

# **Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church February 2026 newsletter**



## The Minister writes...



Dear friends,

February can feel like a month lived in the margins. Christmas is well behind us, spring feels more like a promise than a reality, and the days, though lengthening, are often still cold and grey. It is a season of waiting, and perhaps that makes it an honest time to reflect on how we live our faith when the world feels unsettled.

It would be impossible to pretend that all is well, either globally or closer to home. The news reminds

us daily of conflict, division, and deep anxiety about the future. Many people are feeling weary, confused, or even fearful, not always because of what is happening to them personally, but because of what they see unfolding around them. As Christians, we are not called to shut our eyes to these realities, nor to absorb them uncritically, but to face them prayerfully and faithfully.

One of the questions that seems especially pressing at the moment is how we speak, and how we listen. The volume of public debate is loud, the language often harsh, and compassion can feel in short supply. In such a climate, the words of Jesus challenge us uncomfortably: "Blessed are the peacemakers," and "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." These are not sentimental ideals; they are demanding callings. They ask us to think carefully about what we say, what we share, and what we allow to shape our attitudes.

Christian hope is not naïve optimism, and it is certainly not denial. Hope is the quiet, stubborn decision to trust that God is still at work, even when we cannot see clear outcomes. It is choosing kindness when it would be easier to harden our hearts, choosing truth when distortion is tempting, and choosing prayer when anxiety threatens to overwhelm us.

As February edges us slowly towards spring, we are reminded that change often comes gradually, almost imperceptibly at first. Snowdrops push through frozen ground, not because the conditions are easy, but because life insists on emerging. Our calling is similar: to be people who bear witness to God's love, not by grand gestures, but through faithfulness in small, daily acts of grace.

May this month find us attentive to God's presence, careful with our words, generous in our judgements, and rooted in a hope that does not disappoint.

With every blessing,

Sharon

I was looking for a line from a hymn to finish with, and God is working his purpose out came to mind. It is hard to isolate just one or two lines because the whole hymn seems to speak into our current situation, but maybe the last lines of the first and final verses will both comfort and challenge you:

*Nearer and nearer draws the time,  
the time that shall surely be  
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God  
as the waters cover the sea.*

Image: S. Gardner Ambarrow Court 2023



Printed newsletters - if you receive a printed copy of the newsletter, then we would be grateful if you would make a contribution towards the cost of printing/postage using the attached brown envelope. Please just hand in with collection or give to any steward.

Thanks

## What's on?

### January

**27<sup>th</sup>:** Bible study

### February:

**1<sup>st</sup>:** Morning service

**3<sup>rd</sup>:** Rejoice!, Bible study

**8<sup>th</sup>:** Morning service

**10<sup>th</sup>:** Church Council

**15<sup>th</sup>:** Morning service, then SCT at Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church

**17<sup>th</sup>:** Bible study

**19<sup>th</sup>:** Housegroup

**22<sup>nd</sup>:** Morning service, then Film night

**24<sup>th</sup>:** Bible study

**26<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee, craft and creativity



## **Fire Drill/Emergency Evacuation Practice - advance notice**

It is strongly advised that churches should carry out a Fire Drill/Emergency Evacuation Practice at least once a year.

At our latest stewards' meeting we discussed the need to do this and (whilst we intend to wait until the weather is a little warmer!) this is by way of advance notice.

In the meantime,

Please make yourself aware of the nearest fire exits from the church and the halls.

Please note, our mustering area is the church car park.

Each time you are worshipping at church, just take a note of who is sitting either side of you so that, should there be a practice or a real emergency, when we muster in the car park you can look out to see if those people are present.

Thank you.

## **Coffee, Craft and Creativity**

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

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

**The next Coffee, Craft and Creativity morning will be on Thursday February 26<sup>th</sup> 2026 10.30 - 12 noon.**



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

## The Power of Prayer

Do you find praying a challenge?

I think it is an area that many of us struggle with. At our recent housegroup we focused on it, in order to try and help rectify that situation.

Prayer is powerful because God commands us to do it, and it is a way of communicating with him daily. John (1John 5 v 14-15) presents three key thoughts to effective prayer:

- 1, Ask in prayer,
- 2, Pray according to his will, and
- 3, Pray with faith. This is when when we can open our hearts to him and he is able to work through us to further his will.

In the Bible the power of prayer stems not from the person praying, but from our God who hears and answers us. This enables us to communicate with our creator, align to God's will and receive his strength to overcome our challenges.

The power of prayer can transform individuals, bring revival and bring protection from sin.

Matthew 7 v7:

- "Ask, and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you "

Mark 11 v24:

- "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

Also remember Colossians 3 v17:

- "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."
- Some days we need more encouragement to pray and it is in difficult times and situations we all tend to turn to God more for help. This could be for sick or anxious friends or relatives, or other difficult scenarios.

Consider James 5 v14-16:

- "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
- Also Philippians 4 v 6-7:

- "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

But it is equally important to be thankful when we have times of joy and offer gratitude for life's happy events and milestones.

It was suggested that a 10 minute daily devotion in the early part of the day can help with focus, reduce stress and strengthen our spiritual connection with God. This enables the day to begin with purpose, gratitude and peace. It provides a positive mindset to face the day's challenges with greater clarity, confidence and spiritual grounding. If you wish to break it down further a possible framework is using ACTS, (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication) which can be helpful.

Always remember that the main purpose of Prayer is to stay connected to God, and be comforted in knowing that he is with us, especially during the hard and difficult times.

Perhaps you can think of your own particular times when you have turned to God for comfort and solace to help you through your own difficulties or crisis? Remember that Ephesians 3 v16 states:

- "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being."

The following prayer was probably based on this passage:

- "Lord, I pray for the power of Your Spirit to fill my life and strengthen my inner being. Help me to be rooted and grounded in Your love, so that I am not shaken by life's challenges. Give me wisdom to know how to pray and a renewed heart to pray with faith and trust, believing that You are near and Your word is true. Open my eyes to see Your hand at work, and help me to live in a way that brings You glory. Amen".

Heather, Lesley and Mike.

## **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.



## **Rev John Castle**

### **Moving on**

There comes a moment in the life of every parish when it's time for a change of leadership. George and I have been here at St Michael's for 21 years, and we now feel that the time is right for us to move on, and for St Michael's to look for a new Rector. So I will be stepping down from the role of incumbent shortly after Easter.

We'll be very sad to leave you all, as this church has become part of who we are. But we'll certainly keep in touch and pray for you all, particularly over the months of vacancy, while you go through the recruitment process, which I'm afraid is rather long and arduous in the Church of England.

We'll be moving in April to the parish of Aldenham, near Watford, where I will take up the part-time role of Team Vicar within a Team ministry that includes two other parishes. I will be responsible for the parish of St John the Baptist, Aldenham. The role will involve Sundays and two weekdays, which will give me more time to spend with George, including some cheap flights to South Africa to see our son Adam, his wife Marjoli and their little boy Joshua. I'm also hoping to be studying for a part-time MA from September, and doing some in-depth Bible teaching in the diocese of St Albans.

There are some who have already been speculating about how long it would be before I move on, but for others this news will come as a bit of a shock. However, there are still 3 months to go, and I will be working with the PCC and other leaders to make sure that the parish is in a good position to carry on the work of worship and mission during the period of the vacancy. And our Area Dean, Laura, and Archdeacon Stephen will ensure that other clergy will be available to assist John White and Jane Kraft.

Please pray for George and me, and also for everyone here at St Michael's facing a year of change. The important thing to remember is that this is God's church, and he will be there to guide and empower us for whatever he wants us to be doing in 2026. May God bless us all.

### **Giving lifts to church**

We have a number of people on the list who regularly give others lifts to church from both the Sandhurst and Yateley areas, but it would be helpful if we were able to have a few more volunteers.

If you drive, please do consider if you would be able to help out like this.

Thanks

## 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 G go up to the Shelter every year and take donated toiletries with them.

Just hand to a steward. Thanks

## Your favourite hymns

If you would like to suggest a favourite hymn that we don't regularly sing, then please suggest it to Alison B and she'll put a list together for Sharon to try to include in one of her services with us.

We would also be able to practice it in Rejoice!

## Muriel Mason

Our dear friend Muriel.





## 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 meeting of Rejoice! will be on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026** **unless advised otherwise.**

## Crowthorne Foodbank



Current shortages -

**Sponge puddings, tinned custard, cereal, pasta sauce, squash, tinned meat**

**Bin bags, cleaning sponges**

**Women's deodorant**

Note—they currently have plenty of baked beans, pasta, hand soap

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

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

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.

## Babes and tots



Wednesday mornings 10:30 to 12:00

If you know of anyone in the community with a young baby or child, please invite them to attend.

Small friendly group, all welcome, Mums dads, grandparents.

Facebook page: Babes and Tots - Sandhurst.

## Film night

Film night is on the 4th Sunday...

In February 2026 it will be on **22<sup>nd</sup>**. Venue TBA

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



## Flower rota

For various reasons, there are always 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 in **February - 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>** and **March - 22<sup>nd</sup>**

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



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**For people living with Dementia-Memory loss  
And their supporter**

## **Daisy Chain Café**

**Darby Green Centre, Darby Green  
Road, Blackwater Yateley GU17 0DT**

**Every Monday 14.00 – 16.00  
Except Bank Holidays**



### **FREE TO ATTEND**

The Café offers a relaxed, friendly place to exchange ideas with others in similar circumstances along with light refreshments, table activities, crafts, and occasional entertainment. A chance to make new friends and share the support of others.

Large Free Car Park

Stagecoach Bus 3 stops on Darby Green Road

**New volunteers always welcome** for further information  
find us on Facebook – Daisy Chain Café Yateley, email  
[daisychaincafe1@gmail.com](mailto:daisychaincafe1@gmail.com)

**Yateley Town Council 01252 872198**

**Donations welcomed directly or via EasyFundraising.org.uk**

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## 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 (preferably in plastic bags), bras (any condition), pens (working or not) and Ferrero Rocher boxes (probably empty!) in the other box in the foyer!  
Note that Pringles tubes can now go in with your household recycling.

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.



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



## 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**—3pm 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)



## Minister

**Rev Sharon Gardner**

minister@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk  
01344 774967

## Church Stewards - [steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

Karen Glossop	Senior Steward
Sandra Wooledge	
Heather Brown	
Matt Rowell	

## Sandhurst Churches Together



**15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at Sandhurst and Yateley Methodist Church**

15<sup>th</sup> March at the Baptist Church

29<sup>th</sup> March (Palm Sunday) at St Michael's

## Newsletter and website

Contributions for the **March 2026** Newsletter (in church on Sunday 22nd February 2026 or website) should be with Sue T by **Sunday February 15<sup>th</sup> 2026**

Contributions should either be:

Handed to Sue at Church,

Emailed to: [newsletter@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)

## **S.A.L.T. Zoom Bible Study on Five Remarkable Women**

At the beginning of the gospel of Matthew, he includes a genealogy of Jesus Christ and it is noteworthy that, in a genealogy composed almost entirely of men, five women's names occur. These are not the kind of women you might expect to appear.....



There is Tamar, wronged-against but not prepared to accept the injustice.

There is Rahab, the prostitute - not the most likely profession in which to find someone who becomes a heroine of the faith.

There is Ruth, the Moabite - a foreigner.

There is Uriah's wife - that is how Matthew names her. Not as Bathsheba, her given name, but with the name of her husband who was put to death through King David's sin.

And finally, Mary, the mother of Jesus. We probably think we know the most about her - but perhaps we will be surprised when we consider her place in the genealogy.....

Please do join us even (or especially!) if you haven't before, to have a look at the stories of these women and what they have to say to us today.

Tamar - 27th January

Rahab - 3rd Feb

Ruth - 17th Feb

Uriah's wife - 24th Feb \*to be confirmed as this will be the start of Lent and we may be doing a Lent study.

Mary, mother of Jesus - 10th March (also to be confirmed)

Please note there is no Bible study on 10th Feb as we have Church Council that evening

All sessions begin at 7.45pm and finish by 9pm.

The Zoom link is:

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

Meeting ID: 279 954 9300

Passcode: 3v25BE

## House Fellowship group - providing a friendly platform for discussion...

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

We always welcome new faces and would love you to come and join us. To find out more, please email [steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk)



Next meeting will be on **19<sup>th</sup> February** at Lesley's

## Rotas - February

### Flowers

### Coffee

<b>February</b>		
1st	-	Cynthia R and Margaret H
8th	-	Marian L and Cynthia R
15th	Robert G	Cynthia R and Wendy H
22nd	Diana M	Joan T and Sandra W

## Lifts to church on Sunday morning

If you would like a lift to church and you live in Sandhurst or Yateley, please contact the stewards on [steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:steward@sandhurstyateleymethodist.org.uk) (or phone the minister on 01344 774967) and they can provide you with the details of some of our church members who have volunteered to give lifts.

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

### Yateley

Pam H

Tricia N

### Sandhurst

Graham F

Douglas B

## Services - February 2026



<b>February</b>		
1st	10:30 am	Local Arrangement
8th	10:30 am	Rev Sharon Gardner (Holy Communion)
15th	10:30 am	Rev Mike Thomson
22nd	10:30 am	Kim Tame
	18:30 pm	Film night

For (nearly) up to the minute news, visit our 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)

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

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