

Shirley Methodist Matters



February 2025



www.shirleymeth.org.uk

80p



WELCOME TO SHIRLEY METHODIST

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

MORNING SERVICE STARTS AT 10.30AM
UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE

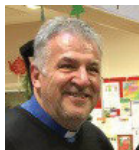
SUN 2 FEB	REVD RICHARD LOWSON HOLY COMMUNION
SUN 9 FEB	PAULINE LITTLE ALL AGE WORSHIP
SUN 16 FEB	REVD LESLIE GRIFFITHS
SUN 23 FEB	DEACON AL HENRY

There is a creche every Sunday morning in the Lounge. Sunday Morning Club provides Bible-based activities for school age students during morning services. Thank you everyone. Our morning services are available on Zoom (with subtitles); 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

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A New Journey

*Revd Juliet Ushewokunze writes
our Circuit letter*

Dear Friends,

We are at the beginning of the year 2025. We thank God for our life together as Croydon Methodist Circuit. The Holy Spirit guided and taught us during the course of 2024, in all the things we were able to do. We experienced God through our worship, praise, prayers, fellowship, learning and caring. God was with us all the time in 2024 and He is with us in this New Year 2025.

So we have started the New Year with the Covenant Service, which marks the first steps on our continuing journey of faith in Christ. This special service gives us the opportunity to reflect on who

we are and what we require to become Disciples of Christ. God has given us a new gift and a new opportunity in 2025.

As we go into this New Year, we are on a New Journey, which needs to be both personal and cooperative or collaborative, with strong commitment to doing everything on a great scale. Lamentation 3:22-23 tells us that the Lord's mercies never end, in which case, they must be different, unique and specific.

How are we going to handle this gift? A New Year is full of uncertainties, one does not know what is around the corner.

A New Journey need not be embarked upon in a hurry, it requires serious praying for divine guidance, planning and strategising through Godly inspiration. Situations, challenges and battles are certain to differ radically from the previous year.

So as we move forward in the New Year to fulfil our calling and vision as the Church of God in this place, we need to do the following:



- Be specific in our goals
- Have new approaches to issues, for example, how Joseph took care not to reveal himself too soon to his brothers; also James 1:19-26, which advises us to be slow to speak but quick to hear
- Be alert and certain of our decisions on issues
- Be committed and determined, lest we faint in the midst of adversity
- Appreciate our achievements, reflect on them and acknowledge God Almighty as our only source of power
- Always depend on the Lord as we take this New Journey which is our service to Humanity

Like Abraham, we must journey forward, not knowing where we are going, travelling on unfamiliar roads where there are no signposts. There may be great challenges that can bring a complete change of circumstances in our lives. We are encouraged by the words of Paul that all things

work together for good for those who love the Lord. Everything is under divine control because Christ in the Head of the Church.

However, we may not know where we are going or what is in store for us, but we know Christ is guiding us. So we continue with the journey, though the path is hidden, trusting God to help us fulfil our calling as Disciples of Christ.

Christ will walk with us in 2025. He knows what is best and he will do all things well.

I wish you all good health and a blessed New Year in 2025.

Revd Juliet



Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3 v 22 - 23

What's on ?

Film Night Thursday 6 February 7.15pm start in the Lounge
Come and join us. We have a wide variety of films. Comfy seats too.

Bible Study Thursday 20 February in the Lounge, at 10 - 11am. All are welcome. For more information speak to Jonathan Baxter on 02087773158 or jandjbaxter@talktalk.net

Prayer Breakfast Saturday 8 February at 9 - 10am 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

Guild Thursday 20 February 8pm in the Lounge. Everyone is welcome. Details on page 11.

Bread Making Tuesday 18 February 9:30am until 12:30 pm in the Corner room. No experience needed. Beginners welcome. Everything is provided.

Great Book Sale We will be receiving (and sorting) books for the Great Book Sale each Wednesday from 10am to noon.

Kindness

Kindness has been chosen as Children's Word of the Year for 2024 by the Oxford University Press after a survey of thousands of young people.

Bless them. ... it is gratifying isn't it?

News of our Church Family

Elizabeth Smart writes:

A lot has taken place since I wrote the last family news and here we are in the month of February already.

I must go back to the Christmas Tree Festival before moving into 2025 news. Seeing all the trees, decorated to tell individual stories organisations or people was wonderful. Revd Richard created a beautiful Bethlehem scene in the Welcome Area. Those who came and shared their musical talents, including St John's school choir, brought us the real meaning of Christmas. The carol service round the trees in the evening was enjoyed by everyone.

Special birthdays have been or will be celebrated by some of our church family . We sang Happy Birthday to Melanie on her 80th birthday last week. And in February Bill J will be celebrating his 90th birthday and his daughter



Kathryn has celebrated her 50th ! So the family are blowing out a lot

of candles! We send our warmest congratulations to them all.

It is always a joy to warmly welcome everyone and it has been good to welcome Rosemary who has come to live locally and be near to her family.

Our church family are in our thoughts and prayers and we especially remember Irene and her mother Sarah, Kate, Margaret, Peggy, Dean, Derek, Dorothy, Doreen, Stanley and Rosemarie and Myrie, Revd Richard, Deanne, Emmanuel, Jackie and John, Adele, Joy, Alan, Eunice, Vicky, Lambert, Anthony and Lesley, Gwen, Sureya and Marcos.

We hold in our prayers all the residents, staff and their families at Hall Grange. There have been some new arrivals there recently and we hope they find comfort and companionship in their new home.

We at Shirley support Shrublands Food Bank throughout the year and there is a basket in the Welcome Area and a list of items that the Foodbank need. Copies of

the list are on the table to help you when shopping. Please pray for all who volunteer at the Food Bank and perhaps consider if you could offer help – info@shrublandstrust.org or contact Bev on 0203 441 7887

As you read this many of us will have been together at the Winter Party on Saturday 1 February. Aren't we lucky to have each other to raise our spirits on these cold winter days?

People are certainly busy in our church - a team will be sorting books each Wednesday morning. A mammoth task! On 22 March we will be holding our 16th Great Book Sale. Quite amazing! The Breadmakers meet monthly - thanks Revd Richard for leading this activity. Here's a lovely photo of them.

From the editors - it's lovely to have you back 'in action' Elizabeth. We are so grateful for the care you take in writing the Church Family News each month.



Panettone is not just for Christmas!
14 breadmakers each made 6 delicious panettone buns under Richard's careful tutelage .



Our Zoom services are now subtitled! When watching use the CC button at the bottom of your screen to turn on 'closed captions' (subtitles). It is not entirely accurate of course but might be helpful.

Great Book Sale

Thanks to everyone involved in preparations for the next Great Book Sale on **Saturday 22 March**.

How can you help right now?

Tell friends and family about our terrific event

If you have any books to donate, please leave them in the church Welcome Area when you are next there (ideally under the tables on the right) or call me if you need them to be collected.

We also need plenty of empty cardboard fruit trays, available from most local supermarkets, so it would be great if you can collect some please - ideally just the deeper ones.

Could you distribute leaflets or display posters - we need this

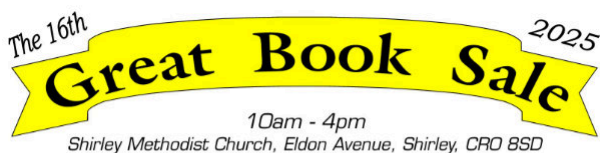
doing right up to the day of the sale. You will find them in the Welcome Area

So how can you help with the Sale itself?

We need helpers for setting up the day before and with a whole range of things on **Saturday 22 March**. Please add your name to the helper lists in the Welcome Area or let me know by email or phone.

Fran Byard is co-ordinating the food and drink. She would welcome offers of help with that or with cake making.

There will of course be clearing away at the end of the day, so if you can recruit any additional help for shifting unsold books, that would be fantastic.



Sat 22nd March

Thousands of good quality pre-loved Books. Records, CDs & DVDs & Jigsaws
Books sorted into categories, including Children / Teenager sections.
** Refreshments & Light lunches ** £1 Adults / 50p under 16s **

Card payments accepted greatbooksale.org.uk

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

We look forward to welcoming visitors from near and far.

Many thanks

Steve Hunt

07704 945111

www.
greatbooksale.
org.uk

Born in Song

Revd Jennifer Potter writes:

In some churches, the appearance of the letters 'LA' (Local Arrangement) on the Plan fills members with trepidation – “what on earth will we get?” they think.

Well, I am very glad to say that at Shirley 'LA' on the Plan fill me, and I suspect many others, not with trepidation but with expectant joy. We hear wonderful stories of what the young people do in their sessions (*see page 12*), hear different voices and learn of varied experiences and, above and beyond all that, we hear peoples' favourite hymns and why they mean so much to them.

The heading of this piece is a quote from the preface to the 1933 Methodist Hymn Book which stated, “Methodism was born in song” referring to how impressed the Wesleys were by the singing of the Moravian missionaries whom they met on board ship on their journey to the American colony of Georgia in 1736. No. 21 in our

hymn book begins “Born in Song”; written by Revd Brian Hoare in 1979 inspired by the words from the preface to the 1933 hymnbook.

For the Wesleys hymn-singing was at the heart of worship. Indeed, one wit has remarked, “Methodism was a choir gathered by John to sing the hymns of Charles.” And there were plenty of those to sing as it is estimated that after his 'conversion' experience in May 1738 there was an overflowing output of hymns from Charles' pen – estimated at up to 8000.

It is difficult for us to imagine it now but there was very little hymn-singing in the churches of the 18th century – it was just plainsong and chanting by the choir with some metrical psalms. Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley were the pioneers of English congregational singing.

The Wesleys wanted people to sing – to bind congregations together, to educate people as they sung their theology and to engage them body, mind and spirit. They understood the therapeutic value of singing. The ability to engage the emotions, lift the feelings and to misquote, 'reach those parts that other words cannot.'



In 1761 he wrote his 'Directions for Singing' - printed below. It was distributed to all his preachers so that no congregation be should be left out.

No bawling! Sing in time! Sing modestly! Sing spiritually!

It is reported that when the late Queen went to reopen Wesley's Chapel in

1978, she commented, 'These Methodists do sing loudly.'

I hope that the centrality of hymns for Methodist worship will be maintained even in an age when more syncopated songs are fashionable. There is nothing quite like singing in

DIRECTIONS FOR SINGING

- I. Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
- II. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.
- III. Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.
- IV. Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan.
- V. Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.
- VI. Sing in time. Whatever time is sung be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing too slow. This drawing way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.
- VII. Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.

From John Wesley's *Select Hymns*, 1761

unison to raise one's spirits, strengthen one's faith and engage one's whole being in the act of worship.

Since 2011 we have used 'Singing the Faith'; there is an on-line resource: Singing the Faith Plus. Some true gems of prayers can also be found there.

Wesley's 7th direction was, " Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing God more than yourself and see that your heart is not

carried away with the sound but offered to God continually." 200 years later, a former minister of SMC, Fred Pratt Green wrote,

*"When in our music God is glorified
And adoration leaves no room
for pride
It is as though the whole creation
cried
Alleluia!!"*

May hymns and music continue to be at the heart of worship in our Church. Alleluia!

Let's go to Guild

As ever, Guild will meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month - 20 February at 8pm in the lounge.

We are welcoming back Malcolm Jennings, one of our greatly respected speakers and a good friend. He is planning one of his highly enjoyable travel film shows. This time it is centred on The Isle of Wight.

I guess that very many of us have enjoyed holidays there but Malcolm's slide shows always add interest because he manages to spot all sorts of things that frankly would have escaped our notice.

His photographs and commentary show aspects of the flora and fauna in a most knowledgeable way.

So do come - and visit the Isle of Wight for the first time or for a return to a favourite holiday spot.

Malcolm has always worked hard for the Wilderness at Hall Grange and is particularly fond of it. So at the end of our evening we will take up a collection towards the upkeep of that project.

Ruth Tayler

It's a promise



At our recent Local Arrangement service led so well by Christine Elliott members of the congregation came forward to choose a hymn and say why they had made this choice.

Simon Tayler stepped up to invite us all to take part in a recent Sunday Morning Club activity about PROMISES.

Simon told us that here are three types of promise:

Strong – an oath or a wedding vow would be an example, or a firm promise made to a friend)

Conditional - ‘I will if you will’ type of promise

Criminal - a promise made when you have NO intention whatsoever of keeping it!

We were asked which of these promises we had made?

Simon showed us a baseball bought in New York when he kept his promise to his family that they would have a holiday there after there original trip was cancelled due to COVID.

Rosemary showed us a CUP presented to her and her husband David by their grandchildren on their 40th wedding anniversary to celebrate the promise made (and kept) by the ‘Golden Oldies’ on their wedding day.

Jenny showed us a photo of her dear friends Marilyn and Ken who lived in Normandy. She had made her promise to Ken that she would stay in touch with Marilyn regularly and support her after his death. A promise Jenny kept to the end of Marilyn’s life.

All three of these are STRONG PROMISES

So which type of promise have you made and kept ?

The Prayer Chain

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 ‘contact us’ form on the church website.



Building for a Brighter Future

Jean Beecher writes:

At the Covenant Service on January 5th we had a retiring collection for Christian Aid and raised £229. We have increased this to £350; using money from our Sunday stall and donations during the year. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this encouraging total.

Last month's magazine featured the brave and resourceful Shede, who was forced to leave her home in Sudan with only the clothes on her back. She fled, with her daughter and her granddaughter, to the Wedweil Refugee Settlement in South Sudan, to live in very basic conditions.

The money we raised will be used by Christian Aid partner SAADO - Smile Again Africa Development Organisation, which works in the camp and helped Shede. Financial assistance is provided so that people can prioritise their own specific needs and work out how to spend for immediate necessities, such as nutritious

food, medicine and blankets, and save some for the future. Shede puts a little by to purchase kitchen equipment – cooking pots and utensils - to set up a restaurant. This approach brings hope and dignity to those who have suffered so much.

So far Christian Aid has supported 4,550 people in the camp. With more arriving every day, every donation is needed.

As the work continues, we remember all those whose lives have been disrupted by conflict, and pray that 2025 will bring hope and peace for a settled future.

Daniel Auen from SAADO says, 'No one chooses to be a refugee. You're only a refugee by virtue of the situation you find yourself in.



Garden Lore

Who will take care of this garden? Who will nurture it ?

I will,' said **January**.

'I will anchor it to the earth with snowdrops.

I will give it my stone, the garnet.'

'It is mine,' said **February**.

'I will feed it the memory of all that grows.

I will welcome it with my stone the amethyst and with primrose.'

'I will coax it with bloodstone and daffodil,' said **March**,

Like a boxer battered by winter

I will lift myself from the frosty canvas of the earth to welcome it.'

'With diamond and daisy I will seduce it.

'I will soak it in shower after shower,' said **April**.

'In the yawny earth its seeds will riot.'

'I will make it dizzy with emeralds

And the fumes of the hawthorn,' said **May**.

'It will know of nothing but play.'

'And I will adorn it with necklaces of honeysuckle and ruby,' said **June**.

'Their clasps will be made out of the honeybees wings.'

It will dance to my languid tune.'

I will contain it,' said **July**.



'I will handcuff it with briar and chrysolite,
Drug it with the scent of roses.'

August spoke from the garden's still centre.

'I will weep layer upon layer of sardonyx.

I will teach it the brevity of poppies.'

'When its bones begin to creak

I will cure it with aster and opal,'

Promised **September**

I will guide it towards sleep with the cold light of sapphires.

For its lullaby I will provide the swan-song of dahlias,'

Said **October.**

'Under the dead weight of chrysanthemums I will bury it,'

Said **November.**

'I will give it a headstone of topaz, a rosary of berries.'

'And I will guard its sleep,' said **December.**

'On a pillow of moonstone

It will dream of holly and the coming snowdrop.'

Poet Brian Patten has given us special permission to include this poem from his collection 'The Armada'. www.brianpatten.co.uk



A truly iconic woman.

Revd Leslie Griffiths writes:

One of my Christmas presents was a book containing the complete poetry of Maya Angelou. Seeing her photograph on the cover triggered a lively memory of the day I first became aware of her.

It was way back in 1992. We were sitting in front of our television as we watched the second inauguration of Bill Clinton as the 43rd President of the United States of America. Maya Angelou was a black woman as famous in her way as Oprah Winfrey or Michelle Obama.

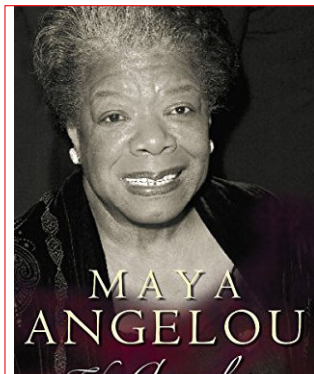
Here she was, America's equivalent of the Poet Laureate, stepping forward to read a poem called "On the pulse of the morning" which she'd written for the occasion. It was an amazingly joyous piece shot through with the colours of hope. "Lift up your eyes upon this day breaking for you" she intoned,

Give birth again to the dream.

*Women, children, men,
Take it into the palm of your hands,
Mold it into the shape of your most private need.
Sculpt it into
The image of your most public self.
Lift up your hearts.
Each new hour holds new chances,
For a new beginning.
Do not be wedded forever
To fear, yoked eternally
To brutishness.*

The up-beat tone of her words, the spirit of unbridled optimism, seems to stand in ironic contrast to the mood that lay behind the recent inauguration of the 47th President. Not much poetry there. And fear, yoked to brutishness, was definitely in the minds of so many of us on the pulse of that new morning.

We got to know Maya personally over the years. She and I used to exchange things we'd published. She asked me to say the grace at the grand



dinner attended by hundreds of people at the Grosvenor Hotel to celebrate her 70th birthday.

How can I ever forget that event? Margaret and I, together with Jon Snow and his partner, were the only white people present. When I was called upon to say grace, I was heckled by quite a number of those in front of me. They wanted a black person to do the honours. I quite understood that. Maya, when she heard what was going on, sprang to the microphone and gave the objectors a dressing down. "It's my birthday party," she declared, "and this is the person I've chosen to say grace. You just continue to make those noises and you'll see the back of me. So pipe down please!" And with that, she handed the microphone back to me. I'd sensed

some of the tension I was likely to stir and, to offset that, I'd composed a prayer that played with the titles of Maya's books and poetry. This reduced everyone to silence and their amen was loud and ecstatic. Praise the Lord.

Maya died just over ten years ago and I cherish so many memories of her. A truly iconic figure.

P.S. If anyone's interested in the grace I offered at that meal, they have only to ask the editors of this magazine who'll be glad to let you have it

Thank you, as always Leslie for your thoughtful and timely contribution to our magazine - the Grace you read can be found on page 25.



Thank you to everyone who has changed their standing order to the Co-Operative Bank with whom we now bank after the many problems we have had with Barclays. However there are still a few standing orders being paid into the old account at Barclays. May I encourage those people to make the change. The Co-operative account is as follows.

Account Name: Shirley Methodist Church

Account Number: 67328686 Sort code 08-92-99

Thank you Sukh Kalsi

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote these words in his poem Ode to the West Wind in 1819. They are so apt as we look around us today in the middle of a very dreary grey winter. From our windows we see all those bare branches and empty flower beds. It is easy to think of winter as an ending. But underground, the cold is softening the shells of seeds ready for germination.

'The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low, Each like a corpse within its grave, until thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow'.

But eggs of insects are waiting to hatch and trees have sugar stored in their roots poised for an explosion of leaf growth when warmer weather comes. And come it will - have no doubt!

Shelley reminds us that though winter seems to signal an ending, it is in fact paving the way for a new beginning. Perhaps we should think of this with respect to ourselves. The old year has gone but a new one is here; giving us new opportunities for growth, for change, and for renewal. Winter is a necessary phase in the course of life. As the proverb says *'No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow.'*



Cyclamen daffodils at the Wilderness in March 2024

Wilderness Open Day

Sunday 9 February 11am - 2pm

Come and see the early signs of spring. The garden is waking up! The teams of volunteers, led by Lucy James have spent a lot of time over these last weeks sweeping up autumn leaves and piling them into 'leaf pens' to make compost. Fallen branches have been tucked away into the dry hedges - perfect hidey-holes for small creatures and nesting places for birds. Flower beds have been tidied up and plants have been mulched. Guttering has been fixed to the sheds so rainwater can be collected.



By the way if you can't make the open day you can visit any time midweek from 10am 17 Church Road. CR9 5AL.

READING

B I N G O

A BOOK WITH MORE THAN 500 PAGES	A FORGOTTEN CLASSIC	A BOOK THAT BECAME A MOVIE	A BOOK PUBLISHED THIS YEAR	A BOOK WITH A NUMBER IN THE TITLE
A BOOK WRITTEN BY SOMEONE UNDER THIRTY	A BOOK WITH NON-HUMAN CHARACTERS	A FUNNY BOOK	A BOOK BY A FEMALE AUTHOR	A BOOK WITH A MYSTERY
A BOOK WITH A ONE-WORD TITLE	A BOOK OF SHORT STORIES	FREE SQUARE	A BOOK SET ON A DIFFERENT CONTINENT	A BOOK OF NON FICTION
THE FIRST BOOK BY A FAVOURITE AUTHOR	A BOOK YOU HEARD ABOUT ONLINE	A BEST-SELLING BOOK	A BOOK BASED ON A TRUE STORY	A BOOK AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR TO BE READ PILE
A BOOK YOUR FRIEND LOVES	A BOOK THAT SCARES YOU	A BOOK THAT IS MORE THAN 10 YEARS OLD	THE SECOND BOOK IN A SERIES	A BOOK WITH A BLUE COVER

www.RETREATbyRANDOMHOUSE.ca

Lets get a grit!



Scotland has a fleet of 240 gritters and since an on line competition that began in 2020 many of them have the most wonderful names. They certainly raise a smile on dark cold frosty days. Here are just a few.

Andy McFlurry Lew-Ice Capaldi Yes Sir, Ice Can Boogie.

Ready, Spready Go Sled Zeppelin For Your Ice Only Grit Scott

Mr Snow-it-all BEAR Chills Gritty Gritty Bang Bang Gritney Spears

Auntie Freeze Spready Mercury Penelope Gritstop Skid Vicious

I Want to Break Freeze Licence to Chill Skate Bush

And of course Gritty McGrit Face



In his biography 'Hope' Pope Francis extols the power of humour and shares his favourite joke about a vain Jesuit.

When struck down with a heart problem the Jesuit asks the Lord if his time has come. God replies that he still has 40 years to go. The Jesuit recovers and decides to make the most of the next 40 years by getting all his desired 'procedures' done - face-lift, teeth veneers, hair transplant and more! When these are completed the priest is knocked down and killed by a car. 'Lord' he said at the Pearly Gates, 'You told me I had another 40 years.' 'Oops' replied The Almighty 'I didn't recognise you'.



Christmas Tree Festival Memories

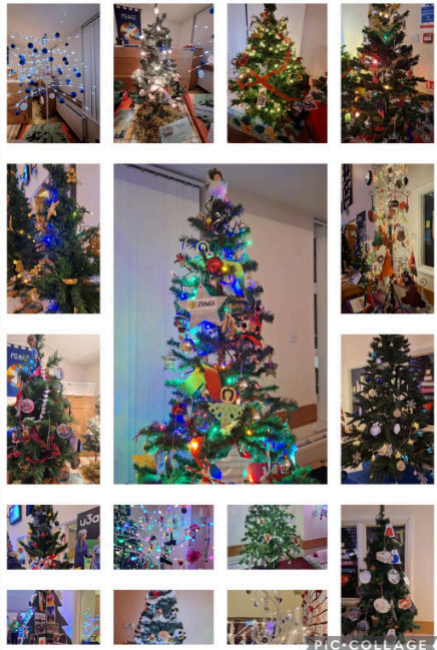


Thank you Charlotte McArdle for creating these wonderful collages - no mean feat when there were 33 scenes to display!



It certainly was a weekend to remember. Thank you to everyone involved in any way at all.

£998. 20p was raised for our chosen charity - The Alzheimer's Society. Please see the next page.



Part of the letter received from the Alzheimer's Society

Dear Mrs Smart

We can achieve so much more when we come together. Thank you so much to everyone in your group for raising a fantastic £998.20 from your Christmas Tree Festival There are an estimated 900,000 people living with dementia in the UK, and this number will only rise in the coming years. We'll make sure that your donation is put to good use, whether it's spent on campaigning government or delivering vital services. You're making a huge difference. Just one of the vital services we provide is Talking Point, our online safe space, where a trouble shared can become a trouble halved <https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk/>. Just £50 means 312 people can access this site any time, day or night.



Once again, thank you.

Sandeep Shikotra (Supporter Care Manager)

Keeping Ourselves Safe

It was decided at a recent Church Council meeting that we should hold a list of those trained in First Aid and in the use of the defibrillator. It would ideal if at least one or more were present at each Sunday morning service.

Our intention is to ask Jennifer Long to provide the training. Some people attended her defibrillator course last year. This time we plan to teach general first aid techniques as well, teaching the use of the defibrillator.

This would be for SMC and will NOT be a certificated course. It will probably take place on a Saturday morning. If you would like to know more, please speak to Christine Elliott, or sign the list in the Welcome Area.

It makes you think

I wonder how many of our female readers remember that 22 February is Thinking Day? If they were ever a Brownie, Guide or Ranger they may well do so.



Members of Girl Guiding have always been encouraged to focus on Guiding being an international organisation. February 22 was chosen as Thinking Day as long ago as 1926 because this was not only Lord Baden Powell's birthday but also that of his wife Olave, the World Chief Guide. Girls were asked to give a 'penny for their thoughts' and £520 was raised on that first Thinking Day. Money is still raised this way (though more than a penny is asked for!) to promote Guiding worldwide. Girls take on special challenges and when completed are awarded this badge.

Art Exhibition at Bethlem Hospital

Bethlem Museum of the Mind Hospital is showing an exhibit - 'What it Felt Like', showcasing the work of artist Charlotte Johnson-Wahl (1942-2021), and specifically the art that she produced whilst a patient at the Maudsley Hospital in 1974. The body of work depicts scenes of hospital life and explores the artist's feelings, her illness and treatment. Charlotte, Boris Johnson's mother had psychiatric problems for much of her life and spent long periods of time in the hospital.

The Museum in Monks Orchard Road Beckenham is open to walk-in visitors from 09:30 to 17:00 on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. No need to book.

Happy Retirement Juliet

Juliet Smith, the Croydon Circuit Administrator, has from day one been a huge support to the editors of this magazine. Always there to answer a question! Thank you. We will miss you.

We wish her successor Julie Turner well and look forward to getting to know her.

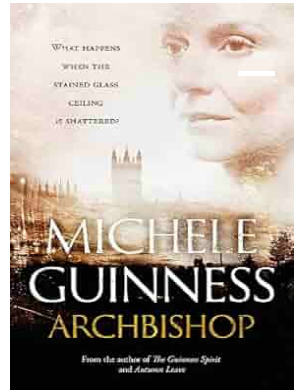
A Female Archbishop of Canterbury ?

This novel - written back in 2014 deals with exactly that. The premise is that the Anglican Church is on its knees.

Did the author have a crystal ball?

One woman, Vicky Burnham-Woods is making a difference, and when she is appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, just about anything could happen. She is deeply committed to bringing the Church back into the heart of community and cultural life - but of course not everyone wants a woman at the top. Behind the scenes dark forces are moving. Can the first ever female Archbishop of Canterbury last long enough to achieve her mission?

One review says; I was gripped right from the first page. Being party to the discussions and negotiations surrounding the choosing of the next archbishop grabbed my attention and made it feel like I'd been allowed to enter a world that so few get to see. The book is immense and covers some huge themes.



Association for Church Editors

Demelza Hospice Care for Children

Happy New Year to Shirley Methodist Church!
A big thank you to all those who attended any of our events during the year. We had a great year - paying in £5001.84 which included over £1000 from the Mini Bazaar in November. We hope to see you at our 2025 events.

Thank you
Carol, Anne and Michael

Candlelight Concerts at Methodist Central Hall

Enjoy a wonderful concert by The City String Ensemble in a beautiful candlelit setting. The ensemble will be playing a range of music throughout February featuring music from Adele, Coldplay and Hans Zimmer. And for the romantics there is a special Valentines Day Concert featuring love songs!

<https://www.c-h-w.com/whats-on/candlelight-concerts/>



Revd Leslie Griffith's Grace ... see page 16

We gather together, Lord, in your name
To give thanks To have fun To celebrate life *Hear us, Lord, hear us.*
For food and friends and lovely things
And knowing why the caged bird sings *We give you thanks.*
For laughter and music and dance till you drop
And good conversation going on non-stop *We give you thanks.*
For Maya our friend, her life and her story
For singin' and swingin' and gettin' merry. *We give you thanks.*
But for those who are hungry and singin' the blues
For all of God's children who still need shoes
We long for a just and a fair world too
Help us to work to make that dream come true. *Hear us, Lord, hear us.*
So now we begin. And as we begin. We say simply. Very simply With
hope Thank you, Lord, Thank you for everything.

Amen

Why Not Try this ?

Dance to Health

NHS Falls Prevention
combining strength and
balance exercises with
creativity and dance.

Thursdays 10 - 12
Shirley Methodist.
See the poster in the
Welcome Area.
07387 504889

The Croydon East Good Afternoon Choir

Shirley Methodist Church Hall
from 2 to 4 on Tuesdays.

For men and women
who love to sing.

No auditions - previous
experience not important

gac@grenvilemusic.co.uk

Dance and Fitness

With Sarah Elbourne
Shirley Methodist Church
Tuesdays 10.15 -11.15 am
Contact Sarah for details sarahelbourne.se@gmail.com
07740675453

Stretch Class

Chair-based exercise
Shirley Methodist - Thursdays 2.00 - 2.45
£3.00 per session
Melanie Alcalde 07956 130052

Shirley Methodist Matters

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

Please send contributions by **Sunday 23 February**

The next editor will be Jenny Crook.

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

Sunday 2 March Contact us on smm8sd@gmail.com

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?

Contact 020 3441 7887 or info@shrublandstrust.org

Shirley Neighbourhood Care

We are 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.

sncs@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 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

