

Services—April 2025

# Services



## April 2025

6th	10:30 am	Kim Tame
13th	10:30 am	Rev Sharon Gardner (Holy Communion)
	6:30 pm	SCT service at St Michael's Church
18th (Good Friday)	10:30 am	Rev Sharon Gardner
20th (Easter Sunday)	10:30 am	Maggie Garton
27th	10:30 am	Pauline Matondo
	6:30 pm	Film night

For (nearly) up to the minute news, visit our new website:  
**[www.sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](http://www.sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)**

If you're on Facebook—then 'like' our Facebook pages—  
and join in the conversation -

**Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church**  
And **Babes and Tots—Sandhurst**

To get in touch email:

**Stewards:** [steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Hall hire:** [halls@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:halls@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Babes and Tots:** [babestots@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:babestots@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Weekly notices:** [notices@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:notices@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

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**Multimedia:** [multimedia@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:multimedia@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Musicians:** [musicians@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:musicians@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Website:** [siteadmin@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:siteadmin@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

**Anything else:** [info@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:info@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

# *Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church*

## *April 2025 Newsletter*



## The minister writes...



[https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2022/02/09/12/45/easter-7003335\\_640.jpg](https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2022/02/09/12/45/easter-7003335_640.jpg)

Dear friends,

Imagine, if you will, that you are one of the first witnesses to the Resurrection. Maybe you are one of the women, making your cheerless way to the tomb in the first splinters of dawn, carrying spices with which to anoint the dead body of Jesus, wondering what you will do about the large stone sealing the grave. You arrive to find it rolled back, to be greeted by angels, to be told the impossible, astonishing, wonderful news that he is not dead but lives! You're scared; you're bewildered but deep inside you a thrill is growing.

Or perhaps you are Mary Magdalene, gone to the garden to weep, the one thing you thought you could do for your Lord denied you, his body moved or stolen. Only to be greeted through a mist of tears by his beloved voice speaking your name. Told by him to go back with a message for the disciples you become the 'apostle to the apostles.'

Maybe you are Peter or John, hearing the testimony of Mary and the other women, uncertain, disbelieving, yet knowing you *must* see for yourselves. You run to the tomb and there is the rolled-away stone, there are the discarded grave clothes. What can this mean? The truth stirs and awakens your grief-numbed hearts.

Or perhaps you are Thomas on that first Sunday evening, returning from your errand to a roomful of friends clamouring to tell you that they have seen Jesus. Oh, the bitterness of not having been there. Bitterness that becomes denial – it

## Rotas April

### Flowers

#### April

6th	-
13th	-
20th (Easter Sunday)	Sue T
27th	Karen

### Cleaning

w/c 21/4/235 Alison F? and Alison B

### Coffee

#### April

6th	Alison B and Sandra F
13th	Wendy and Margaret H
20th (Easter Sunday)	Joan and Sandra W
27th	? And Wendy

## Lifts to Church on Sunday morning

If you require a lift to church and you live in Sandhurst or Yateley, please ring through the listed names. They are happy to give lifts if they are available. Please alternate between the names if using the service regularly.

**Please do take advantage of this service—people really do want to help.**

### Yateley

Pam Hardy 01252 870468  
Tricia Needes 01252 658350

### Sandhurst

Graham Fradgley 01276 36631  
Douglas Brown 01252 655419



## S.A.L.T.

This is the plan for the next couple of months:

We'll continue looking at the gospel of John until we start the Lent course. This is the subject of this year's Bible Month (June) and it will be good for us to have looked at John in advance as there is so much more in the fourth gospel than we can hope to fully cover in the Sunday services during Bible Month.



So, the timetable is this:

Apr 1—Lent session 4

Apr 8—Lent session 5

Apr 15th—Lent session 6

After Easter, on April 29th, we will continue with our study of John which will take us up to Bible Month in June.

As always, our sessions begin at 7:45pm for prayer, then 8pm onwards for Bible study.

All are welcome and it is lovely to have new faces so if you're wondering about joining in and not sure, take the plunge!

We meet via Zoom, using the link below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/2799549300?pwd=YjVCazFHR0NwZE50OEhaRzhMdm13UT09>

Meeting ID: 279 954 9300

Passcode: 3v25BE

Sharon

## House Fellowship groups providing a friendly platform for discussion ...

**Thursday House Group (usually third Thursday)—  
at 15:00**

Robert Godden, 11 Scotland Hill, Sandhurst. 07543 800921

Next meeting

No meeting in April—clashes with Maundy Thursday supper.



can't be true, they're wrong. Unless I see him for myself and touch his wounds, I won't believe! Given just that opportunity a week later, you fall to your knees and from your lips comes the first proclamation of faith that will be echoed by millions of believers down the centuries: 'My Lord and my God!'

We can't be *those* witnesses for that was then, but we can still be witnesses. For we know the same truth that they learned that first Easter day – that the grave couldn't hold him, that death was defeated by him, that the shackles of sin have been burst apart by Love. The first alleluias of Easter morning 2025 will sound from our lips as we come to worship and as we sing those uplifting hymns..... but don't let them stay confined to the church. For the astonishing, soul-gladdening news of the Resurrection is not for us alone to rejoice in – it is for us to share. It is the Good News that distinguishes Christianity from every other faith, and it is news that can move hearts and transform lives. Let us make it count in our lives and in the lives of all we meet.



He is not dead, he is alive! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Yours in Christ,

Sharon

## What's on?

**April**

**8th:** Rejoice!

**9th:** Easter Service at Fourways

**12th:** Easter Fair

**13th:** SCT service at St Michael's

**17th:** Passover service/Maundy Supper— note no Thursday house group

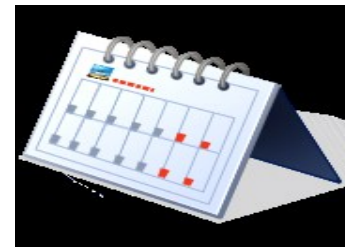
**18th:** Good Friday Service

**19th:** Messy Easter

**20th:** Easter Sunday

**24th:** Craft, Creativity and Coffee

**27th:** Film night



## Local Arrangement

Our Local Arrangement focused on The Leprosy Mission and we adapted the service around their Leprosy Mission Sunday resources.



The whole presentation was from Revelation 21:1-7 where it is revealed to the Apostle John through a vision that God will send a new heaven and a new earth, when He will wipe every tear from our eyes, where there will be no mourning, crying or pain, all those former things passing away. What a wonderful promise. This is a reminder that no matter how dark and difficult the present may seem, God's promise of renewal and restoration is sure.

We saw slides of people in Odisha in India where 96% of the population have permanent and life changing disabilities caused by leprosy. They live in what looks like crumbing caves, with no hygiene facilities. Often begging is their only income and they cannot break out of the cycle of poverty. Jesus spoke of his death and resurrection but that did not stop him from showing love and compassion to people when faced with their suffering. We too can look forward to a time when God will make all things new, but like Jesus, we need to help those who are in need, this is our opportunity to show love as we ourselves have been shown love.

It is crazy to think that £24 will provide medication for one person to be completely healed from leprosy. As recipients of God's transformative love and hope, we are invited to be agents of change in a world that longs for healing and restoration and there are few places where this longing is as urgent as in the leprosy colonies of Odisha State in Eastern India.

We had a retiring collection at the end of the service and we did indeed respond with love and compassion to these people. We raised £309 which is also gift aided and so The Leprosy Mission can claim back the tax paid on that sum to make it £386.25. This means that our donations will have helped 16 people at the very least, to be cured of this most debilitating disease. Thank you all for your generosity, kindness and compassion.

Thank you too to everyone who took part in the service, to the Musicians for choosing the hymns, for Heather preparing and presenting the prayers of intercession, for Doug on his guitar and Alison on the piano, for Douglas operating the MM; Matt for presenting the service, Sandra, Mike, Sue T, Gil, Margaret H, Lesley and Wendy for their participation. A real team effort, thank you so much for your donations as well. The whole service glorified our wonderful Maker and Redeemer, the One who makes all things new.

Keg

## Minister

**Rev Sharon Gardner**

minister@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk  
01344 774967

## Church Stewards—steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk

Karen Glossop	07934 144322	Senior Steward
Sandra Wooledge	07710 066210	
Heather Brown	01252 655419	
Matt Rowell	07890 424767	

## Sandhurst Churches together



### 13th April—at St Michael's (Palm Sunday)

No Good Friday service at The Meadows this year.  
11th May—Baptist Church  
8th June—Joseph: the musical. At St John's in Crowthorne (a joint CTC/SCT event—more about it nearer the time)  
13th July—St George's (Pentecost) Songs of Praise

August—no service

14th September—Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church

12th October—St Michael's

16th November—TBC

December—the Meadows carol singing/telling the Christmas story—date tbc  
Please not that the venues from September onwards may change.

## Newsletter and Website

Contributions for the **May 2025** Newsletter (in church on Sunday 27th April or website) should be with Sue Truby by **Sunday April 20th 2025**

Contributions should either be:  
Handed to Sue at Church,  
Emailed to: newsletter@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk  
Or posted to 58 Crowthorne Road, Sandhurst GU47 9EP (01252 879236)

## Our Church Hall availability

Please keep in mind the following availability of our beautifully redecorated, light and airy church hall should you, or someone you know, be looking for such a facility.

Regular hirers as well as occasional use for children's parties or meetings always considered and most welcome.

**Mondays**—10:30am to 4:30pm

**Tuesdays**—11am to 2pm

**Wednesdays**—1pm to 7pm

**Thursdays**—fully booked at present

**Fridays**—11am through to midnight

**Saturdays**—1pm through to midnight

To see our charges (plus more photographs and measurements) please click <https://sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk/blog/hall-hire/>

### Regular bookings

£19.50 per hour with the use of the kitchen

£18.50 per hour without use of the kitchen

£17.50 per hour for charities with use of the kitchen

### Single one-off events

£22.50 per hour for parties etc with the use of the kitchen)

£20.00 per hour for charities

Please make contact via [halls@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:halls@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)



## Hotel Toiletries

If you have any spare mini toiletries which you have had from hotels or airlines, then please consider donating them to the Whitechapel Mission Shelter for the Homeless.



Maggy and Colin Garton go up to the Shelter every year and take donated toiletries with them.

Just hand to a steward. Thanks

## Songs of Praise at Sandhurst Day Centre

SCT hold a 'Songs of Praise' service at Sandhurst Day Centre on the first Tuesday of each month. These are just half an hour in length, and we always get a very warm welcome from both the staff and those attending the Day Centre.

We meet at the Day Centre about 11.15am ready for an 11.30am start and we're always finished by 12 noon. If you would like to be involved, whether every month or just on an occasional basis, you are most welcome to join us.

## Maundy Supper 17th April

We shall be joining Crowthorne Methodist for a Passover Maundy Supper. Maggy Garton will be doing the catering:-

Chicken Soup  
Roast Lamb  
Chicken in orange sauce  
Potatoes, carrots, peas and sweetcorn  
Mixed salad, olives  
White and red grape juice

Dessert: Dates, grapes and oranges - teas and coffees

There is no charge but donations are welcome. Charity to be announced at a later date.

There are only 15 places allocated to SYMC. Please let Keg know as soon as possible if you would like to go.



## LEGO

### WE NEED LEGO BRICKS!!

Do you have any Lego bricks that you would consider donating to the church? We are hoping to introduce a regular 'Brick Builders' event at church where the youngsters, who are too old to attend Messy Church, can come and show their creativity whilst building Lego, most probably based on Bible stories. This is in the infancy of planning and more information will be given when we have finalised arrangements, but first we need LEGO bricks in order to offer this event! Without bricks we can't put together what we think will be an exciting project for the 10's and over age group. Please see a Steward if you have any you would be happy to donate. Many thanks

Keg

## Flower rota

For various reasons, there are a number of Sundays available on the flower rota. If you would like to take one of these, please let me know.

You can buy a bunch of flowers to put in a vase, or flowers for an arrangement (Oasis or an alternative is always available), or make a donation (via the stewards) and one of the silk flower arrangements will be used that Sunday.



Gil F has some tips:

It is tradition in our church not to use just red and white flowers—if you particularly want to use red and white, then please also include flowers of another colour.

Because the wall behind the communion table is black, some flower colours (dark red, blue or purple—receding) don't show up very well unless very carefully surrounded by light foliage. It is probably better to use white, yellow, orange, pink—bright (advancing) colours.

It is lovely to be able to give flowers to members of the congregation—a ministry of flowers.

Dates available:

2025 April 6th and 13th, June 15th  
Thanks. Sue T

### Please note:

**Please use the front entrance to the church when arranging the flowers if there are any hirers in the hall. The oasis and pot will be either in church or in the vestry once flowers have been distributed on a Sunday. Thanks**

# Camberley & District funeral directors

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## Sandhurst

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College Town, GU47 0QA

**01276 33241**



[www.camberleyanddistrict.co.uk](http://www.camberleyanddistrict.co.uk)

## Recycling for Good Causes

In the vestibule you will notice a largish box which advertises 'Recycling for good causes.'

Please donate your unwanted items from the following list. There are some leaflets available which tell you about what can be recycled but basically it is: Unwanted jewellery - including damaged items and costume jewellery and watches

Coins and currency - any age and UK and foreign both acceptable

Mobile phones, cameras, video cameras and gadgets including ipods, tablets but NOT laptops.

Stamps - single, loose and presentation packs.

The box contains a sack. When the sack is full Recycling for Good Causes will collect it and the church will receive 75% of the proceeds from the sale of the contents within about 8 weeks of collection. (As a guide, at High Cross they received a cheque for £80 - so it is definitely worth doing this!)

Thanks,  
**Sharon**

## Reminder of more recycling

And of course you can still recycle medication blister packs, Pringle tubes, bras (any condition), pens (working or not) and Ferrero Rocher boxes (probably empty!) in the other box in the foyer!

Thanks Sue T

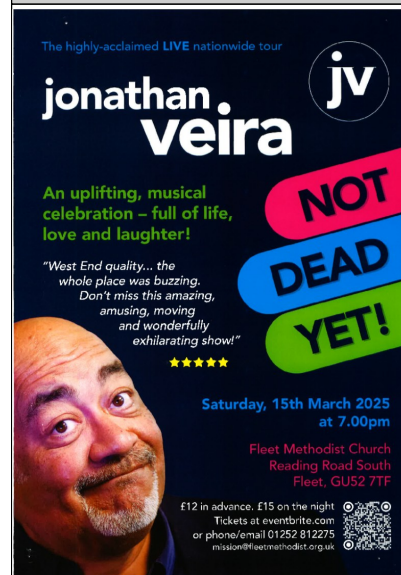
## In memoriam plaques



I am delighted to be able to tell you that **Camberley and District Funeral Directors** (Yorktown Road, College Town) are now sponsoring our memorial plaques.

Just talk to Sue T about the words you'd like and they will provide the plaque for free! Doug W has been attaching them to the seats once done. Thanks Doug!  
A donation to the church of £50 is suggested but not required.

## An Audience with Jonathan Veira – Not Dead Yet!



On Saturday 15th March Jonathan Veira appeared at Fleet Methodist Church with his latest event: An Audience with Jonathan Veira - Not Dead Yet!

Jonathan used to be an opera singer of renown, and he still has a marvellous voice. These days he concentrates on delivering a mixed palette of humour, stories and songs (both secular and spiritual) to audiences around the country.

Many people who attended would probably have heard and seen Jonathan at Spring Harvest or other large-scale events. I'd first come across him at CRE (Christian Resources Exhibition) and had been blown away by his voice. What I hadn't realised though was what a wonderful raconteur he is too! With his larger-than-life personality and his talent for seeing – and sharing – the humour in situations, I'd

defy anyone not to enjoy an evening spent with him.

On the 15th he had us all laughing, listening and occasionally singing along. We heard some of his life story and his recent health battles. He is only alive because his wife donated one of her kidneys to him. You can imagine that was of special interest to Mike and me.

It was lovely to see my old church so full and great to see some folk from my current churches there, including Douglas and Heather. The time flew by all too fast but I came away with another of Jonathan's CD's and two of his books so I will enjoy him for a bit longer!

If you ever get the chance to see Jonathan Veira, I would highly recommend taking it. You won't be disappointed.

Sharon

## Film night

Film night is on the **4th Sunday - April 27th**

and this month will be held in the church

Do join us for fellowship and pizza at around 18:30.



## Crowthorne Foodbank

Current shortages -

**Tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, tinned ham and corned beef, 500g dried rice, sponge puddings, tinned tomatoes, jam, small jars of coffee, squash, long life milk, biscuits, porridge, jars of pasta sauce, tins of spaghetti with no meat**

**Toilet rolls, bleach, cleaning sponges, washing up liquid, anti bacterial spray, washing tablets**

**Handwash (liquid), conditioner, adult toothbrushes, adult toothpaste, ladies and men's deodorant.**

Note: the foodbank update their needs weekly here:  
[Crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/](http://Crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/)

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Note—they currently have plenty of beans

Please do consider the food bank when you do your food shopping. There are collection points in most of the major supermarkets.

E.g.  
Tesco, The Meadows—please only place Tesco bought items in these bins.  
Co-op, the High Street, Crowthorne.

## Rejoice!

From 2.30- 3.30 on the 1st Tuesday of the month a small group of us meet to sing old favourite hymns, learn new ones and share fellowship.

If you miss singing hymns that perhaps you loved years ago or are keen to familiarise yourself with different ones you would be very welcome.

Sometimes there is also a chance to select what will be sung at services either when Sharon is preaching or when we have a Local Arrangement.

The next Rejoice! will be on Tuesday **8th April** not 1st.



## EASTER FAIR

SATURDAY 12TH April

2—4pm



Crafts, Cakes, Tombola, Games, Cards, with tea and hot cross buns .

Everyone welcome





## VINYL RECORDS WANTED

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POP, DANCE, ETC**

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**ian@recordvault.co.uk / 07737 003891**

**www.recordvault.co.uk**

**Unit 5/6 Redlands Yard, Broadwindsor, Beaminster DT8 3PX**

## Concert of the year?

On March 22<sup>nd</sup> the Royal Memorial Chapel Choir combined with Yateley Choral Society to perform the first public concert at the Royal Memorial Chapel, Sandhurst since the pandemic.

With Simon Dinsdale at the fabulous Chapel organ, it was an evening of superlatives. The main works were the Vierne's Mass and Faure's Requiem. Both written at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Vierne is forceful & dramatic while the Faure is full of many well-known tunes. The choirs brought this out very well whilst the soloists were superb, with the Requiem's "Pie Jesu" being particularly poignant.

It was good to see the audience packing the Chapel and the 70 strong choir using the Chapel's acoustics to create a wall of sound. It was an evening that will long live in the memory.

Wilf Hardy

ps....the next Yateley Choral Society Concert is on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July at St. Peters Church, Yateley & is titled "What a Wonderful World".

## Craft, Creativity and Coffee

Craft, Creativity and Coffee Mornings every **fourth Thursday** in the month.



At our February coffee morning we introduced a new Craft , Creativity and coffee session to run alongside our usual coffee morning. This proved to be popular as we had nine people who participated in this.

We offered card making with a flower theme of Snowdrops, as well as colouring in various forms, and the simple craft painting of flower pots.

This is a lovely opportunity to catch up over coffee and cakes and be creative too!

Do put the date in your diary and pop along if you are free between 10:30 and 12 midday.

**Next session April 24th**

# MESSY EASTER



**SATURDAY 19th APRIL**

**3 — 4.30 pm**

**Crafts, Painting, Stories,**

**And Music**

**Come and join us!!**

## Lent Bible Study—Holy Habits: Following Jesus

This Lent are using a book entitled *Holy Habits: Following Jesus* to guide us through the six weeks of Lent. Our studies are on a Tuesday evening by Zoom starting at 7.45pm.

The Zoom link is:

<https://zoom.us/j/2799549300?pwd=YjVCazFHR0NwZE50OEhaRzhMdm13UT09>

Meeting ID: 279 954 9300

Passcode: 3v25BE

This is the same as the regular Tuesday evening Bible study slot BUT you don't have to be a regular attender of that to join with the Lent study! Often people feel they can't commit to something on an ongoing basis but at special times of the year such as Lent or Advent, they make an extra effort. Please do consider joining this Lent period.

Week 4	1 <sup>st</sup> April	Session 4	Jesus praying
Week 5	8 <sup>th</sup> April	Session 5	Jesus making disciples
Week 6	15 <sup>th</sup> April	Session 6	Jesus generous under pressure

### And other dates for the diary:

#### **Maundy Thursday Passover Meal**

Please note that on Maundy Thursday (**17<sup>th</sup> April**) at 7pm there will be a Passover meal hosted at Crowthorne Methodist Church to which members of our congregation are warmly invited. Places are limited to 40 so it will be a case of first come, first served. Look out for the sign-up sheet nearer the time!

#### **Good Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April**

There will be a reflective service led by Sharon at our church at 10.30am on Good Friday, followed by tea/coffee and hot cross buns. On this significant day in the Christian calendar it is good to come together to worship and give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ for all he did for us on the cross.

Please note that, due to circumstances outside of the control of SCT, there is NO act of witness this Good Friday at The Meadows.

#### **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April Messy Easter 3 – 4.30pm.**

Please tell your friends and neighbours about this – it's a great afternoon with crafts, games, story, songs and, of course, an Easter egg hunt. Lots of mess and lots of fun but also a chance to tell young families about the message of Easter.

**Easter Sunday worship 20<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am** will be led by our dear friend Maggy Garton.

**Leaders from the Baptist, Methodist, Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church have responded to the Prime Minister's announcement concerning further cuts to the international development budget.**

In the statement, the leaders said:

*We deeply lament the government's stated intention to make further cuts to the UK's international development budget. This would break a manifesto promise made to people in the world's poorest communities and have a devastating impact on lives and livelihoods across the globe. While there is a case to be made for increasing defence spending to support Ukraine in resisting Russian aggression, that shouldn't come at the cost of vital humanitarian and development programmes, which play a crucial role in promoting human security around the world.*

*"UK aid programmes protect women and girls from violence, provide cost-effective vaccines to babies and young children and support human rights defenders who work to prevent future conflict. Such programmes will be under threat if UK aid is further slashed by 40%"*

"Our Churches have strongly encouraged and supported the UK in its commitment to international development, not only as a way of showing care to our global neighbours, but in recognition of the UK's historic and ongoing responsibilities to address the causes of global injustice, poverty, forced migration, climate change and conflict. It is a source of deep regret to see a backing away from that responsibility. A massively reduced UK aid budget would be experienced as a bitter blow by partners and communities in the global south, especially coming so soon after the devastating USAID cuts. We urge the government to rethink its decision immediately."

#### **Signed by:**

The Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary, The Baptist Union of Great Britain  
Emma Jackson, Convener of the Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group, The Church of Scotland

**The Revd Helen Cameron and Carolyn Godfrey, President and Vice-President, The Methodist Church in Britain**

Tim Dunwoody, Team Leader for Irish Methodist World Development and Relief, The Methodist Church in Ireland

The Revd Philip Brooks, Deputy General Secretary (Mission), The United Reformed Church

# Circuit Merger

NEWSLETTER ED 1



Hants-Surrey Border  
Methodist Circuit



Berkshire Surrey Border  
Methodist Circuit

## Greetings!

**We are pleased to bring you the first edition of the Circuit Merger Newsletter.**

Our aim is to keep people informed of what is happening/planned to happen as the Berkshire Surrey Borders Circuit and the Hampshire Surrey Border Circuit merge to become one circuit in September 2025. Here you will find information about the progress of the merger, what is involved and the opportunities which will arise to help, guide and take up roles in the merger and in the new circuit.

## THE STORY SO FAR

The possibility of merging the two circuits came about in 2024 when the Circuit Leadership Team of BSBC were discussing the likely impact of both Revd Catherine Bowstead, Superintendent Minister, and Revd Soba Sinnathamby 'sitting down' (that is, retiring) in the summer of 2025.

Since it was highly unlikely that BSBC would find a new superintendent, they approached HSBC to discuss the possibility of combining the two circuits with Revd. Nick Oborski then becoming superintendent of the resulting merged circuit.

Both circuits agreed to explore this and, following a series of meetings, the resolutions to enable this went to all 17 church councils in both circuits. All 17 church councils passed the resolutions.

This was then endorsed at the circuit meetings of both circuits and finally agreed at the District Synod on 13 March 25.

The next steps are for the circuit meetings to agree that the merger can go ahead, and then this will be taken to the next District Synod this spring.

## A NEW NAME...

We asked across the circuits to think about what name would bring the two circuits together. Thank you for all your suggestions. At the moment, the front runner is...

### THE BLACKWATER VALLEY CIRCUIT

This incorporates most of the churches, and gives a recognisable geographical point which helps people know where the circuit will be. The question is, what will the logo look like? If you have an idea, and can draw, design a logo, please send your ideas to Revd Anne Day - [anne.day@methodist.org.uk](mailto:anne.day@methodist.org.uk)



### Staffing News

Although we will be sad to bid farewell to Revds Catherine and Soba, we are pleased to announce that Revd. Wes Hampton will be stationed in Berkshire Surrey Borders Circuit from September 2025 and will have pastoral charge of Wokingham Methodist Church, as well as being the Methodist minister for two LEPs: Church @ The Pines and Wooshill Community Church. He will be joining at an auspicious time as the new circuit is just taking off!



## IMPORTANT DATES

Circuit meetings - HSBC - 2nd April at  
Ash Vale Chapel, 7.30pm  
District Synod - 26th April, 10.00am  
Methodist Conference - 26 June - 2 July  
2025 in Telford



## OPPORTUNITIES

As the circuit comes together, there are many opportunities for people from both circuits to get involved. We are particularly interested if you have experience in or have skills of:

**Graphic design** - a new website will be needed and there are opportunities for new ways of communicating.

**Finance** - To help with the merging of the finance and finance procedures from both circuits.

**HR** - keeping the contracts of lay workers and other people in the circuits right, and recruiting, writing job descriptions and person specifications for the various roles is needed.

**Youth work group** - would you be interested in helping the youth work across the new circuit flourish? This includes getting all the young people ready for the next 3Generate Youth Assembly in October and other projects.

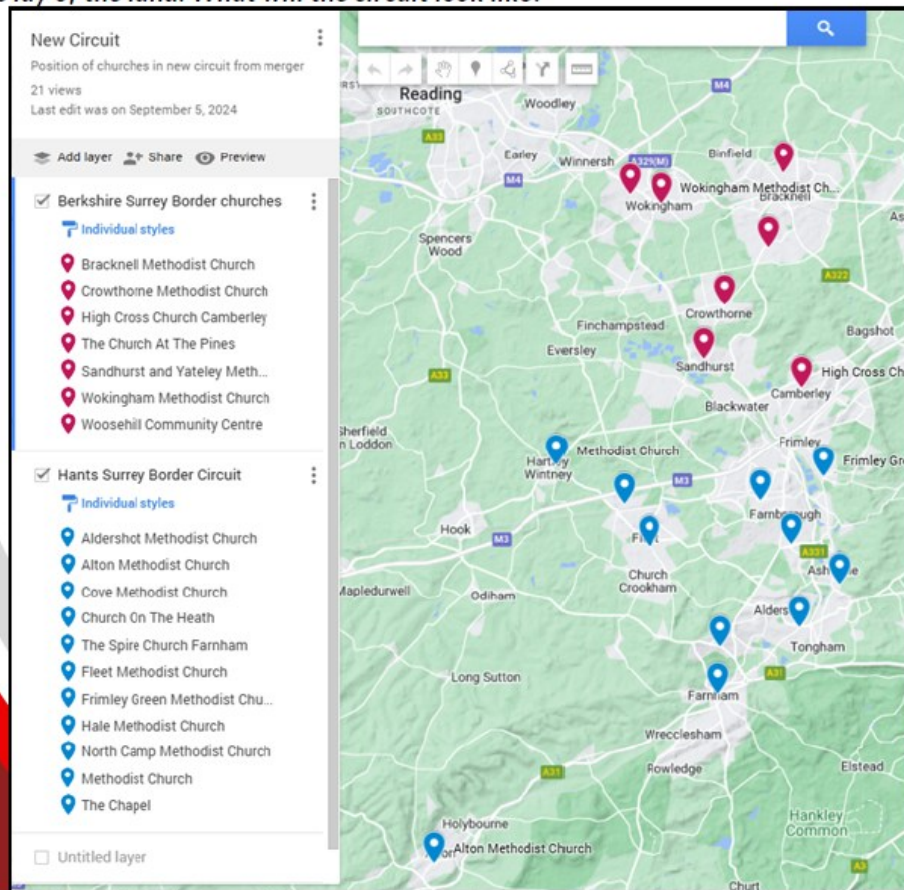
**Circuit Leadership and Circuit Stewarding** - new opportunities will arise for new people in the Circuit Leadership Team. Could this be you?

**Safeguarding** - Would you like to get involved in this crucial role within the new circuit, to assist and develop this vital role.

**Property** - No experience necessary, and you don't need to be handy with a paintbrush, it's more about overseeing the new circuits property assets, and making sure they are looked after and maintained well.



### The lay of the land: What will the circuit look like?



## Sandhurst Churches Together at SYMC on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Our theme for this service was: 'Be Still: Making the most of the wilderness' We had a good turnout to the service and a time of worship, group discussion and challenge. We were given a tea-light at the end of the service and Sharon encouraged us to light the tea-light for five minutes each night and just give that time over to God. She also gave us a print out of the words from Psalm 46: 'Be Still and Know that I am God'.

'Be still and know that I am God' – this is a familiar verse from Psalm 46 but did you know that this psalm was written during a time of conflict, fear and hardship. The Assyrian Army under King Sennacherib had surrounded the city of Jerusalem and was besieging it. He had already captured the Northern Territory of Israel and taken them into exile in Assyria. How very frightening for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, almost certain of their own destiny and destruction. And yet whilst this Psalm was being written God is quoted as saying 'Be Still and know that I am God'. Just how do we do this?

We find ourselves in turmoil and surrounded by troubles in life at times, sometimes we can't see a way out of our situation – we need to be still and know that He is God. To trust our lives to the living God who loves us and experience his presence. 'Being still' is not just physical stillness, that is, the absence of activity, but it is a deep inner surrender to God's will.

King Hezekiah of Judah prayed and so did the people of Jerusalem. God sent the Angel of the Lord to destroy the Assyrian army, all 185,000 of them, leaving just King Sennacherib who quickly retreated back to Nineveh in Assyria, (read the story in 2 Kings 18 and 19).

Jesus too withdrew to spend quiet times with his Heavenly Father, the longest of these times being straight after his baptism when he spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness. This was a time of preparation and contemplation, completely away from the troubles of everyday life allowing Jesus to be totally focused on his relationship with God and on the mission that God had given him to do. This must have been challenging for him, but with complete trust and surrender, God gave him the strength to see his ministry through.

There are several other characters who spent times in the wilderness, Elijah, Moses, the children of Israel and even Noah floating around aimlessly in the flood. All of these people were being prepared for something greater in their lives, the wilderness experience had a purpose, even if they couldn't see it at the time.

We need to trust in God recognising he is the ultimate source of strength and stability even when life throws challenges at us. So whether you are experiencing a difficult time in your lives, or whether you are preparing yourselves for some challenge or change in your life, God would encourage you to 'Be Still and Know that I am God' being fully reassured that He loves you, He has plans for you, He wants you to experience inner peace, inner contentment and fulfilment, always remembering that as it was said in the Psalm, that God is our secure refuge and fortress.