps you to know a little more about who we are, what we do and what you might like to get involved in. Please speak to one of the stewards over coffee after the service. If you have anything you would like to have included in Shirley Methodist Matters please speak to **Jenny Crook** or **Kate Marsden**. As you will see we like to cover quite a range of topics.

The 15th

Great Book Sale

thousands of books at bargain prices

10 am - 4 pm - Shirley Methodist Church - Eldon Avenue, Shirley, CR0 8SD

Saturday 11th March 2023

Wanted: Good quality paperbacks, hardbacks, children's books, CDs, Records & DVDs
(No video tapes thanks) will be gratefully received

Collecting from Wed 11th Jan until Wed 22nd Feb 2023

- Shirley Methodist Church on Wednesday mornings between 10am-12pm or any reasonable time at:
- 90 Devonshire Way (Steve Hunt, 020 8777 4700)
- 109 Shirley Avenue (Bob Wakefield)
- 62 Oak Avenue (Mike Patt)

www.greatbooksale.org.uk



In aid of Shirley Methodist Church & other charities. Registered Charity No: 1127524

Steve Hunt writes:

By the time you read this the church should already be filling with books, records, DVDs and CDs

We have held Book Sales since 1997; this will be first since 2020. If you have not been before, do come along – most first-timers say 'Wow, I didn't realise it would be this big'.

There is a great sense of community and camaraderie so please do get involved. There are various ways you can help.

- Sorting - Wednesdays 10 -12 (lifting & shifting too if you can)
- Delivering leaflets locally
- Setting up tables & moving boxes on Friday 10 March from 10 am
- Helping with refreshments on the day or providing cakes. Contact Fran Byard 020 8405 3222
- Helping at the Sale - one (or more) 2-hour shifts
- Helping to clear away at 4pm so we can be ready for worship the next day!

However you can help, it all counts and is really appreciated.

Creche Helpers Needed

According to our Safeguarding Policy there must be 2 people looking after little ones in our creche. As we currently only have 4 volunteers this is not really viable. Could you offer to be part of our rota? If we had 8 volunteers no one would have to do more than one duty a month.

It's not an onerous task, in fact it's fun! There are lots of toys and books.

If this sounds like something you could do, or would like to know more about please speak to Heather Tarling (07914 540112) or one of the other helpers - Donna, Kate and Carolyn. We look forward to hearing from you!



Prayer Breakfast

Saturday 11 February
9am for refreshments in the Church lounge and we finish by 10am.

We come together the pray for our world, our Church and our own individual needs. We pray within the fellowship of the group, and the quiet of own hearts.

This meeting is open to all, for those that have faith, and those that struggle with this concept. When it comes to prayer we are all beginners.



House Group

Thursday 16 February
10am in the Church Lounge.

We will be continuing to look at growth of the early Church. Session 7 focuses on conflicts faced when talking to non believers about Jesus. Nobody in our group would claim to be a expert on the Bible; we look at a set of questions and relate them to the Bible message. So if you have a good knowledge of the Bible, this meeting is for you, and if you have never explored the Bible this meeting is for you as well.

A New Year filled with hope

Jean Beecher writes:

Fyness Tembo, a small-time farmer from Malawi says 'I used to lack food but now I am able to feed my family. The produce gives me food security. I am so grateful to Christian Aid. Thank you.'

You may recall reading about Fyness in our last magazine. With the combination of hard work, determination and training (provided by a local Christian Aid provider) she has learned new skills. This provider, *Social Support for Resilience*, helped her to chose varieties of crops that could better withstand the effects

of climate change. Her garden now even includes fruit trees. Life for Fyness and her children is getting better.

The retiring collection after our Covenant Service raised £345.50. In addition to that was £200 raised by the sale of items on our regular Sunday Sales Table. Thank you for your generosity. Our donation of £545.50 will go towards supporting more farmers in Malawi.



On behalf of everyone at St Christopher's I would like to say thank you for the huge donation that we received from the Christmas Tree Festival. I went into work just before Christmas with two buckets full of cash that had been donated at the festival and another large amount was given through card donations. I am happy to say that the total came to £666.57. Thank you!

Alison Hunt



10.6 million saw Hall Grange on Christmas Day!



Did you watch the King's Christmas Broadcast? Did you know that it featured Hall Grange - the manager Abi Williams was enjoying a game of Scrabble with residents Evelyn and Margaret. What a surprise!

Abi writes: I was overwhelmed with happiness and fulfilment that MHA, Hall Grange and our residents were privileged to be an exemplary point of reference; showing exceptional care and support within our community and across the nation. To appear, most significantly in the King's very first Christmas speech gave me the best ever Christmas present.

Sandwiches for Nightwatch

Jonathan Baxter writes:

Thank you to everybody who made sandwiches in November and December. On those seven Sundays we handed over 500 sandwiches to Nightwatch! All the churches that would have hosted Floating Shelter in the past agreed to provide sandwiches on 'their nights'. So together we will be providing sandwiches every night this winter until 31 March.

On 18 December (our final evening) Nightwatch fed 130 people - but sandwiches go only part of the way towards feeding all the rough sleepers.

The future of community Floating Shelters is in the balance as the government are in favour of static shelters in buildings offering single room accommodation. However, such a building is not available to us in Croydon.

Home from China

You might have seen Charlotte Stonehouse, one of our local preachers, in Church last month. She has just returned from 9 years in China ...and kindly agreed to write for us. Here's Charlotte with her companion in Shanghai - Percy



Ranked first in the world by population, second by economy and third by land area, China often hits the global headlines for a variety of reasons, not least recently for its stringent stance in the COVID-19 outbreak and its development as an emerging financial superpower.



I have spent the last 9 years living in Shanghai, working as a teacher to predominantly Chinese students in two bilingual schools. Initially I was attracted by the country's diversity, with snowy mountains and famous ice festivals to the North, tropical beaches and botanical rainforests to the South. Luxurious and modern high speed railways taking you through dilapidated villages - arriving at up-and-coming cities with never-ending construction work.

In my time in Shanghai the second highest building in the world, the Shanghai Tower, was completed. The central business district's skyline is iconic with several newly erected skyscrapers. Going back only thirty years, it would have looked a very different place altogether. A lot of the endless building projects are carried out by migrant workers parachuted



in from surrounding villages and housed in prefabricated dorm rooms with shared facilities. They earn just couple of hundred pounds a month that is typically sent back to their families. I was able to visit some of these workers' family homes and schools and was honoured to help to run summer camps for their children. It is not unusual to see 70 children crammed into one low-tech classroom with no computer facilities and for whole families to share one bedroom. Quite different from the way of life of the richer children who attended the bilingual schools where I worked in the city.

I think the aspect of life in China that kept me there for so long was the people. As a "laowai" (foreigner) I felt very lucky to always be made to feel welcomed. On one of my first days in Shanghai, I was caught outside in the rain without an umbrella, when suddenly a young local girl came alongside me and saved me. She insisted on escorting me to my destination, sharing her umbrella. Many similar acts of kindness and understanding arose in the past nine years. I have met many life

long friends and understand more and more that, despite cultural and demographic differences, we often have more in common with others than we realise. I know enough Mandarin to get by and can understand quite well what people are saying in conversations but I am definitely not fluent.



At times, I struggle with the great discrepancies between people in terms of wealth and standard of living and wonder if the country developed too fast, leaving some of its population behind. However Chinese friends will sometimes tell me that the country's leaders are looking after them *as a whole* and that there are much better systems in place to support people than before. They are focused on what drives forward a civilization collectively, so at times individuals



might appear to have gone unnoticed because they are just one part of a bigger picture. Whilst this can be difficult for me to understand and accept, the vast majority seem to live without questioning, in quiet hope for exciting and prosperous times ahead.

In February 2020 of course everything changed for me and for the rest of the world when COVID 19 hit Wuhan.

To read all about Charlotte's experiences during the pandemic you will need to read our next magazine!

The Guild

Ruth Tayler writes:



Thursday 16 February
8pm in the lounge

We will be welcoming Jeremy Davies as our speaker. He went to the Oberramaggau Passion Play last year and found it was a really inspiring experience. His illustrated talk will be an opportunity for us to be inspired too - especially welcome at a rather cold time of year. Some of you might remember going to the play a few years back with our minister John Mitchell and his wife Hilda.

A wonderful time was had by all. I remember that Hilda told her hairdresser that she was going to the Passion Play and the lady said she was surprised that a vicar's wife would do that! We are not arranging "that kind of evening" but a better one for an opportunity to "get inside" the story of the Gospels and find a clear understanding of all the joys and sorrows of a history changing set of events.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have not been before do give us a try!

Ruth Tayler



Oh no! No more stamps!

We're looking forward to welcoming Wendy Piccinini to lead our worship on Leprosy Sunday, 26 February. Wendy is Community Partnerships Manager for our region, and many of you will remember her visit to Shirley last year when she spoke about the development of the Anandaban Hospital in Nepal which is doing vital work in emergency care for leprosy sufferers.

Fundraising is crucial in supporting such projects, and here at Shirley we have done our bit over the years by donating stamps and other collectibles. TLM has raised around £1 million by selling these items to collectors, but unfortunately their value has greatly reduced in recent years, and now that bar-coded stamps have been introduced the value has decreased further.

Sadly, TLM has therefore taken the tough decision to stop taking donations of stamps and collectibles, as from 31 March. So ... let's have a final push to support TLM. Please have a look at

home for old postcards, medals, foreign and old coins, broken / unwanted jewellery - and of course stamps. Bring them to church by 26 February when Wendy will be happy to collect them.

There is a much deserved tribute to our Church friend Jose Riddiough in the latest edition of TLM's magazine. She is thanked for her devoted service to TLM - collecting stamps for more than 40 years! They included this photo taken at Hall Grange for TLM a few years ago.



If you're unable to bring items to church, I can collect them from you - call me on 01959 700201. Many thanks,

Heather Tarling



Wassailing in the Wilderness

The Black Swan Border Morris came on 7 January to wassail the apple trees and wake up the orchard. 60 visitors came to the event. Wassail (cider) was poured on the fruit trees and everyone joined in with the wassailing song. Some of our visitors even danced with the group.



The group danced on the Hall Grange patio - and the residents had a ring side view from their lounge. Later the residents spent time chatting to the dancers.

If you missed the Black Swan Border Morris this time - they are coming back on 17 June. Save the date!

www.blackswanbordermoris.co.uk



Not just for kisses

Don't winter trees look wonderful silhouetted against grey winter skies? And February is the best time to see mistletoe nestling high among the bare branches.

This poisonous, parasitic, evergreen plant features in mythology across the world. Norse god Baldur the Beautiful was killed instantly when Loki tricked his blind brother into throwing a twig of mistletoe at him. The Greeks called it The Golden Bough. Aeneas, a Greek hero was protected by this Golden Bough as he descended into the Underworld to meet his long-dead father.

Mistletoe has been widely used world-wide in medicines to treat a huge range of ailments - epilepsy, rabies, strained muscles, toothache, sores, itching, impetigo, dandruff, the common cold,

ulcers, warts, snakebite, fever, syphilis, beri-beri, ringworm, gout and worms. Remember its poisonous before you think about self-medicating though! Oh - and it can speed up labour!

Mistletoe grows in the branches of trees such as apple, hawthorn, poplar and lime and thrives in open situations with plenty of light. Its white berries are a favourite of birds such as blackcaps which eat the flesh, leaving the sticky seeds stuck fast onto the twigs. Hence the Anglo Saxon words 'mistel tan' which translates as

'dung on a twig'!



Local scientist Jane McLaughlin has surveyed mistletoe in Croydon and has discovered that Shirley is one of the best places in Croydon to spot it.

A tale told by a grandma, full of the sound of music and signifying a great deal.

Leslie Griffiths writes:

Just before Christmas, sitting innocently in church one Sunday morning, I was accosted by one of our regular members. She was clearly on fire. She had a story to tell and she was brimming with excitement as she tried to explain herself. "Come on sister," I urged her; "spit it out!" And that's just what she did. It was all about her grand-daughter who'd clearly done something that was causing grandma's chest to burst with pride. This young woman, so her grandma reported, had just been covered in glory.

"Calm down," I told her as her story began to go all over shop; "you're getting everything jumbled up. Take a deep breath and tell me what's happened and do it one step at a time." She swallowed hard and gave it another go. She explained that her grand-daughter had got a top prize. "Top prize for what?" I asked. Grandma couldn't be exact but she was clear that it had been worth the long journey

to see it happen. "Long journey?" I questioned; "where to exactly?"

She announced that all this took place in Birmingham. By now, I was more than curious. "Where in Birmingham?" There was a bit more urgency in my question this time. "The Town Hall," she replied. "Which day?" I asked (though by now I believed I could answer all my own questions). Yes, it was Monday. And yes her grand-daughter's name was Rachel. She's a soprano, she lives in the South of France, she describes herself as a British Jamaican.

"And were you there?" I probed. "Oh yes," she said. "Upstairs or downstairs?" I enquired. "Upstairs," she answered. "So was I," I finally announced. She couldn't believe it. We must have been within a few feet of one another. "How come we didn't spot each other?" I asked. But it was too late for serious analysis. She was now in seventh heaven and beyond the possibility of coherence. We just embraced and laughed and thanked God for all his blessings.

The event we were discussing was organised by the British Black Classical Foundation under the direction of a local impresario named Vincent Osborne. It exists to address the under-representation of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in classical music. I'm one of its patrons and I was dicky-bow-tied up to the eyes on the front row of the gallery. We were there for the final round of a competition for the Sir Willard White prize of £10,000 which came with a coaching programme and a performance with the Welsh National Opera Company in one of its future productions. And Rachel Duckett won it. That's her name. And that's what she won.



No wonder *Syslin Hall*, yes that's her grandma's name, was so excited.

Rachel's interests are in no way confined to singing. Since her graduation, she's been developing a portfolio of skills that includes producing, composing, teaching, piano playing and conducting too. She was recently commissioned to write a tribute piece celebrating women of the Windrush generation. The result, for soprano and piano, *Windrush 1948 Sea Shanty*, was premiered at Kings Place as part of the 70th anniversary programme for the arrival of the Windrush.

This grandmother's "spontaneous overflow of powerful emotion" came my way as I sat innocently in church one Sunday morning in December. That's Shirley Methodist for you! What next, I wonder?

Editor notes- in case you are not sure who Syslin is ... you may well have been in church in January when she served us all with Jamaican Bun and cheese after the service!

Kindness beats therapy

St Paul said it first!
Love is patient and kind.

A recent study at Ohio University by Dr Cheavns involved 122 adults who were suffering from moderate or severe anxiety and stress. It was found that performing kind acts reduced depression. Psychological tests were repeated at the end of the study. Those in the study had been asked to perform regular acts of kindness for others daily for 10 weeks.

These people showed a greater improvement compared with others who were prescribed interventions such as cognitive behaviour therapy. Maybe being kind helped people take their minds off their own symptoms.

We often think that people with depression have enough to deal with, so we don't want to burden them by asking them to help. But maybe we are wrong?



Performing acts of kindness seems to help people feel properly connected to others.



Are you one of the many folk within our Church who does some volunteering?

It would be good if you could contribute something about your volunteering experience for our magazine. Don't be shy! You just might inspire someone to do the same!

It seems you can never be too old - a resident of Macclesfield in Cheshire is a primary school reading volunteer and he is 100 years old!

Lent Lily, Daffy-down-dilly

Kate Marsden writes:

Who doesn't love daffodils! My father lived at Swettenham Water Mill in Cheshire as a child when his father was a labourer there in the 1920s. People came to 'Daffodil Dell' as it was known to carry armfuls home for free. Dad would be amazed to know that people still flock there but now they are charged! A business opportunity missed!

The delicate Lent Lily daffodil is native to England and was even celebrated by Shakespeare as the flower that "comes before the swallow dares". Daffodil farming began in 1875, when William Trelvelick, a potato farmer on the Isles of Scilly, had the idea of

putting bunches of the wild narcissi that grew on his land into the potato crates going to London via Penzance. The flowers were at Covent Garden within 8 hours of picking. His first 30 bunches, sent in a hatbox, earned him 7/6d.

Of course we associate daffodils with Wales so it very apt that a Powys based firm has discovered a very important use for the daffodil. They contain galantamine – a compound known to slow the progression of Alzheimer's symptoms. The company harvests daffodils in the Black Mountains and supplies pharmaceutical companies with 20 kilos of galantamine per year, so helping over 9,000 Alzheimer's patients .



This photo was taken in February last year in the bog garden at The Wilderness on Shirley Church Road.

Take the opportunity to visit and see the daffodils for yourself. (See the next page for details).

Winter in the Wilderness

Come and enjoy a winter walk ... only a few minutes from the Church. There is a secret garden - tucked behind Hall Grange on Shirley Church Road. No need to book - call in on weekdays between 10 and 3pm, and Sundays 5 February, 5 March and 23 April.

Though it is winter the Wilderness is dotted with colour from winter blooms, and the air is fragrant with the scent of sarcococca, winter honeysuckle, and witch hazel.

Our first daffodil has announced itself in the bog, and it will soon be followed by a carpet of



narcissus, snowdrops, and fritillary. Outside the cabin, we have planted beds with helebores, hazels, forget-me-nots, spring bulbs, feverfew and philadelphus.

If you are a bird lover - bring your binoculars and see if you can spot redwings, goldcrests, a variety of tits, greater spotted woodpeckers, wagtails, thrushes, jays, magpies, carrion crows, robins, blackbirds, woodpigeons, wrens and dunnocks.

There will be a series of Gardening Workshops in March and April. Booking essential - contact Lucy for details

Volunteers are also most welcome – a number of new people have joined the team very recently – and the sessions are now on any weekday between 10am and 1.30pm. Contact Lucy at thewilderness@mha.org.uk



if you are interested in joining our team of fantastic volunteers.

To sign up to the Wilderness newsletter and receive information each month, use this link: <http://eepurl.com/icewq>

Photos by Susanne Haynes

Blessed Undeniable Truths

When reading the Bible, look out for the commonly used word **but** – it is number 20 on the list of the most common words used in the NIV Bible (appearing nearly 4,000 times). It usually marks a very important message that is best described as a **Blessed Undeniable Truth** – or **BUT** – about God and his love for us. Here's a few of them.

Matt 22:14: For many are invited, **but** few are chosen

Ephesians 2:4-5: **But** because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

Psalms 73:26: My flesh and my heart may fail, **but** God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Acts 3:15: You killed the author of life, **but** God raised him from the dead.

By the way . . .

Excluding the little words like *the/and/a* the most common words in the New Testament are **GOD JESUS LORD FAITH SPIRIT**

And in the Old Testament **LORD GOD MAN ISRAEL PEOPLE**

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, **but** the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 2:24: **But** God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

Matthew 19:26: Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, **but** with God all things are possible.'

Timothy 2:9: And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. **But** the word of God cannot be chained.

Romans 5:8: **But** God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Bob Peters Association of Church Editors

Frameless - an Immersive Art Gallery

Just moments from Marble Arch thanks to digital wizardry you can kick leaves in Monet's garden, be tossed by the waves on Rembrandt's Lake Galilee, feel disorientated in a kaleidoscope of Surrealist images or sit in St Marks Square in Venice listening to baroque music. And so much more!

Frameless is a wonderful place for all ages (totally accessible). You can have lunch, browse the gift shop (of course!) Booking is strongly advised. There is a timed entry system - but once in you can spend as long as you like.

Have a look at the website - www.frameless.com



on the new
Safeguarding Team

The new district Safeguarding Team comprises of Claire De Stefano and Rachael Pielow. Contact them if you have any concerns.

safeguarding@methodistlondon.org.uk
rachael@methodistlondon.org.uk

And... a date for your diaries - District Safeguarding Conference **Saturday 18 March**, (time to be confirmed) at Methodist Central Hall.

Please note - our Church Safeguarding Officers are Tau Wey (020 8655 2754) and Fran Byard (020 8405 3222). See Church website for the Safeguarding policy and statement.

DDMIX A safe fun and motivating full body workout workout

Do you want to get a little bit fitter?
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DANCE/FITNESS CLASS

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Every Tuesday from 10th January 2023
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www.diversedance.com
www.zumba.com

 **ZUMBA**

Shirley Methodist Matters

The magazine can be read on line
www.shirleymeth.org.uk A few printed copies are
available at church. Thank you to all our contributors.

Jenny Crook will be the next editor.

katemarsden747@gmail.com jenny.crook@blueyonder.co.uk

The next magazine will be published (and be on
the website) on Sunday 26 February

Please send contributions by Sunday 19 February



Shrublands Foodbank

Every donation makes a difference. By contributing you help provide a vital support to local families in need. This is becoming an ever more urgent problem as prices are rising and families are finding it so hard to cope. There is a list of items needed in the Welcome Area - and a basket for your contributions. If you prefer you can put items in the box at the Coop on Wickham Road. Bev at Shrublands Foodbank is looking for more volunteers - could you help?

020 3441 7887 or info@shrublandstrust.org

Shirley Neighbourhood Care

We are based at the West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church. We run shopping buses lunch clubs; transport to medical appointments; a befriending service; and a range of outings to tea shops, pubs and restaurants for lunch and garden centres; as well as a monthly film club showing up to the minute movies at Shirley Methodist Church.

It is only with the help of volunteers that we can do any of this. If you have a few hours to spare each week, please get in touch Suzy Stoyel
snscs@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk 020 8662 9599.

Shirley Methodist Church one of 'Churches Together in Shirley'

As followers of Jesus Christ, our mission is:

✠ *to honour God by our daily living as individuals and our corporate life as a church*

✠ *to offer God worship which is both lively and dignified*

✠ *to offer welcome and care to all, regardless of age, status, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, ability or disability*

✠ *to stimulate one another to grow in our faith and develop our discipleship*

✠ *to work with our fellow-Christians in Shirley to serve our neighbours and share with others our experience of God's love*

