

# Shirley Methodist Matters



*Orange Tip Butterfly*

*Photo; Ray Roberts*



April 2024

[www.shirleymeth.org.uk](http://www.shirleymeth.org.uk)



80p

# Worship in April

## MORNING SERVICES START AT 10.30 AM

SUN 7 APRIL REVD RICHARD LOWSON

SUN 14 APRIL LOCAL ARRANGEMENT

SUN 21 APRIL REVD JULIET USHEWOKUNZE

SUN 28 APRIL REVD LESLIE GRIFFITHS

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](mailto: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  
rlowson@hotmail.com  
07311 390 636



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

- 3 CIRCUIT LETTER
- 5 HOLY WEEK
- 6 DIARY DATES
- 7 FAMILY NEWS
- 8 MEMORIES OF PAT PRITCHARD
- 10 LESLIE GRIFFITHS WRITES
- 12 HOW TO MAKE EASTER MEAN MORE - PART 2
- 14 SUNDAY MORNING CLUB NEWS
- 16 CHRISTIAN AID
- 17 CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SHIRLEY
- 18 THE TROPHY IS MISSING
- 19 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
- 20 SPOTLIGHT ON THE BUDGET
- 21 A BUTTERFLY PARADISE
- 22 SAD NEWS FOR SHIRLEY
- 23 FINDING NANA
- 24 SHIRLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE
- 25 HARVESTING SPAGHETTI TREES
- 26 WHAT'S GOING ON ?

## Revd Steven Day writes our Circuit letter



Dear friends,

I wish you a blessed Easter! Easter Day will mark my last day in this Circuit before my three-month sabbatical. I am grateful to the Methodist Church for the gift of sabbaticals in which ministers are released from their usual responsibilities. Sabbaticals are valuable opportunities for rest, recreation and time with family and friends. However, we are also expected to pursue a programme of study, research, work or experience.

I plan to engage in a study of bridges in London, hence the photo of Tower Bridge above.

We will all have crossed many bridges during our lives, but we may not have paid too much attention to them.

Particularly during the past ten years, I have been struck by the sense of being a bridge, which is a significant aspect of what I offer as a minister. This realisation has led me to ponder the nature of bridges. Thankfully, London offers many examples of bridges to study: from the latest incarnation of London Bridge, a crossing point of the Thames for over 2,000 years, to the pedestrian Millennium Bridge.

I intend to explore several aspects of bridges, such as:

- The relationship between purpose and design
- The cost of building bridges, human and economic
- The impact which bridges make
- Bridges as means of inclusion and exclusion
- Changing context and needs
- Maintenance
- Bridges no longer fit for purpose

I will relate these aspects to actual bridges in London and my experience in ministry.

The purpose is to develop a theology of bridges.

I hope to offer an evening in July when we can gather by the Thames, look at a few bridges together and reflect on what has emerged during my sabbatical. More details will be shared later.

I will be praying for you during my sabbatical, and your prayers for me will also be welcome.

God Bless

*Steve*



*We are delighted that the bedding and mattresses once used by The Floating Shelter have found a new home. They are now on their way to a rural area in Ukraine. The Ukrainian lady, Sascha, who collected them explained that areas away from the cities have difficulty accessing aid. She has highlighted especially the shortage of men's clothing. Can you help? If so please let Elizabeth or Bill Smart know.*

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.

## Holy Week

Tuesday 26 March 8pm  
Reflective Easter Experience  
*At Addington Methodist*

Thursday 28 March 8pm  
Maundy Thursday Tenebrae  
and Communion  
(Service of Shadows)  
*at Christ Church (and on Zoom)*

Friday 29 March 11am -3pm  
Good Friday  
Walk the Way of the Cross  
A reflective, self - led walk in the Wilderness.  
Pause at stages along the way .  
Stay as long as you like.  
*Behind MHA Hall Grange  
17 Shirley Church Road*

Easter Sunday Communion  
Alleluia - Christ has risen  
*Shirley Methodist*  
10.30am



## THURSDAY FILM NIGHT

Thursday 4 April 7.15pm start in the Lounge  
Come and join us.

## PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday 13 April 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](mailto:jandjbaxter@talktalk.net)

## BREAD MAKING

Tuesday 16 April 9:30 am until 12:30pm in the Corner room  
No experience needed - Beginners welcome  
Everything is provided.

## BIBLE STUDY

Thursday 18 April 10am in the Lounge.  
We will be studying Chapter 8 of *Fruit of the Spirit - Gentleness'*  
All are welcome.  
Jonathan Baxter 020 8777 3158 or [jandjbaxter@talktalk.net](mailto:jandjbaxter@talktalk.net)

## Family News

*Elizabeth Smart writes:*

We were saddened to hear that Pat Pritchard died on March 2nd, peacefully in hospital. Pat and John's ministry left us with so many very special memories and we are blessed to still have visual as well as personal memories of Pat's creativity and the pastoral care she so generously shared with our church family.



The Peace banner above the organ was made by Pat, and it still speaks to us today. It will continue to be a focus for our

prayers for the world and for ourselves. Such a wonderful legacy.

We hold John, Claire and Paul and their children in our prayers at this time; may they be comforted by God's love and the memories they hold dear.

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

We hold the residents, staff and volunteers at Hall Grange in our prayers together with the staff and volunteers at The Wilderness.

On Good Friday we are invited to make our way to The Wilderness and Walk the Way of the Cross when we can stop, pause and reflect and try to make sense of all that Christ did for us.

On Easter Sunday, the cross will be in the church garden once more as we replace the symbols of the Passion with flowers that speak of Easter, new life and all the joy that Easter brings.

Do bring along flowers to decorate the cross on Easter Sunday.

**HAPPY EASTER.**



## Memories of Pat Pritchard



*Rosemary Jones writes:*

All of us who knew Pat and John Pritchard will have so many different memories flooding in. What a privilege it was to know them both. Pat immersed herself in all the Church activities. She was a member of Sheila Bryant's house group and Monday Fellowship. She was a great supporter of Hall Grange, often helping at their Communion services. And she brimmed over with ideas for a whole range of different events.

I vividly remember the great Birthday Party! We all put our birthday dates on a list - for the party, we sat at tables with those who shared the same birth month. Each table group had been asked to provide a decorated cake

and an activity. I was on the November table and fireworks was our theme. It was a great evening (let's do it again!)

*The September table*



Then there was the Mock Wedding! Pat knew that everyone loves a wedding so why not have a wedding - themed party? Jean and Jonathan Baxter were the 'bride and groom', there were other 'top table' guests - the most memorable surely being Dave Bateson as a 'bridesmaid'!





Everyone else came as guests - enjoying the speeches, laughter and joining in with the wedding banquet.

Both John and Pat enjoyed music and we had a variety of musical events. The Flower and Music Festival was a huge success; involving many local flower arranging groups; visitors enjoyed their displays while listening to a variety of performers. The production of Amahl and the Night Visitors was another notable highlight.

Other people will have different memories. I wasn't particularly involved in craft activities but these were a special interest of Pat's and there is still evidence of her work in the banners we display around the Church. What everyone will remember though is Pat's warmth and friendship. Nothing was too much trouble. She cared about people and shared their sorrows and their joys. Life was not always easy for her but she was always cheerful and uncomplaining.

How fortunate we are to have known her.



*We now have a new - quicker way to access our archive of church photos which live 'on the cloud'. Scan this QR code and 'voila' - you will see lots of photos!*

*But you can still find them by going to the website. Look at the bottom of the Home page for the link. [www.shirleymeth.org.uk](http://www.shirleymeth.org.uk)*

*We now have more than 200 for you to peruse. Take a trip down Memory Lane - you may even find photos of you or your family. They are not sorted into any kind of order (a job for another day!). More have been added this month thanks to Margaret Reed's sister passing Margaret's album on to us. Margaret had poignant photos of the last service in the old church - Easter 1997 as well as ones taken of the Open Day held in our brand new building in April 1998.*

*Please let Kate Marsden know if you have any that can be included - once scanned you will get the original photos back.*

## A thought written in Lent but with Easter in mind.

*Leslie Griffiths writes*

Esther Ghey, the mother of the transgender Brianney, has impressed everyone by the way she's opened up to the parents of the two youngsters who killed her child. She understands, she says, how they must be feeling now that the courts have sentenced their offspring to all those years in prison. Theirs is a sense of loss just as hers is. Esther Ghey opened herself to meeting the parents of her child's killers. Indeed, she has now met Emma Sutton one of these parents. They had more in common, she suggested, than what kept them apart. How much more impressive or generous can things get than that? A pure act of grace.

During Lent, I've been looking at instances like this through the prism of the death of Christ. When the drama

of his human life reached its conclusion, when Jesus had been pitied, crushed, humiliated, mocked, betrayed, abandoned, and screamed at, he was hung up on his cross. As he looked down on the baying crowd, their stupid moonlike faces shouting their venom and spitting their hatred and, no doubt, enjoying it, it brings from him the heart-rending cry, a shout to the heavens, imploring his Father to forgive them on the grounds that they didn't know what they were doing or had done. Isaac Watts supplies the line that never fails to come to my mind as I contemplate this astonishing moment in the story of our salvation.

*"Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?"*

I sing it. Over and over again. Just to catch the enormity of it. And, somehow it morphs into one of my favourite lines



from Shakespeare: "Love is not love that alters when it alteration finds." His love was constant, unconditional, right to his last breath.

Anyone who claims to follow in the way of Christ must surely heed this. Our Lord, looking at those who'd been brainwashed, like sheep that have gone astray, into wanting this cruel end, was filled with pity for them. Not anger. Nor a desire for revenge. Not even disregard. He saw them. Looked down at them. Understood them. Saw more deeply than that veneer of gormless hatred and idiotic heartlessness into the core of their beings, beings made in

God's image, and he tried even *in extremis* to reach the parts that nothing else seemed able to reach. Amazing love!

I haven't a clue whether Esther Ghey is a person of faith. Nor does it really matter to me. As we followed the tragic story of the murder of her beloved daughter, a truly dark tale of the depths to which human beings can sink, we were stopped in our tracks, tears still in our eyes, by the generous, compassionate, warm-hearted and (surely) painful offer she made towards the parents of those killers. They, after all, had also lost a child. Her gesture bore all the marks of a Christlike act and we can only thank God for it.



*Esther Ghey set up the charity 'Peace in Mind' seven months after her daughter was murdered. Its aim is to improve mental health in schools; building resilience, empathy and compassion. After meeting Esther, the mother of one of Brianna's killers is considering how she can help this charity.*

*Editor*

## How to make Easter mean more - Part 2

*Part 1 of this article appeared last month when we featured hot cross buns, palm fronds and Simnel cake. This month it's eggs and candles!*

### Eggs and new beginnings

In many cultures, the egg has long been a symbol of new life, fertility and rebirth: one Hindu creation story states that the universe came from a cosmic golden egg. For thousands of years Iranians have decorated eggs on Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, which falls on the spring equinox.

For Christians, the egg symbolises the resurrection of Jesus Christ; the hard shell representing the sealed tomb from which he broke free. At Easter eggs are rolled down hills (re-enacting the rolling away of the tombstone). Children go on Easter egg hunts. Eggs are decorated and of course



chocolate eggs are shared - and enjoyed by young and old.

The idea of rebirth or a fresh start is one that we can all appreciate. It can be hard to make big changes in life but Spring presents the perfect time to get a new job, mend or end a relationship, move house, or even get to grips with the Spring cleaning. But a "rebirth" doesn't have to be so tangible: it can also be about a change in attitude or approach. When you tuck into your Easter eggs embrace the changes that you want to make – inside and out. In the words of T.S. Eliot: 'Every moment is a fresh beginning.'

### Candles and holding on to hope

Many congregations have a Paschal or Easter candle which is blessed and lit at Easter. This candle



represents the risen Christ who brings light into the world and with light - hope.

Easter is the holiest time for Greek Orthodox Christians. (As they follow the Julian Calendar, their Easter will be on 5 May). Late in the evening of Holy Saturday churches fill with people waiting for the stroke of midnight. It is at this moment that all the lights in the church are extinguished. In total darkness the priest enters carrying the Eternal Flame - and from this flame candles are lit, hand to hand, until the whole church is ablaze with light. The crowd then shouts 'Christos Anesti' - Christ is risen. The Light of the World has come. Outside, the dark sky is lit up with fireworks.

The Light of Easter reveals the victory of Jesus Christ over death and evil. Darkness tries to overwhelm us but we must trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and always walk in the light of Easter. We must nurture hope within ourselves; remaining optimistic and positive in the face of obstacles or pitfalls. We must also try to inspire hope in those who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. Martin Luther King said, 'We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope'. Easter is the most significant event for Christians but its message of new beginnings, hope, and redemption is universal and can be appreciated by everyone.

Association of Church Editors



## Sunday Morning Club News



*Which story from the Old Testament do you think is illustrated by these fruit kebabs? Thanks Simon for the photo?*

We have been finding out about some Old Testament prophets – Jonah, Moses, Noah and Samuel. To illustrate them we used some excellent short animated video clips available on the internet.

Revd Leslie Griffiths kindly shared a video to celebrate St David's Day involving 12,000 schoolchildren from across Wales, singing enthusiastically (*Pawb I ganu'n un / Sing Together*). This inspired us to devote the session on Sunday 3 March to St David, just two days after his special day on 1 March

Here's the link:

<https://youtu.be/QOmckL0a8f0?si=6BQsg6VZZazpQ4Q6>

Besides finding out about his life as a monk, we learned that St David became a renowned preacher and missionary, spreading Christianity throughout Wales, south west England and Brittany. The monks led a very simple, austere life, supposedly eating only leeks and drinking only water; he was sometimes referred to as *the waterman*. On St David's Day, Welsh people around the world wear one or both of Wales's national emblems – a daffodil and a leek.

We were shown how to make Welsh cakes, which can be cooked in minutes. They also disappeared in minutes after the morning service! Here's the recipe we used.



*The fruit kebabs show the range of rainbow colours in the story of Noah!*

Traditional Welsh cakes - prep time 15 minutes - cooking time 5-10 minutes - makes up 8-12

- 225g/8oz self-raising flour
  - 110g/4oz salted butter, diced
  - 85g/3oz caster sugar, plus extra for dusting
  - handful of sultanas
  - 1 free-range egg, beaten
  - milk, if needed
  - extra butter for greasing
1. Sift the flour into a bowl and add the diced butter.
  2. Rub with your fingertips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
  3. Add the sugar, sultanas and beaten egg and mix well to form a ball of dough, using a splash of milk if needed.
  4. Roll the dough to a thickness of about 5mm/½in.
  5. Cut into rounds with a 7.5–10cm/3–4in plain cutter.
  6. Rub a bakestone or heavy iron griddle (we used a heavy non-stick frying pan) with butter, wipe away the excess and place on the hob until it is heated through.
  7. Cook for 2/3 minutes on each side, until golden-brown.
  8. Remove from the griddle and dust with caster sugar while still warm. then eat!



We have once again entered our magazine for an Association of Church Editors Award. It will be judged on the clarity of the Christian message, cover design, overall layout and structure, headlines, use of graphics and intended readership appeal.

The competition is tough! A lot of the magazines are slick, glossy affairs - with lots of advertising revenue!

Results in September. Wish us luck!



## Thank You For Your Gift of Love

*Jean Beecher writes*

We have received a letter from Amar Diner (Economic Justice Project Support Officer, Christian Aid Bangladesh), thanking us for our recent donation of £300. He writes:

*Young women in rural Bangladesh often have limited opportunities, with pressure to marry young and little chance for study or future work. Your gift is letting these women unlock their power to support their families and help their communities.*

A group from our church recently met up with Christian Aid supporters from other Shirley churches. We were joined by our friend, Joseph Vambe, who took our Christian Aid service in October and is the South London Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer. We discussed Christian Aid Week which takes place from Sunday 12 May - Saturday 18 May. The focus will be Burundi, one of the world's poorest countries and will feature in next month's magazine. There will be booklets available, in which we meet farmers who, working with Christian Aid partners, learn how to combat the effects of climate change. The booklets will also feature Bible readings and prayers for Christian Aid week. A group of friends from church will be taking part in the Christian Aid Freedom Walk on Saturday 11 May which starts at All Hallows by the Tower at 12.30pm and will go past various landmarks including Southwark Cathedral before finishing at St Pauls. If you would like to come along then please speak to Hilda or Robin Burnhams [rebandhpcb@outlook.com](mailto:rebandhpcb@outlook.com)





After last year's successful Bring and Buy Coffee Morning, another will take place on Friday 5 July, 10.30am to 12.30pm, at the home of Liz Bebington, 79 Shirley Way. There will be a raffle, cake and Bring and Buy stalls; all profits will go to Christian Aid. Please make a note in your diary.

Finally, our weekly stall has been graced with a selection of attractive Easter cards and homemade knitted gifts. Thanks to those who have provided them.



## CTIS Churches Together in Shirley

*St John's Our Lady's St George's Church of God Apostolic All Saints  
Shirley Methodist Shrublands Christian Fellowship West Wickham and  
Shirley Baptist Longheath Baptist*

We hold monthly prayer meetings 7.30 -8.30pm (on Zoom until September)

Wednesday April 3rd Thursday May 2nd Tuesday June 4th  
Wednesday July 3rd Thursday August 1st  
Tuesday September 3rd at St George's



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83660642432>

Meeting ID: 836 6064 2432



*Prayer notes will be emailed to member Churches when available. Contact [dunaigh2@btinternet.com](mailto:dunaigh2@btinternet.com) for a copy. You can of course use the notes for private or family prayer whenever you want.*



## The Trophy is missing!

The story of the theft, in March 1966 of the iconic FIFA World Cup Trophy and its subsequent discovery by Pickles is very well known. But did you know that the cup was stolen from the Methodist Central Hall Library!



The trophy, officially known as the Jules Rimet trophy, had arrived in England ahead of the World Cup games due to be held that summer. It had pride of place in a glass case as the centrepiece of Stanley Gibbons Rare Stamp Exhibition - promoting "Sport with Stamps".

Despite being kept under (relatively)

constant guard the trophy was discovered missing just after noon on March 20th. It seems that the theft occurred when the guards were on a break. By the way, the thieves ignored the rare stamps valued at £3 million and only stole the silver gilt trophy which was worth far less!

Scotland Yard immediately set about investigating but to no avail. The FA, meanwhile, secretly commissioned a replica to be made, just in case the trophy wasn't recovered. A couple of days after the theft Joe Mears, chairman of the FA, received an anonymous package, containing the top lining of the trophy and a

demand for £15,000 in return for the trophy. Whatever was planned by the gang did not come about - maybe the trophy was just 'too hot to handle'.

A young collie called Pickles found the trophy under a bush seven days later wrapped in newspaper.





His owner David Corbett had been taking him for a walk near his home in Beulah Hill.

Pickles became the most famous dog in England! Not only was he all over the news, but he appeared on Blue Peter and later starred with Eric Sykes and June Whitfield in the 1966 film *The Spy with a Cold Nose*. Spillers even awarded him

a year's supply of free food. He and his owner attended the banquet that followed England's win in July that year. David Corbett collected a reward of £5,000 (equivalent to £99,000 today) and used the money to buy a house in Lingfield.

Sadly Pickles died just a year after all this excitement. His collar is on display in the National Football Museum in Manchester all these years later!

## World Day of Prayer

Revd Pam Clews led the service for the World Day of Prayer which was held at Hall Grange. Members of our congregation were made welcome. Hymns were sung, prayers said and residents read parts of the liturgy which had been prepared by a group of Christian Palestinian women. These services are planned up to four years ahead - long before the dreadful situation faced by people in this war-torn region. How very sad for these women.

Each year the liturgy is written by women in different parts of the world. In recent years it has been Taiwan, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe. Next year it will be the Cook Islands.





## SPOTLIGHT on the Budget

The Methodist Church is part of the Let's End Poverty movement, calling on political leaders to make tackling poverty a core priority. They said that the reality of deepening poverty did not feature in either the Chancellor's Budget speech or the Leader of the Opposition's response – they said that next time, it must be central. Leaders from across the Methodist Church have responded in the media to the latest Budget, highlighting the lack of acknowledgement of people struggling against poverty in our communities, and the lack of difference that the Budget will make to the communities they live and work alongside.

Paul Morrison (Joint Public Issues Team) said: 'A 2p cut in NI offers the bottom fifth of households around £350m a year, but the top fifth of households over 10 times more – in excess of £4bn. This cut represents a long-term choice to target resources on those with the most rather than those with the least.

Winnie Baffoe (South London Mission) said: 'The Budget refers to a recovery of finances, but not to people's actual lives. The negative accumulative effects of inadequate housing, lack of investment in mental health and reduced funding in education is not spoken openly about. What we need is a Budget that tells the story of the social contracts of housing, education, and health. Children and young people are heirs of the past 10 years; the suffering children of the present and 'makers of the future'.

'Deacon Jenny Jones (Methodist Central Hall, Manchester) said: 'This Budget makes no additional provision for refugees and asylum seekers people become dependent on food banks, clothing banks, warm spaces, the places that churches provide. But this government and this Budget have forgotten that these are real people with real emotions'.

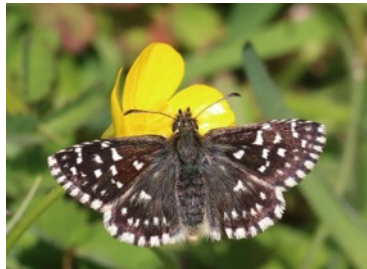
## A Butterfly Paradise

*Ray Roberts writes:*

Did you know that just 2 minutes from Fishers Farm recycling centre in New Addington you can find Hutchinson's Bank, Three Corner Grove and Chapel Bank - 20 acres of dry chalk valley and woodland. This butterfly spotter's paradise is run by the London Wildlife Trust. In addition they are great places to find orchids (including the spectacular bee orchid). You can also find common lizards, slow worms, huge Roman snails and a wide variety of birds including kestrel, sparrow hawk, buzzards and red kites.

LWT manage the site carefully to remain butterfly friendly; sheep graze the site and volunteers take on a whole range of tasks.

Spotters come from far and wide and have recorded 44 species of butterfly (UK has 59 in total).



The cover photo on this month's magazine is of a beautiful orange tip butterfly which usually starts to emerge from mid April. Also on fair weather days this month you should be able to find butterflies that over-winter here: peacock, red admiral, comma, small tortoiseshell and brimstone.

Towards the end of April they will be joined by large, small and green veined whites; holly blues; and then a little while later dingy and grizzled skippers (pictured below). Later in the year this is one of the few places in London to see dark green fritillaries and Dukes of Burgundy butterflies. And it is one of only a handful of sites in the UK with the Glanville fritillary.

Street parking is available near Fisher's Farm. Or enter on the other side - there is a good footpath on Farley Dean Crescent off Featherbed Lane. Do take care though as the slopes can be slippery when wet.

## Sad news for Shirley

*The Council is dismantling our once lovely borough 'service by service'.*

These are Alison Hunt's words in a recent edition of Inside Croydon, responding to the threatened closure of Shirley Library. Here are a few of her points.

- Books are expensive - why not borrow them instead.
- Libraries acts as a social hub
- They provide a warm place to access computers.
- The cost of running the service is high, and so is the value of the land the buildings occupy,

making them a good target for a council drowning in debt.

- Fewer people are using libraries. We can't argue with that, but many - like Shirley - are only open on two days, mid-week, till 6pm! What if you work?
- Do we really want to be inside looking at screens all the time?
- I still think seeing the look on a child's face when they sit in a library surrounded by books and realise they can take some home is worth the fight.
- What next? Our parks? (*see below!*)

Well done Alison - we're proud of you!

## Can you help Miller's Pond?

Miller's pond is a much used local amenity - used by dog-walkers, and for families and friends who can sit awhile (and feed the ducks!). Because the council has reduced its spending on parks a volunteer group (The Friends of Millers Pond) keeps the area safe and looking good. They raised the money needed to repair the boardwalk but this has now left them without the funds needed for urgent repairs to the little bridge over the pond as well as other much needed tasks. The Friends group has made an on line appeal. Could you help?

[www.gofundme.com/f/funds-to-get-some-essential-work-done](http://www.gofundme.com/f/funds-to-get-some-essential-work-done)



## Finding Nana

Why was there rather a lot of excitement in the hub at Hall Grange recently? Why were residents being interviewed and filmed? Why had BBC London turned up? Why was President of Conference Revd Gill Newton there? And the CEO of MHA? Why had students from Shirley Oasis Academy walked up the road? Well - it was to launch a book - *Finding Nana*. The book follows the story of Ellie and Jack

when their Nana moves into a care home.

*Finding Nana* had been the brainchild of Crispian Archer, Head of Chaplaincy at MHA, who sadly died suddenly just as the book was being published. He had realised in conversations with colleagues that there was nothing currently available to help children in this situation. You can buy the book from Methodist Publishing

[www.methodistpublishing.org.uk](http://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk)

## Wilderness News

Despite the rain, the volunteers have continued to turn up - clearing yet more leaves, moving some azaleas to new beds, cutting back the holly trees, extending the dry hedges, planting climbing roses, weeding the poppy bed, sorting out the contents of the sheds and generally sprucing the garden up ready for the new season. Come along and enjoy yourself. We are open weekdays from 10am -3pm

Sunday 14 April - Open Sunday

Saturday 8 June - Wilderness Picnic. This mini festival was such a success last year - we had a huge range of performers, from shanty men, mandolin players and choral music to African drumming and Morris dancing. Do put this date in your diary.

Lucy James [TheWilderness@mha.org.uk](mailto:TheWilderness@mha.org.uk)



Emily Davies is the new manager at SNC and will be building on the great work done by Suzy Stoyel and her team in recent years. Emily and the team are happily settled at St. George's. SNC will be continuing the shopping bus, the weekly lunch club and helping with medical appointments. She plans trips to Polhill Garden centre, lunches at the Toby Carvery and film shows in our church lounge. Emily has started to organise her first fund-raiser - the SNC May Fair on Saturday 11 May.

**SNC MAY FAIR**  
**Shirley Neighbourhood Care**  
Helping local elder residents live independently and combat loneliness

**Saturday 11th May 2024**  
**11am – 3pm**  
**WEST WICKHAM & SHIRLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**WICKHAM ROAD, CR0 8EB**

**FREE ENTRY**

COME AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHARITY AND ENJOY:

- Market Stalls
- Arts & Crafts
- Children's Soft Play
- SNC Raffle
- The Hub Coffee Shop
- Entertainment
- Yummy food
- and much more!

**DONATE**

**THE HUB**  
**OPEN!!!**

Sponsored by Eco Surface Solutions – Insulate your property in style with recycled and sustainable solutions



## Harvesting Spaghetti Trees



*Graham Marsden writes:*

Despite the fact that the BBC Panorama Special featuring the spaghetti tree harvest was broadcast on April 1st 1957 it is still remembered as the hoax of all hoaxes! Since then we have had Wimbledon Centre Court grass being painted purple to promote Robinson's new blackcurrant drink, The Advertiser announcing that Formula One Grand Prix was coming to Croydon, Volkswagen changing its name to Voltswagen because of its latest range of electric vehicles, and the erection of a statue of Dominic Cummings in Barnard Castle. Yes April Fool jokes are alive and well - even more so now thanks to commercial brands and social media.

But why is April 1st associated with pranks? While its exact history is shrouded in mystery, some speculate that April Fools' Day dates back to 1582, when France switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. In the Julian calendar the new year began with the Spring Equinox around April 1st. People who failed to recognise that the new year began on January 1st became the butt of jokes and were called 'April Fools'. Pranks were played including having paper fish pinned on ones back ('poisson d'Avril' - April fish). This is still done in France today.

Historians have also linked April Fools' Day to the Roman festival Hilaria, involving people in disguise mocking fellow citizens. In Scotland, people were sent on phony errands - called 'hunting the gowk'.

I wonder what the media has in store this year? Will you be caught out?

What's going on?



**HALL GRANGE**  
**Coffee Morning**

17 Shirley Church Road, CR9 5AL

**10am-12noon**  
**Saturday 27 April**

Admission £1



Lucky Dip  
Cake Stall  
Raffle  
Cards  
Crafts



All proceeds in aid of the Residents Amenities Fund

**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](http://www.shirleymeth.org.uk). Printed copies are available at church. Thank you to all our contributors.

Please send contributions by Sunday 21 April .

The next magazine will be published (and be on the website) on Sunday 28 April

Contact us on [smm8sd@gmail.com](mailto:smm8sd@gmail.com)  
(our new email address)

Jenny Crook 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](mailto: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](mailto: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*

