

THE VOICE

MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE



May 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE MANSE

*Asif is unwell and unable to write his letter for this edition of "The Voice".
Instead we hear his voice in his pastoral letter to the circuit.
We wish him a speedy and full return to health.*

Dear Friends,

I pray this finds you well and managing your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health during these days like none other. It is still odd, after a year's time, on these beautiful spring days not many people are out and about enjoying the timeless beauty of God's creation. The joy and laughter of spring is still muted.

Though a number of us have got their first job, some of us both, happiness is still missing from the life of people. So what is it that is causing this? A psychology professor who has done extensive study on happiness has said that one of the greatest barriers to happiness was not what many would think. It was not about wealth or health or any of the other external or material forces. One of the biggest barriers to happiness is uncertainty.

Well, I guess this is true. We are living in a time inundated with unhappiness and discontent. In some quarters of the population this is more intense and expressed via protests, occasionally resulting in unsavoury incidents. Uncertainty is pretty much a word that describes just about everything including churches. Within the church communities, this is not just about when we will begin normal worship and other activities we love doing but real concerns relating to how many are going to come back, financial situation, personnel to fill in key roles etc.etc. The 'not knowing' eats at our happiness. The saying that people who receive bad news are happier than those who receive ambiguous news, describes quite well the current situation. When we get bad news, we are sad for a while, and then get on with life making the most of it. We tweak our life style and attitudes. But we cannot come to terms with circumstances whose terms we do not know yet. An uncertain future leaves us stranded in an unhappy, frustrated and powerless present with nothing we can do but wait. And we wait, and we wait. When we will be able to socialise freely with our loved ones and friends and fellow believers? Hug and kiss our grandchildren? These are some of the questions bothering us and no one in a position to give any reasonable answers.

Having said all that, we do have some certainty that can help us to break out of this spiral of unhappiness. We are children of God and followers of Jesus and we cannot separate our current reality from that truth. Faith does not change

the circumstances, it changes us.

We look at the world with hope and with knowledge that is deeper than the bottom line. There is an ultimate, foundational truth that we stand on – we are children of God. We are never alone. We are called to love God and each other. We are to help make this world into a place where all are fed, sheltered and safe.

Covid-19 has threatened us and will continue to do so, even after everyone is jabbed up. But we are created for eternity and ultimately it cannot defeat us. It is okay to be anxious and concerned, but let us not forget whose we are. Happiness depends on what happens but joy is a condition of the soul. Let us nurture the joy. Let us live our lives in such a way that others experience joy because of our faith and actions.

As we continue on this journey of difficult circumstances, we are now beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. However, the unknown - what that light will reveal, is still a cause of concern in many minds. Let us not worry about that and keep travelling on, hand in hand with each other and our Saviour besides us.

Asif Das



EDITORIAL NOTE



"**The Old Vicarage, Grantchester**" is a poem by Rupert Brooke written in Berlin in 1912. He initially entitled the poem "Home" then "The Sentimental Exile". It begins....

'Just now the lilac is in bloom'

and later *'O would I were in Grantchester, in Grantchester'*

When I was a child I lived in a lane on the edge of a small town. On each side were hawthorn hedges and my abiding memory of those 'growing-up' years is the heady scent of the May blossom. Each year since I left northern climes to live in the south I search out the Hawthorn blossom to breathe in, once again, the perfume of May and of childhood. Here is my 'Sentimental Exile' poem.



*Just now the heavy blossomed May
On Hawthorn branch will dip and sway
As heady perfume fills the air.
I stop, I breathe it in and stare,
Recapturing yet once again
My childhood in Broadowler Lane.*

Any items for inclusion in the **JUNE** issue of "The Voice" should be sent to me by: **WEDNESDAY MAY 19th 2021**

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com

or by post: 57, Darfield Rd. Guildford. GU4 7YY

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PROPERTY LETTINGS

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PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP:

This is a small group willing to put time aside for praying each day for special needs within the Church community. Your request will be passed on to other members of the group, where it will remain confidential.

The prayer contact for MAY will be

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Important: It is our practice at Merrow to publish THE VOICE on the website. This is an important source of information about the life of our church and we want to share it with others.

However, we recognise that some contributors may be uncomfortable with a mention on our web page and we will be happy to omit your name and any other personal details in any future issue if requested to do so.

Please advise at the time of submitting the copy.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAY

We are still abiding by government guidelines and Methodist Church advice but hope to re-open for Sunday Worship on **Sunday May 23rd**. Not only will be able to meet in person but this is Aldersgate Sunday and Pentecost - a triple celebration.

You will still need to book a place and observe safety precautions as before. See the weekly news sheet for booking details.

Sunday	Vestry	Worship	P/A	Door & Booking in
May 23 rd 10.30am	Joan Wells	Margriet Rasker	Glenys Magill	Ruth McCulloch Julie Wallis
May 30 th 10.30am	Lyn McKay		Jane Vinall	Helen Belsham Maggie Woolcock

The organists - on May 23rd Gillian Brierley and May 30th Joan Tabraham.

We continue to open for Silent Prayer each Wednesday from 10-11.00 am

Wednesday Steward's Rota:

Date	Door Steward	P/A
Wed.5 th May	Hugh Bradley	Glenys Magill
Wed 12 th May	Helen Belsham	"
Wed 19 th May	Julie Wallis	"
Wed. 26 th May	Maggie Woolcock	"

READ ON

The next few pages are full of exciting happenings in which you might like to participate.

You are invited to a
VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING

in aid of **Action for Children**



on Thursday 20th May
10.30am to 12.30pm

**Karis Kulawole, Head of Faith Partnerships for
AFC
will be joining us at 11am**

Bring your own coffee and cake!



JustGiving page and further details on how to join will be published in the newsheet.

THY KINGDOM COME



Thursday 13th May - Sunday 23rd May 2021

Thy Kingdom Come, the prayer movement which invites Christians around the world to pray daily for 5 friends or family members, that they might come to know the love of God, is happening here in Merrow! Let's start thinking now about who we might pray for, perhaps neighbours or others who we have got to know better during the past year or those who have had a particularly difficult time.

Ascension day and Pentecost

We are launching the eleven days of prayer with a Zoom meeting on Ascension day, Thursday May 13th at 3pm led by Asif (joining details will be in the notice sheet). The end will be a triple celebration - our first Sunday morning service at Merrow in 2021 led by Rev Alan Payne, minister at Godalming marking both Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday.

Prayer Journal and Novena

There are many resources available for Thy Kingdom Come, the Prayer Journal and the Novena are the two main ones for adults. There is a link below for those who receive their church communications electronically and for those who usually receive their communications by post. These will be (or have been) included in one of the weekly mailings. May I suggest that you have a look at each and decide which would suit you best or you could use both. During the period between Ascension and Pentecost (13 - 23 May), these devotions will take the place of our normal Thoughts for the Day.

Resources for children and young people

There is a wide range of resources for children and young people which you might like to share with grandchildren or other young people. We have physical copies of the Family Prayer Adventure Map which I am happy to deliver to you on request and there is a whole series of Cheeky Panda videos and activities for primary school children and an Escape Room for older children (details below)

Helen (Guildford 823742)

Resources for adults:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/new-2021>

Resources for Children:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/cheeky-pandas-resources>

Resources for young people:

Yet to be published but will be included in the notice sheet nearer the time



IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR IN THE GARDEN

What unusual weather we have had in April this year; mini heat waves in the daytime and frosts at night and whatever happened to April showers? As a consequence we begin May with very dry gardens and still the chance of frosts until the end of the month.

The spring flowering shrubs have bloomed well and early this year and can be pruned back as soon as the flowers fade, to keep them compact and healthy. Regular deadheading of the spring bulbs will extend their season a bit and it is tempting to clear the foliage too, but the bulbs need the contribution of the leaves to build for next year, so let it die back naturally.

May is the month to plan for summer colour and to supply that you can't beat summer flowering bulbs such as lilies, dahlias, begonias, cannas and gladioli, plus many more. Planting can start now, ensuring that you time it so that the new shoots won't appear above ground before all danger of frost is past.

The same applies in the vegetable garden, planting out the tender varieties such as beans, courgettes, marrows etc. only when frosts are over. I now sow all the bean family – French, broad and runner – directly into the garden this month. I have found that raising them in the greenhouse first does not give materially earlier crops and they tend to get very "leggy" and check when planted out. Perhaps you have had greater success!!

My fruit trees are full of bloom this year; the apples only produced a moderate crop last year so hopefully it will be better this time, barring late frosts.



A pair of blue tits started nesting very early in April but seem to have deserted our pristine nest box (in which we have a camera) for a battered old relic at the bottom of the garden. So sad that we will miss out on watching their family life this year.

Last but not least this month, don't forget to spray the roses against blackspot and mildew and hoe in some rose food around the base.

Enjoy the spring!

F W Gardener



Circuit Day Outing to Oxford Saturday 4 September 2021

TIME TO SIGN UP!



Subject to Covid-19 travel restrictions being relaxed, a CIRCUIT DAY OUTING TO OXFORD will take place on 4 September. This will include an opportunity to visit some of the historical locations associated with John and Charles Wesley, who were both undergraduates at Christ Church, with John later becoming a Fellow of Lincoln College.

Travel will be by luxury coach (Gastonia of Cranleigh) with on-board toilet and complimentary hot drinks.



Wesley Memorial Methodist Church -
our base for the day

COST £27.50 per person
includes tea/coffee biscuits on arrival in Oxford
GUIDED WALK OF OXFORD LOCATIONS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE WESLEYS £4 on the day
PICK-UPS in Cranleigh, Godalming, Guildford,
Merrow, Woking and Walton-on-Thames

If you would like to join us please send a cheque* payable to **WEY VALLEY METHODIST CIRCUIT**
to **JAMES STRAWSON, 5 FORTUNE DRIVE CRANLEIGH GU6 8DH**

BY THE END OF JULY

Please include the following details with your cheque -

- Your address
- Names of those travelling
- Where you will join the coach
- Do you want to talk part in the walk? (*about 2 hours level walking*)
- Mobile contact number for use on the day of the outing
- Usual contact number *if different from contact number for the day*

****Cheques will not be paid in until mid-August just in case there are any changes to government regulations which mean that unfortunately the trip has to be cancelled.***

If you have any questions please contact James Strawson on 01483 276075 or by email
strawsons@hotmail.com

James Strawson

JUNIOR PAGE – for the young and young at heart

W	A	T	B	L	U	B	A	D
B	L	U	E	B	E	L	L	F
L	O	L	W	E	R	O	K	P
P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E	D
A	A	P	B	L	Y	S	L	P
N	I	Y	I	S	R	O	S	E
S	N	L	I	B	G	M	U	T
Y	A	A	B	V	U	D	N	A
C	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L

Can you find these words in the word square above? The words can run horizontally, vertically or diagonally but the letters must be in adjoining squares.

Blossom; Bluebell; Bud; Bulb; Daffodil; Daisy; Lilac; Pansy; Petal; Primrose; Rain; Sun; Tulip.

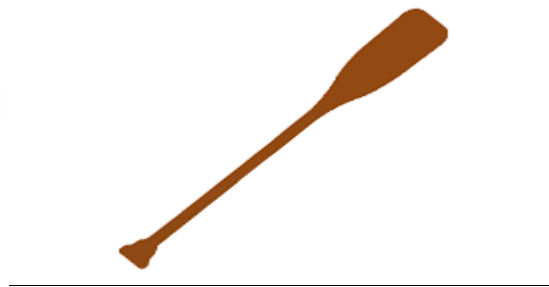
How many words of 3 letters or more (for juniors), 4 letters or more (for seniors) can you make using the letters found in the word - **HAWTHORN**.

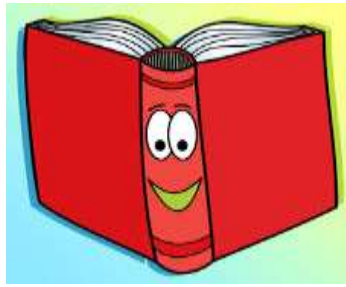
No proper names allowed and letters may only be used once.

Juniors, can you beat 46?

Seniors, can you beat 22?

Here are a couple of picture clues to help you get started





Story time



One day, a camel and her baby were chatting. The baby asked, “Mother, why do we have humps?” The mother replied, “Our humps are for storing water so that we can survive in the desert”.

“Oh”, said the child, “and why do we have rounded feet mother?” “Because they are meant to help us walk comfortably in the desert. These legs help us move around in the sand.”

“Alright. But why are our eyelashes so long?” “To protect our eyes from the desert dust and sand. They are the protective covers for the eyes”, replied the mother camel.

The baby camel thought for a while and said, “So we have humps to store water for desert journeys, rounded hooves to keep us comfortable when we walk in the desert sand, and long eyelashes to protect us from sand and dust during a desert storm. Then what are we doing in a zoo?”

The mother could think of no answer.

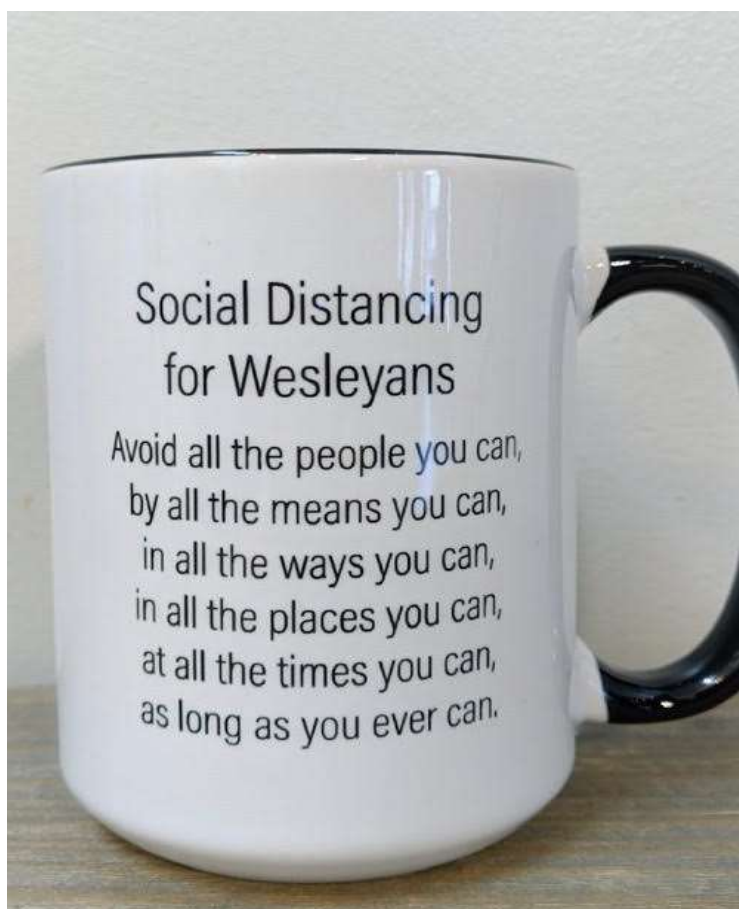
Moral

Your strengths, skills, and knowledge are useless if you are not in the right place.

Gill's trills



As Covid restrictions ease a little it is important for us all to remember that social distancing is still one of the best ways of keeping the virus at bay. So, as you drink tea in your garden with family and friends, take to heart the advice below.



(With apologies to John Wesley)

and an actual John Wesley quote:

Light yourself on fire with passion and people will come from miles to watch you burn.

Ken's pen

Abraham Lincoln, on hearing a friend speak angrily about someone, advised him to sit down and put all his abuse into a letter, which he did. "It will do you good," Lincoln said. When the letter was written, the friend read it through, and Lincoln commended him on its severity. "How would you advise me to send it?" asked the friend. "Send it? Oh, I wouldn't send it. I sometimes write a letter like that, but I never send it."

These days, with e-mails and several social media available, it is so easy to get in touch. But, once sent, the message cannot be recalled. So much vitriol seems to be sent that is damaging and hurtful. So, do take care whenever you feel angry. Read the message through, then cancel it.

The word "tongue" appears 82 times in the Old Testament, and 28 in the New. Have a look at James 3 vv1-13, where we read about both the good and the harm that the tongue (and modern messaging) can do.

A 60 years-old couple were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary (Rosemary and I celebrate a mere 68 years this month). A fairy appeared and offered each one wish. The wife asked for a trip round the world. She immediately had a load of air tickets in her hand. The husband asked for a wife 30 years younger than him. He straightaway became 90.



Happy Anniversary, Rosemary and Ken,
from all your Merrow Methodist Church family.

Pete's tweet

Twelve Apostles plus One

Two earlier homilies have mentioned that most apostles were martyred, only John surviving into exile on Patmos. Another reference suggested that Simon the Zealot was possibly a terrorist (glass half empty) or a freedom fighter (glass half full). Morbid interest got me scurrying to my "Brewer's Dictionary" to determine their actual fates. Here they are but it is not pleasant reading:

- i) Andrew, crucified on an "X" shaped cross
- ii) Bartholomew, flayed with a knife
- iii) James, beheaded, Acts chapter twelve
- iv) James the Less, stoned then bludgeoned to death
- v) Jude, clubbed
- vi) Matthew, struck with a halberd (combined spear and battle axe) at Nadabar, North Africa
- vii) Matthias, first stoned then beheaded
- viii) Paul, beheaded after imprisonment
- ix) Peter, crucified reputedly upside down
- x) Philip, hanged from a tall pillar clutching his staff surmounted with a cross
- xi) Simon (mentioned above), believed sawn to death
- xii) Thomas, speared by a lance in Mylapore, India

The above details can be ascribed to biblical statements in three cases. The writings of Josephus, a Samuel Pepys of his time, or collections of surviving narratives pieced together help to complete the sorry picture. Other listings vary a little, mainly because some of the apostles were despatched in a brutal, double fashion. The second James and Jude are widely held to be siblings and possible half-brothers or cousins of Jesus.

Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, his cross being the main emblem on its national flag. There is a tenuous connection here with the playing card "9 ♦". It is commonly known as the "Curse of Scotland". Now *curse* is an original corruption of *cross*. The nine diamond pips, blood red, form the X-shape of his martyrdom. Several explanations exist for the naming of this card but none can be authenticated.

Quote: God bears with the wicked, but not forever. Cervantes

POETRY CORNER

The Old Grey Squirrel by Alfred Noyes

A great while ago, there was a school-boy.
He lived in a cottage by the sea.
And the very first thing he could remember
Was the rigging of the schooners by the quay.

He could watch them, when he woke, from his window,
With the tall cranes hoisting out the freight.
And he used to think of shipping as a sea-cook,
And sailing to the Golden Gate.
For he used to buy the yellow penny dreadfuls,
And read them where he fished for conger eels,
And listened to the lapping of the water,
The green and oily water round the keels.

There were trawlers with their shark-mouthed flat-fish,
And red nets hanging out to dry,
And the skate the skipper kept because he liked 'em,
And landsmen never knew the fish to fry.
There were brigantines with timber out of Norrøway,
Oozing with the syrups of the pine.
There were rusty dusty schooners out of Sunderland,
And ships of the Blue Funnel line.

And to tumble down a hatch into the cabin
Was better than the best of broken rules;
For the smell of 'em was like a Christmas dinner,
And the feel of 'em was like a box of tools.
And, before he went to sleep in the evening,
The very last thing that he could see
Was the sailor-men a-dancing in the moonlight
By the capstan that stood upon the quay.

He is perched upon a high stool in London.
The Golden Gate is very far away.
They caught him, and they caged him, like a squirrel.
He is totting up accounts, and going grey.

He will never, never, never sail to 'Frisco.
But the very last thing that he will see
Will be sailor-men a-dancing in the moonlight
By the capstan that stands upon the quay

Alfred Noyes was born on the 16th of September in the year 1880 in Wolverhampton and died on the 25 June 1958 on the [Isle of Wight](#).

His father was a teacher and taught Latin and Greek and in Aberystwyth, Wales.

In 1898, Alfred attended Exeter College in Oxford. Though he failed to earn a degree, the young poet published his first collection of poetry, *The Loom of Years*, in 1902 and by the age of 30, Noyes had firmly established himself as the most commercially popular poet of his time.

His style was most often infused with Romanticism and ballad-like simplicity.

Note by Gillian Brierley –

‘The Old Grey Squirrel’ is one of two Noyes’ poems which I memorised as a schoolgirl, the other being ‘The Highwayman’ an epic poem of love and tragedy.

I loved his use of rhythm and wonderful descriptive ability to evoke such real pictures and feelings of people and places I had never experienced.



Capstan on the quay at St. Ives

SCAMS

No new ones to report this month, but please remember that there are Scammers out there.

Never click on a link in an email or text if you are not absolutely certain that you know who it is from.

Never give out personal or bank details to cold callers, even if they claim to be people in authority, such as your bank, government offices, NHS or the police.

and let's not forget our advertisers who are all facing challenging times.

BTU INSTALLATION	01483 590600
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CARPETS <i>LADYMEAD CARPETS</i>	01483 506616
CARPENTRY <i>NICK HAYWOOD</i>	01483 225323
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DANCE GROUP <i>SURREY SAINTS</i>	07900 902527
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SOLICITORS <i>JENNIFER MARGRAVE</i>	01483 562722

Wise words for MAY

Sometimes God calms the storm. Sometimes He lets the storm rage and He calms you.

A university student was studying a course in the social sciences. The lecturer asked her to define the differences between a psychotic, psychologist and psychiatrist. She replied, "Well, a psychotic builds castles in the air, a psychiatrist helps the individual to live in them and the psychologist collects the rent".

And now a little May trivia

- More UK prime ministers have been born in May than any other month, though [Theresa May](#) was born in October.
- One Anglo-Saxon name for May was Tri-Milchi, as dairy cows could be milked three times a day during the month of May.

May is named after the Greek Goddess Maia, who was the goddess of fertility and **Maypole dancing** became a May Day tradition. It is believed to have **started** in Roman Britain around 2,000 years ago, to celebrate the arrival of spring by **dancing** around decorated trees to pray to their goddess for fertility and a rich harvest. Maypoles were actually banned in England in 1644. Those who were found to have erected them were fined five shillings every week it was standing, but the ban was lifted with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.



In Yorkshire, the Gawthorpe maypole is raised into position and the tradition still carries on with dancers weaving ribbons around a pole rather than a tree.

Prayers worth sharing



Lord, you set us all as caretakers of your creation.

Forgive us that we have been so slow to take on the responsibility.

Bless and inspire scientists and engineers who are working to devise ways of easing the strain we put on the earth.

Bless and inspire financial leaders to create and enact environmentally responsible structures for trade.

Bless and inspire political leaders with an undaunted vision for environmentally responsible policies and the courage to make responsible stewardship fit seamlessly into our daily lives.

Help us all to walk more gently on your earth and live more gently with each other. Amen.

Lorraine Davis, Wesley's Chapel, London

Almighty and everlasting God, we offer you our grateful thanks for your fatherly goodness and care in giving us your gifts and the fruits of the earth in through the seasons. Give us grace to use them rightly, to your glory, for our own well being, and for the relief of those in need.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Uppingham Road Methodist Church
