

Shirley Methodist Matters



Breakfast view of Table Mountain, Cape Town Photo Jennifer Potter



March 2024

www.shirleymeth.org.uk



80p

Worship in March

MORNING SERVICES START AT 10.30 AM

SUN 3 MARCH	REVD RICHARD LOWSON HOLY COMMUNION
SUN 10 MARCH	REVD JENNIFER POTTER MOTHERING SUNDAY
SUN 17 MARCH	MRS MARY SALTER
SUN 24 MARCH	MRS WENDY PICCININI THE LEPROSY MISSION PALM SUNDAY
SUN 31 MARCH	REVD RICHARD LOWSON EASTER DAY HOLY COMMUNION

There is a creche every Sunday morning in the Lounge. Many thanks to the volunteers on the rota.

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.

Minister Revd Richard Lowson
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07311 390 636



Shirley Methodist Church, Eldon Ave, Shirley, CR0 8SD

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Rev Richard writes our Circuit letter

Finding the Right Path

The wanderer returns – at last! It seems so long since I left Shirley to follow the French path through Spain to follow the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela.

I thought I knew the path I was going to travel but within days it became obvious I needed to walk a different path. I had travelled part of that way almost seven years ago, and was looking forward to walking on familiar paths and discovering new paths along the way. I wanted this trip to be about spontaneity, finding the right place to be. But with a real increase in the volume of pilgrims, along with a post covid surge, accommodation en route was in short supply; many pilgrims having booked rooms all the way to the destination.

I did enjoy the mountain scenery of the Pyrenees and the

people and places as I walked through the Basque region.



Pamplona was a pivotal point as I had to make important decisions about the paths that lay before me. I needed to find a different path and thought if I drop down to Porto the path to Santiago may not be as crowded (How wrong I was). Where do I go from here? What's happening?

It was time to get off the beaten track; spontaneously I headed south of Porto and picked up a coastal walk following fishing villages and towns. It was a space for peace and quiet – away from the crowds. It was a time to get lost in the beauty of God's creation; to walk with saints at the festival in the

fishing town of Espinho. But I was a long way from Santiago. I decided I really needed to get home, to plan again the next stage of my journey. I had to discern which path I needed to follow. I flew back from Spain very despondent, not really knowing what to do next, trying to live with disappointment. I shared that flight back with a small group from Yorkshire (of course) who were returning from Santiago having walked the Camino Ingles (English route) – a path less travelled. The seed had been sown and on my return I investigated the *Ingles or Celtic Camino*, booked a flight and accommodation all the way and I was ready to go.



It was so good to get my walking shoes on again, to start in Ferrol and follow the yellow arrows to the resting place of St James. The scenery was breathtaking, the sunrises and sunsets that book-ended the day were wonderful. The people I shared the path with had great stories to share – but there was time to walk alone and reflect when needed. And to arrive as a



pilgrim in Santiago, even though I have done it before, was something else; to be part of that pilgrim mass.

We follow a different path now; we are on our way to Jerusalem and to what lies ahead.

For Jesus this was a very different path to the path he chose three years earlier. There were pivotal points on that journey, and the path he chose was anything but easy. But that is the path he chose.

I have discovered so much in these last few months, about myself and the God who journeys with me. About having to sometimes find a different path and accepting sometimes we don't know where a path will lead. I look forward to sharing pictures and stories from my sabbatical at a later stage. Thanks once again for letting me go.



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What path are we on?

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Is it the right path for us?

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Do we dare to take a different path?

Richard



Please contact us if you would like someone 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 the website.

THURSDAY FILM NIGHT

Thursday 7 March 7.15pm start in the Lounge
Come and join us.

PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday 9 March 9am in the Lounge.
Enjoy a croissant with tea or coffee then pray for what is on your mind.
All are welcome.
Jonathan Baxter 020 8777 3158 or jandjbaxter@talktalk.net

BREAD MAKING

Tuesday 19 March 9:30 am until 12:30pm in the Corner room
No experience needed - Beginners welcome
Everything is provided.

BIBLE STUDY

Thursday 21 March 10am in the Lounge.
We will be studying Chapter 7 of *Fruit of the Spirit* 'Faithfulness'
All are welcome.
Jonathan Baxter 020 8777 3158 or jandjbaxter@talktalk.net

GUILD

Thursday 21 March 8pm in the Lounge
All are welcome. See page 17

Family News

Elizabeth Smart writes:

Signs of spring are beginning to appear all around us and I am always cheered when I see the daffodils, snowdrops and crocus and all the spring blossom – it's just what we need after the winter months.

Visiting our daughter and family recently in Cambridgeshire, we remembered that Alan Youngs' favourite flower was the daffodil. So we went to March, Alan's home town, and placed a posy on his grave and gave thanks for all the wonderful memories we have of Alan's friendship.

Our thoughts and prayers are with our church family and friends; we especially remember Revd Richard, John and Pat, Rebecca and Robert, Maurice and Peggy, Anthony and Lesley, Robert and Charlotte, Fran, Alan, Joy, Dean, Brian, Eunice, Vicky, Lambert, Gwen, Sureya and Marcos.

We think of the residents, staff and volunteers at Hall Grange and hold them in our prayers, together with the staff and volunteers who work together to make the Wilderness a special space for everyone to enjoy.



Kate Marsden writes:

Our Anniversary Garden is waking up! The grass is rather water logged though (no surprise there!) . It's lovely that as people walk past on Wickham Road they can see the hellebores , daffodils and crocuses. We have never had snowdrops before but I spotted a tiny one under the yew tree. I guess we have a squirrel to thank for it.

World Women's Day of Prayer - Friday 1 March



On 1 March 2024, churches around the UK will be holding a World Day of Prayer Service. World Day of Prayer is an international, inter-church organisation, led by women, which enables us to hear the thoughts of those women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns, and prayers.

The theme of this year's service is from Ephesians 4:1-6

I beg you, bear with one another in love. The service was written by a group of Palestinian Christian women before the current conflict and deals with their own personal experiences.

Their hope was to encourage and inspire other women around the world to bear with one another in troubled times. As has so often happened before, this year's service has been overtaken by a tragic set of events.

The service is offered to support the Christian women who created it. All taking part are invited to listen prayerfully to their voices. We pray with world leaders, relief workers, medical teams and all those praying about the situation, for an end to the killing, and for wisdom to build a lasting peace.

A Palestinian Christian Nurse, Dina Nasser, said:

I hope on the occasion of the World Day of Prayer, as we pray for peace and justice on earth, we remember that taking a stand for justice does not allow us the luxury of choice. It is a moral stand that we should uphold for all the oppressed in this world, be they Palestinians, Syrians, Yemenis or Ukrainians. How can we remain silent and only speak up when it is acceptable to do so? Please take action; we have heard enough statements of concern!

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 146 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world – through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later.



World Women Day of Prayer services will be held locally on Friday 1 March at:

- + Hall Grange MCH, Shirley Church Road at 2.30pm; Revd Pam Clews will lead the service and the Home's two chaplains, Mala and Jennifer, will be involved
- + There will also be a service at Our Lady RC church, Bingham Road, Addiscombe at 7pm.

All are most welcome to these services.

Events in



Revd Stephen Day writes:

'Let justice flow' a 6-week Bible study based on the ministry of the Old Testament prophet Amos, continues through Lent. The study raises the kind of deep and searching questions of faith that befit a meaningful Lent study. What kind of God would allow pain and suffering to occur in his world? Can God's people expect protection from natural or human-made disasters?

The sessions are on Zoom at 7.30pm on Wednesday evenings, with four sessions remaining - 28 February, 6 March and 20 March. The session planned for 13 March will take place on **Thursday 14 March** because of the Circuit Meeting scheduled for the previous evening.

The Zoom link for each week's session is shown in the Shirley Methodist church Notices and on the church website.



at St John's Church, Shirley

*Saturdays 12-2pm
in the Tamberlin Room*

2 March Kidney Research UK

9 March The Orpheus Centre

16 March Alzheimer's Society

Charity Fundraiser - all donations welcomed



My Christian Journey

a series of inspirational Lent talks

St Mildred's Church in Bingham Road warmly invites local residents to a series of talks by church leaders who will be sharing aspects of their Christian journey; what has inspired and motivated them and what parts of their ministry they most enjoy.

No need to book – just come along and enjoy.

Each Wednesday evening talk will begin at 7.30pm (tea and coffee available from 7pm) and finish by 9pm.

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|-------------|---|
| 28 February | The Right Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallet,
Bishop of Croydon |
| 6 March | The Venerable Greg Prior,
Archdeacon of Croydon |
| 13 March | The Right Revd Peter Price,
retired Bishop of Bath and Wells |
| 20 March | Revd Barry Goodwin, retired acting
Archdeacon of Croydon |



The Olive Tree: Keeping Hope Alive

Jean Beecher writes:

As we approach Good Friday and Easter, we remember how Jesus spent one of his last days on earth praying in an olive grove whilst his disciples slept. It was there that soldiers, armed with clubs and swords, arrested him. Of all those present, he was probably the only one who remained calm, healing the man who had been struck.

Today, over 2,000 years later, the fruit of olive tree is widely used as a salad oil, a soothing balm in soap and as a skin softener. When the *olive branch* is offered, it remains a symbol of peace and known internationally as a desire to end hostility and warfare.

The olive tree also has broader meanings - historically, the long-living, slow-growing, and drought-resistant olive tree represents resilience, and also

holds symbolic value across the religious scriptures of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

There are still olive groves around Bethlehem and in the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank, owned by Palestinian farmers.



Those who live near illegal Israeli settlements have for decades suffered harassment, ranging from the uprooting of trees to bulldozing the entire crop. This hits the farmers, who regard deeply their trees as an intergenerational connection to the land and community - *we raise olive trees as if we raise our children.*

Twenty years ago, seeing the need to help the farmers, Christian Aid teamed up with local organisations, like the YMCA and YWCA, to promote the Olive Tree Campaign *Keep Hope Alive*. This invited individuals and organisations in the UK and beyond to sponsor an olive tree. This caught on and was a token of solidarity, letting the olive farmers know people from all over the world were investing in their field and their family. In 2022 Christian Aid sponsored 1700 saplings, including trees planted on behalf of MPs and church leaders. An elderly farmer, Sheikh Ahmad Rashaydeh, whose land is under threat of confiscation, was able to plant 50 new saplings thanks to the Campaign. She said, *As an old lady, I am happy to see trees growing and standing. God bless you.*

For over a decade, hundreds of volunteers from around the world have travelled to the West Bank each year, accompanying Palestinian farmers to olive groves in high risk areas for the

harvest. *Rabbis For Human Rights*, an Israeli human rights organization recruits volunteers for the harvest from all over Israel and beyond.



Volunteers working with olive farmers

Another organisation, set up in 2013, *To Be There*, states: *The impact of the volunteers is multidimensional - it's about understanding, bearing witness, and buying time so that families can harvest as much as they can. From experience, we have observed that Israeli settlers and soldiers behave differently in the presence of 'internationals' which contributes to a greater sense of safety felt by Palestinians. They feel more assured, knowing that they, and their plight under occupation, are not being ignored – that they are not invisible.*

Dylan Jones, a volunteer from South Wales, wrote toward the end of his time in the West Bank in 2019: *Just got back from a great day picking. Such a beautiful valley, climbing up trees as old as 2,000 years. There must have been around 20 of us from many different countries. An unofficial United Nations in the trees.*

However, since October 7, 2023, the situation for the Palestinian olive farmers in the West Bank has deteriorated significantly.

The annual olive harvest starts in October through into November, usually a festive, joyful season of family and friends coming together to pick olives, on groves passed on through generations of ancestral inheritance.



In previous years, the olive harvest has been carefully coordinated by local Palestinian authorities and the Israeli military to allow farmers specific dates on which they can reach their trees.

A schedule of timings for the farmers was published the day before Hamas attacked southern Israel. Since then, requests for permission to reach most of their trees have been turned down.

This means no oil, soap and multiple other products, or revenue from their sale, and disruption of a profoundly important time for the nearly 3 million Palestinians on the West Bank. Olives are the largest single agricultural product on the West Bank, and would have earned farmers \$70m in total in 2023. A clampdown by security forces has led to thousands of arrest and shootings, and sweeping restrictions on movement. Palestinians say, the measures are more severe than anything in nearly a generation.

A Prayer for the Middle East

Written by Embrace the Middle East
– a Christian development charity,
partnering with Christians in the Middle East

Father God,

*We pray for the day when justice and peace
will flow like rivers through Israel and Palestine.*

*We praise you for the resurrection hope
that we have in Jesus.*

*We acknowledge the scars of violence on Jesus' body
and yet we remember that scar tissue is also a sign of healing.*

*With this image in mind, we pray for
healing and hope in the land.*

*We commit each and every one of our partners to you
who, in following Christ, make transformation
and peace possible.*

In Jesus' name, Amen.



<https://embraceme.org/>

Invitation to a Passover meal at St George's

Dear friends,

I am writing on behalf of the Church Wardens and staff team at St George the Martyr, Elstan Way, Shirley, Croydon, CR0 7QJ to invite members of your church to join us for our Passover Meal (cold lamb/vegetarian alternative, potato and green salad etc, plus dessert etc) and Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, March 29 starting at 7pm.

Some local churches are not able to meet for worship on Maundy Thursday this year - and this invitation is extended especially to them. The event, at St George's Church, includes the meal and Eucharist, followed by the stripping of the altar. There will be a vigil at the altar of repose in our Lady Chapel until midnight for those who wish to stay.

Non-alcoholic drinks will be freely available during the meal but the Chalice WILL contain blessed alcoholic wine. All are very welcome to receive this wine if they wish, or to pass the Chalice along if preferred.

We need numbers of those expecting to attend by Monday March 11 please, for catering purposes, and also an indication of any food intolerance or special dietary requirements e.g. vegetarian, gluten free, lactose intolerance. There is no charge for joining us but a Donations basket will be available if people wish to contribute.

We look forward to welcoming local Churches Together friends on this very special evening. If you have any questions - or just want to let us know how many will be joining us - contact details below.

I wish you a Blessed Lent

Liz

Liz Bebington (Mrs M E Bebington)

***Licensed Reader (PTO) at the Parish of St George the Martyr Shirley
020 8777 4840 (main phone number) 07722 573 282 (for texts etc)***

[Email lizbeb@gmail.com](mailto:lizbeb@gmail.com)



The Guild

Ruth Tayler writes:

This month we will meet on **Thursday 21 March** when we will be welcoming **Anne McConnell** to speak to us about the country of Haiti.

I guess many of us cannot lay claim to knowing much about Haiti. Anne is well versed in what Haiti is like; its people, what has been its past, its present situation and its hopes for the future. Anne's mother, Olga, was Haitian and her father, Patrick, was Irish. Anne's paternal grandfather, Ormande, spent his entire ministry (about 35 years) in Haiti. Anne will be explaining and showing all this to us through pictures and artefacts.

Margaret and Leslie Griffiths have, as we know, particular

interest in Haiti having served there. They first met Anne and her family in Birmingham when the family was on sabbatical, and Anne was about 6 years old. The Griffiths' and the McConnells' friendship continued in Haiti, where Anne's grandfather, Ormande McConnell retired in 1970.

Anne really does come warmly recommended. We are delighted this opportunity has come for us to learn much more about a country that for the most part is far away from our own experience.



Enlarge your experience! Come to Guild on 21 March - as ever, **we will meet in the Lounge at 8pm.**

Mining – Promise or Peril?

In early February, Revd Jennifer Potter flew to the Republic of South Africa, staying in Cape Town. People have asked 'why did you go?' Jennifer referred them to this magazine - so here you are - read all about it!

Well, you may ask, *What is a superannuated, female, Methodist Minister doing at a Mining Conference in Cape Town?* I will try to answer that question by describing my involvement over many years.

First of all let me say that Cape Town is a lovely place and the views from my own room and especially from the breakfast restaurant were breath-taking (look again at the front cover!) but sadly I had little opportunity to travel any further than a brief excursion to the Waterfront for a meal with my colleagues.

I'm the Methodist representative on an ecumenical and international organisation called



Mining and Faiths Reflection Initiative (MFRI for short). It began just over ten years ago through conversations between the then CEO of Anglo American and the Pope. The idea was that faith groups are present worldwide and have the trust of communities in ways that other groups do not. The idea was that Faith groups would be critical friends to the Mining Industry, assisting them to build sustainable communities in the places where they operate, mine safely and ethically and seek to reduce their environmental impact. Church investors are also involved.

Many large mining groups have joined the initiative and each year more are contacted with a view to joining.

As part of this initiative, I have been on two site visits to mines – both in South Africa while other members have been on similar visits in Peru and Brazil. On these visits we were able to scrutinise the mine operation and talk to employees and local community members.

It is difficult to over-emphasise the importance of mining in the history of human civilisation. Not for nothing are eras of history named Bronze Age or Iron Age. However, the impact of mining on people and environment has often been very damaging, hence many citizen groups oppose all mining. Now we live at a period in history when critical minerals like lithium, cobalt, palladium and many other metals of which we have scarcely heard have become essential to a 'green future' – electric cars,

hydrogen powered cars, batteries, turbines and many other new technologies. They are in great demand and they were in the spotlight at this Conference. Other issues were relations with indigenous communities, preparing communities for mine closure and how to develop trust with local communities.

For me one of the positives of the initiative is our **collaboration with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa** and the prospect of producing educational materials to help church ministers be a constructive presence for their congregations in mining areas, the possibility of chaplaincy to miners and partnerships with the mines in community development.

Our Initiative has already taken great strides in developing trust with the CEOs of these bigger Mining Companies and we look forward to extending those with smaller companies.



Heather Tarling writes:

We look forward to welcoming Wendy Piccinini once again to lead our LM service on Sunday 24 March. Many of you will have heard Wendy speak previously about the work of the Leprosy Mission, which continues to reach out to the most marginalised in society in some of the poorest regions of the world..... people like 18-year-old Rajisha (seen below) from Bihar State in India who was diagnosed with leprosy by a doctor visiting her community. She had noticed strange marks appearing on her face, and her fingers stiffening and bending inwards.



Unfortunately the treatment was too late to prevent nerve damage and her condition worsened to the extent she couldn't feed herself. Her only hope was at Muzaffarpur Hospital, 100km from her home, where she could have surgery to straighten her fingers. In desperation she made the exhausting journey alone and waited for many hours to be seen. Finally she received the loving care and surgery she needed, for which she was deeply thankful.

Sadly, the Hospital is cramped and crumbling and in urgent need of modernisation. It floods in monsoon season, and offers no shelter from the fierce sun for the 600 desperate people queuing each day for treatment.

The Leprosy Mission is raising money to rebuild a new Outpatients Department. A gift of £36 to TLM will provide a tonne of bricks for the restoration; £442 would fund reconstructive surgery for someone like Rajisha; £2,008 would cover a labourer's wages for the entire build. Muzaffarpur Hospital (below) is the only place in Bihar where people affected by leprosy can receive free and compassionate care.

Here at Shirley, we have a long history of supporting the Leprosy Mission, whether through prayer, through our donations and, in the past, collecting stamps and coins.

We hope this love and care continues into the future.

After the service, Sunday Morning Club will once again be providing delicious freshly made biscuits for which you're invited to make a donation; there will also be the opportunity to donate directly to TLM via Wendy's card reader machine. Leaflets will be available for those who'd like to read more about the work of TLM, or you can visit their website:

www.leprosymission.org.uk

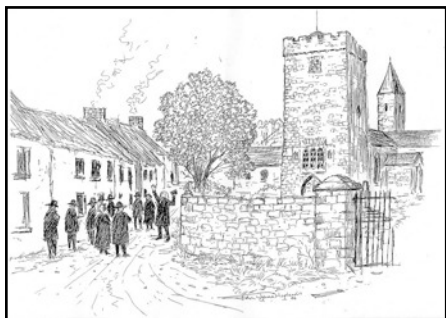
So please do come along and support what is sure to be an inspiring and informative service.



Return to Llanelli

Leslie Griffiths writes:

In early March, I'm to give a lunch-time talk to the former pupils of our two grammar schools in Llanelli. The lunch will be held in Llanelly (sic) House which was once inhabited by Sir Thomas Stepney, entrepreneur and one of the town's modernisers.



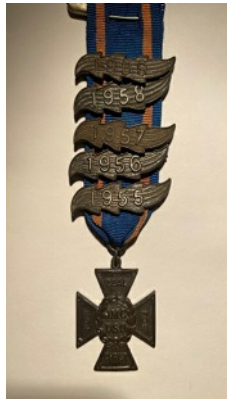
John Wesley passed through the town a dozen times on his way to or from Ireland - the sketch above shows one occasion when he preached in Llanelli. Until 1772, the year of Sir Thomas's death, Llanelli House is where Wesley used to stay. He found a small group among the household staff who, of their

own free will, had begun to form a "society". So the architect of Methodism, our dear John Wesley, without lifting a finger, found himself among fellow believers and very much at home. Sir Thomas, of course, was a gentleman and an Anglican but, for all that, he was more than sympathetic to the spiritual lives of his staff.

In 1790, on his last visit to Llanelli, just a few months before his death, Wesley met the little band of Methodists now meeting in someone's home. He pressed a guinea into the hands of one of them and urged them to start fund-raising to build themselves a church.

And that's how the English Methodist Church began its life in Welsh-speaking Llanelli. Soon the church was built and a minister was sought to help it grow and develop. In my talk, I'll recount the dramatic arrival of that minister (he almost sank without trace in a patch of quicksand) and the work he did

throughout the Principality and beyond. He became one of the first General Secretaries of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and started the JMA (the Junior Missionary Association) of beloved memory. Margaret still has her medal and bars, I'm going to display them for all to see. They bring back such precious memories.



This minister's name was James Buckley. There's so much more I could say but that will have to wait. Llanelly House, where I'm giving my talk is just across the street from the parish church of Saint Elli, and less than a hundred yards from a building boasting a blue plaque. This announces to passers-by that Emmeline Pankhurst, the famous suffragette, visited the town and gave a speech near that spot in 1912. My hosts have invited me

to include some reference to that event too. What a lot of ground and what a mix of issues and events I'm going to have to straddle.

Luckily, Margaret is going to save the day. Again. There are Pankhursts, the same ones, in her own background and she's done a vast amount of research into their history. So I have all the reference books and articles I could possibly need. And, serendipity, my talk is planned for March 7th, International Women's Day.

Getting all this (and so much more) into one coherent narrative is going to be a challenge. But it's the sort of challenge I relish. Wish me well.



How to make Easter mean more - Part 1

This year Easter comes right at the end of March and could feature in either our March or April magazines. We shall have an Easter feature in both!

Easter is the most significant event in the Christian calendar but its message of new beginnings, hope, and redemption are universal and can be appreciated by everyone.

What do palm fronds and a traditional baked bun symbolise? What are the positive messages we can all take from these Easter emblems? And how can we apply these to our daily lives?



Hot cross buns and self-sacrifice

It's thought that the hot cross bun was first baked by a 14th Century monk from St Albans

Abbey, who handed them out to the local poor on Good Friday.

The idea of giving one's life for others is a powerful one. Easter offers an opportunity to reflect on the notion of self-sacrifice and selflessness. In what ways can we make our own sacrifices, concessions and compromises for the people we love or those in need? A sacrifice could be volunteering for a charity, donating hard-earned cash to a worthy cause, or something as simple as taking the time to help bake a batch of hot cross buns for friends and family.

Palm branches and warm welcomes

On Palm Sunday, which falls a week before Easter, Jesus is said to have entered Jerusalem on a donkey with the happy people welcoming him by waving palm branches. To commemorate the event, many churches provide their congregation with small crosses made from palm leaves.



These days, we would likely balk if someone waved a large branch in our face, but we can all try and replicate the act of openly welcoming someone new. We can be hospitable to those fleeing places of conflict or violence, and we can also show welcome to people we meet, be it in person or online. When you meet somebody new, be friendly and smile. As the writer Max Eastman said, *A smile is the universal welcome.*

Simnel cake and mothers

In the UK, and many countries around the world, we celebrate our Mother Church, by giving thanks to God for his gift, and our parental mothers on the

fourth Sunday of Lent. This dates from a 16th Century tradition when people were given a day off work to travel home to attend a service at their Mother Church.

This naturally developed into visiting parental mothers at the same time; by the 17th Century the tradition had evolved of taking your mother a gift of a Simnel cake that would be eaten on Easter Sunday. Toasted *eggs* around the edge of the marzipan-covered fruit cake represent the 11 disciples of Jesus – Judas is not included because it is an 'Easter Sunday' cake.



Association for Church Editors

What is Easter Experience?

Caryl Rapps writes:

Did you know that each year, before Easter, Addington Methodist church engages in a very important exercise in outreach and mission?

We mount sessions for local schools, to tell of the events of Easter. A class of 30 children at a time visit our church to hear the Easter story. In this exercise we are reaching out to young people (and the adults who accompany them) in the local community, many of whom do not attend a church.

However to do this we need your help; we have managed to cover most bases but have a couple of gaps to fill. Would you be willing to come and help? To come and sow seeds of the knowledge of Christ? People who have joined us in the past have found it a rewarding and uplifting experience.

This year schools are coming into our church on:

Monday March 18 at 1.30pm

Wednesday March 20 at 1.30pm

Thursday March 21 at 1.30pm

Friday March 22 at 9.45am

The children move round the church in small groups of 6 to find out about each event in the Easter Story. You would only be talking to 6 children at a time and a script is provided. The children have a small activity at each base – this is also provided with instructions. You only have each group for 7 minutes at a time!



The children have always been very receptive and it has been a wonderful to experience Easter with them. Children at the Servant King base each make a cross shape on their hands with water. To see the children move to the next base carefully guarding this cross is quite moving.

At the end, after Rev Richard has spoken about the Resurrection, we move into another room for angel biscuits and a drink – there is an angel biscuit waiting for you!



I do hope you feel moved to help – and experience this way of telling the Easter story to young people.

Let me know by telephoning or emailing me.

Thank you
Caryl Rapps


DEMELZA HOSPICE CARE FOR CHILDREN
Regd. Charity No. 1039651

SPRING COFFEE MORNING

FRIDAY 15th MARCH, 2024
10.00am – 1.00pm
at ANNE'S
74 SHIRLEY WAY, CRO 8PB
(020 8777 7665)

SELECTION OF GOODS TO BUY
TEAS, COFFEES & CAKES

RAFFLE
ALL WELCOME





Addington, Christ Church and Shirley Methodist Churches

Invite YOU to

Walk the Way of the Cross ...



A reflective self led **Good Friday/Easter** walk
around the **Wilderness** pausing at stages on the
way. For All Ages.

Good Friday 29th March
Between 11am and 3pm

At the MHA Wilderness
17 Shirley Church Road,
Croydon CR9 5AL





Christian Aid Week 2024 Sunday 12 – Saturday 16 May

Christian Aid Week really starts, a day earlier, with the London Freedom Walk on **Saturday 11 May**.

The walk begins at All Hallows by the Tower, with a short service at 12.30-1.00pm. The link below looks back to last year's walk, which started at St James, Piccadilly. See if you can spot some familiar faces from Shirley in the photos!

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/events/london-freedom-walk>

This year's route takes in Southwark Cathedral, south of the river. It ends at St Paul's, and there are plenty of landmarks on the route!

If you would like to join 2024 walk, Robin and Hilda Burnham have kindly agreed to sign up Shirley walkers as a group. Speak to Hilda and Robin at church or email them at rebandhcpb@outlook.com

To register they need each person's name, phone number and email address. There will be a list to sign in the Welcome Area on Sunday mornings. And, as a group, we can ask church members to sponsor us! You can also ask friends and family to sponsor you/us too.

The (rather long) link below is very informative. It shows the route, the churches and other buildings to be visited and the distance between each stage.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1jPPufMa6UepjX-jW3YUldKggcTORE0s&ll=51.51247994977971%2C-0.090944500000000087&z=15>

It's good exercise, good fun and for a very good cause!

What's going on?



9th Feb 2024 - 7th Sep 2024 11am - 5.00pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat
Level 1, Then and Now Gallery

Croydon Clocktower, Katharine Street, Croydon, CR9 1ET

This is Croydon's Music is a new exhibition that looks to unveil the rich history of music within the borough of Croydon at the Museum of Croydon. Croydon has been the home of new music from almost every genre including punk, folk, choral, reggae, Indian classical, rock, grime and more. The exhibition includes photography, oral histories and objects from iconic artists spanning the eras - from the eminent Samuel Coleridge Taylor to Captain Sensible of The Damned, from dubstep idols Skream and Benga to international reggae star Desmond Dekker, and from Croydon's much-loved singer the late Kirsty MacColl to ground-breaking rap and hip-hop artist Nadia Rose and many more!

Stretch Class

Chair-based seated exercise

Shirley Methodist Church

Thursdays at 2.00 - 2.45 pm

£3.00 per session

Melanie Alcalde 07956 130052

Dance and Fitness

With Sarah Elbourne

Shirley Methodist Church

Tuesdays 10.15 -11.15 am

Contact Sarah for details

sarahelbourne.se@gmail.com

07740675453

Shirley Methodist Matters

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

The next magazine will be published (and be on the website) on Sunday 17 March

Please send contributions by Sunday 24 March

Contact us on mm8sd@gmail.com
(our new email address)

Kate Marsden will be the next editor.



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 now based at St George's Church Hall. However our lunch club will remain at West Wickham 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.

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*

