



the NEW
Messenger
Spring
23

*From heaven
you came helpless babe
Entered our world,
your glory veiled
Not to be served
but to serve
And give Your life
that we might live*



Third
Avenue

CHURCH & COMMUNITY

GILLINGHAM METHODISTS | *Part of the North Kent Circuit*

WELCOME TO THE Spring edition OF THE NEW MESSENGER

Welcome to our Spring edition of the New Messenger. Although winter is still giving us the odd chilly reminder, we are excitedly dipping our toes into Spring, looking up at brighter skies, delighting as the spring bulbs break out and trees start to bud. Take a closer look at our own little church garden for glorious signs of spring.

In our magazine you'll find items looking back to our wonderful Christmas celebrations and activities during the winter months, but we are also looking forward to Spring and our Easter celebrations. There is even a date to pencil in for your summer diaries when we will be holding a Summer Fair.

Our minister, Rev Robin Selmes, looks at new life, new beginnings and we are invited to learn about the Servant King during the period of lent leading up to Easter. There are articles which explore the diverse interests of our congregations and community, including fun

afternoons for the youth groups, craft, eco issues and our prayer ministry. In fact there are many active groups within the church and community which would welcome you if you're interested, so why not check out the articles and advertisements in this magazine if you'd like to get involved too.

If you've ever been to the Methodist chapel at Hartlip, chances are you've heard Rosemarie Barnes playing the organ there, as she has been doing it for 30 years. She has written an interesting article about her 30 years as an organist, reminiscing on some funny incidents along the way, and describes some of her favourite hymns and memories that they hold for her.

For those up to the challenge, or just for fun, there are some puzzles at the back - but no peeking at the answers though!

So, we hope you enjoy reading this edition, and maybe find the inspiration to get more involved in the life at Third Avenue Church and Community.

Paul and
Helen Garland



You can contact us anytime by email: messenger@gillinghammethodists.uk
by post: New Messenger | Third Avenue Church & Community | Gillingham | ME7 2LU
or come and chat to any of the team. Deadline to receive articles for the
SUMMER edition (JUNE, JULY & AUGUST) will be 14 MAY 2023.

New life & new beginning

What comes to your mind when you think of Easter? Have you ever wondered what rabbits and eggs have to do with Easter? The short answer is—nothing. The longer answer is that rabbits and eggs were both symbols of springtime and new life in many ancient near-eastern cultures and that's why these images have got jumbled together with other Easter traditions because Easter is about New life and New beginnings. It is a story of transformation, of renewed spirits and fresh starts. But it begins with broken hearts.

The disciples had committed their lives to following Jesus. They believed in Jesus. They put their faith in Him. All their hopes and their dreams rested in a man they believed was God in human flesh. But then He died and so to say that the disciples were discouraged is an understatement, they were devastated, heartbroken. But on that first Easter morning hope rose again with the Resurrection of Jesus. It was this living hope that changed them from a frightened and disillusioned group to men who stood up against the authorities and eventually gave their lives for what they believed. The Resurrection confirmed for the disciples every teaching and promise of Jesus, not just for them but for generations to come. That Jesus, who was crucified on that first Good Friday, rose to new life on the first Easter Sunday. New life for Jesus leading to new life in his disciples.

The impact of what happened that first Easter is still relevant today. When Jesus died and rose, he did it for us. He offers us new life, eternal life, with him; life that starts now, but continues beyond this life. It invites us to experience joy where there had only been grief; new life where we had thought there was only emptiness. And because Jesus defeated Death, we declare death does not have the last word and that this gives us eternal life in

A message
from our
Minister
Rev Robin
Selmes



heaven. To live is to live with Jesus, and to die is to be united with Jesus.

Easter is also about new beginnings, it invites us to put to death our old life and step into a new life. Which can be exciting and daunting all at the one time. As one theologian wrote "it is a time where we can let go of what we have been holding onto, so that we can grab onto the next thing with both hands. Sometimes there is literally a leap of faith in between, when there is nothing but air and thrill of adrenaline thumping a beat in our ears". But that leap of faith puts an end to the power of sin and shame because we know "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25). It is through Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection that we are saved from sin. Brokenness and despair are replaced with a living hope because we know we have a God of second chances, who is constantly working through all things, even hardship and pain, to bring good to our lives

This year have a wonderful Easter and I do hope you will get to eat some Easter eggs but not too many! But I also hope that you will spend some time thinking about the real meaning of Easter, Jesus' resurrection: New life, New Beginnings. And through this I pray we will open our eyes and hearts to allow that living hope to overflow from our lives so that others might know of this hope that Easter holds for new life in Christ.

Happy Easter, Robin

Lent Sermon Series

5 MARCH THERE IN THE GARDEN OF TEARS
DR BART WOODHOUSE

12 MARCH THE SCARS THAT SPEAK OF SACRIFICE
REV ROBIN SELMES

26 MARCH FOR IT IS CHRIST WE ARE SERVING
REV ROBIN SELMES

the Servant King


Third Avenue
CHURCH & COMMUNITY
GILLINGHAM METHODISTS | Part of the North Kent Circuit

HOLYWEEK

6 APRIL	MAUNDY THURSDAY	7.30PM	THIRD AVENUE
7 APRIL	GOOD FRIDAY	6.30PM	HARTLIP
9 APRIL	EASTER SUNDAY WITH HOLY COMMUNION	9.30AM 10.30AM	HARTLIP THIRD AVENUE

Children & Youth work



It seems a long while ago now, but it was very busy over Christmas, although very enjoyable seeing lots of different people of all ages using our buildings.

We started December with the Christmas Tree Festival ~ it was really good to see Barnsole School bringing children to the church to decorate their tree and Robert Napier School bringing in decorations that their young people had made. Woodlands School had a tree for the first time this year they brought 37 Children from the school who all put a decoration on the tree! It was great to see them and they were so well-behaved. We are hoping to build more links with the school in the future.

The following week we had all the years from **Barnsole School** in the church, practising for their carol concerts ~ one group each day. It was really lovely to see them all there and they were all looking forward to coming back the week after, when the parents would be there and all the lights on the Christmas trees would be on. Unfortunately that is the week it snowed and it was so icy the children couldn't get to the Church! So Robin and I spent most of the week in their school, it was a little squashed but the singing was amazing and they even gave us lunch!

We also had a **Fun Afternoon** with lots of sparkles and fun at Christmas. And also one in the February half term. All that came had a great time.

For our **Christingle Service** this year we were joined by the young people from the Chinese Church who sang a song and played their cups! It was great to see so many families in the church on Christmas Eve.

Since Christmas we have had **Youth Together**, where Florence served amazing Chinese food. We have had several **Youth Clubs** ~ one that I couldn't get to, our amazing volunteers stepped

in, thank you. At one we made pancakes a little early but any day is good for pancakes!

I thought it would be good for you to hear from some of our volunteers, So below, Clare will tell you why she likes helping at Jesus squad. If anyone else would like to help in Sunday Squad, or any of our youth meetings, please come and chat with me, or email on youth@gillinghammethodists.uk

We are holding an Away Day for our Sunday Squad leaders and helpers on 11 March, so we can get to know each other better and to look at how we can move forward as a group. Please pray for our young people and all the leaders and helpers, that they will feel loved by God and the Church.

Thanks, Karen



Why I became a Sunday Squad Leader

I started coming to this church in 2007. I was made to feel very welcome. Each week during the service, the Sunday School would come and tell everyone what they had been

doing and this made me want to help out! So in the Spring 2008, I began volunteering as a helper. In 2012, there wasn't a leader for the younger ones so I stepped up. Apart from a couple of short breaks I have been doing it ever since.

I went to Sunday School from a young age and now I enjoy helping the children to learn about Jesus. I don't think it's ever too young to learn about God's love for us all and you're never too old to learn about God or be baptised. We can grow in the faith and pass on our faith to future generations.

Clare Watton

3RD
AVE
youth

FUN AFTERNOON

Pictures from our two recent
Fun Afternoons at Christmas and
in the February Half Term...



YOUTH TOGETHER 一起青春

3RD AVE
第三街
youth 青年

邀請中學生一起共聚
午餐，時間為每月第
一個主日下午12:30
至01:30

For senior school age,
Spend time together
over lunch from
12.30pm to 1.30pm on the
1ST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

For more information, please contact | 查詢詳情，請聯絡
Karen on youth@gillinghammethodists.uk or
Florence Cheng on florencechisuen.cheng@gmail.com

FREE FUN AFTERNOON

Thursday 6th April | 2-4pm
in the Community Hall

Crafts, Games & Snacks!!
ALL CHILDREN UNDER 16 MUST BRING AN ADULT

For more information contact our Youth Pastor | [Karen Willing](mailto:karen.willing@gillinghammethodists.uk) | youth@gillinghammethodists.uk

3RD
AVE
youth

Church Council

As a church we are seeking new trustees to help broaden the skills and diversity of our Church Council. Being a trustee means you have one of the most important and exciting roles within the life of the church.

The **Church Council is the Governing Body** and its members have overall responsibility for all that goes on within the life of the church. As a rule, it meets three times a year; in February, June & November and receives reports from the Leadership team, representatives of the various responsibilities within the Church, sub-committees and wider interest groups. Further meetings may be called to deal with extraordinary matters. Church Council take place in the church foyer but we also provide a zoom link for those wishing to join and participate online.

Church Council meetings are open to anyone to attend, but only those who are Managing Trustees are eligible to vote on issues and resolutions.

Some of the Managing Trustees are appointed to the Church Council by the nature of the positions they hold or responsibilities they carry out e.g. Church leadership team, Treasurer and Youth Pastor, others are elected to serve on the Church Council at the General Church Meeting which is held annually, this year it will be on Sunday 7th May and will form part of our morning service.

If you would like to know more about becoming a trustee, please speak to Robin or any member of our leadership team (Mark Frost, Karen Willing or Carol Waldock). Nomination forms for new Trustees will be available from the beginning of April.

Robin Selmes

**MANY THANKS TO ALL
THOSE WHO BRING THEIR
OWN CUP OR MUG FOR THEIR
SUNDAY MORNING BREW...**

**DON'T WORRY IF YOU
FORGET YOUR OWN,
YOU'LL STILL GET YOUR CUPPA!**

**AS WE HAVE A SELECTION OF CUPS AND MUGS
THAT WILL GET WASHED AND REUSED!**



If you are interested in joining the Sunday morning **refreshment team**, please speak to one of us as you order your coffee!



DAFFODIL DAY 2023

A SPRING FESTIVAL FOR CHRISTIAN ENCOURAGEMENT AND RENEWAL

'Sing to the Lord a New Song'

FEATURING

Pam Rhodes – Broadcaster & Author

The National Methodist Choir of Great Britain

Anando Mukerjee - Lirico-Spinto Tenor

And More

WITH

The Lord Mayor of Westminster

Anthony Boateng - Vice President of the Methodist Conference

James Carver - Methodist Youth President

Revd Nigel Cowgill - London District Chair

Ruth Parrott - President of Methodist Women in Britain

SATURDAY, 4TH MARCH AT 2PM
WITH COMMUNITY SINGING FROM 1.40PM
METHODIST CENTRAL HALL WESTMINSTER

Please tell us you are coming online at mchw.live/daffodilday23

The event is free, but please consider making a donation of £3 in advance to help with costs. Save the next for next year: Saturday 2nd March, 2024



METHODIST CENTRAL HALL

mchw.live

tel 020 76543809

Alpha

Why not try **Alpha**
each **Tuesday**
7.30pm in the foyer

Our Alpha course started on Tuesday 21 February, but you are still welcome to join us each Tuesday evening.

What is Alpha?

Alpha is a chance to **discuss life's big questions** and to **explore the Christian faith** in a fun, no-pressure environment. Each session includes a short film which looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Whether you are curious about faith or been going to church for a long time, everyone is welcome to come along. We will be providing homemade soup from 7.15pm.

For more information email alpha@gillinghammethodists.uk

tea at 2
You are warmly invited to share
tea & cakes with friends this Spring!

Third Avenue
CHURCH & COMMUNITY
100 THIRD AVENUE | GILLINGHAM | ME7 2LU

Wednesday 8th March
& 12th April and our
Coronation Special
on 10th May
2pm ~ 3.30pm



Especially, but not exclusively, for those living alone or in need of company



GET CRAFTY!

Every TUESDAY in the
FOYER | 12-30-3pm

Bring your own LUNCH

EVERYONE Welcome

Prayer Ministry

One key part of Third Avenue and any church is having a dedicated prayer ministry: a team of people who feel a special calling to pray. The purpose of the team is to uphold the congregation and its ministries and also the community in prayer and to empower and inspire the congregation in their prayer lives.

Each edition of the magazine we are going to introduce you to a different member of our new prayer team, starting with Allison Clarke.

Allison Clarke

Hi, my name is Allison, I am a member of the Third Avenue Church & Community Prayer Ministry Team.

Prayer is a very important part of my daily walk with God as well as being an important foundation stone of the church. I joined the Prayer Ministry Team about 8 years ago after realising that God was “knocking on my cage” - I had recently been at a service where the preacher was sharing a message asking if God was knocking on our cage, to encourage us to step out in faith as He wants us to share His word and love to others.

I realised that God was calling me to step out of my cage and to become a member of the Prayer

Ministry Team (which was totally outside my comfort zone). I stepped out trusting in God and since then God has really blessed me with answering prayers that I have prayed on behalf of others as well as myself. I feel blessed that I am able to be used by God in this way that helps other people.

God answers prayers but sometimes the answer may not be what we expect or want to hear but the answer is what God wants for us.

Please remember in your prayers...

We pray for all those who are known to us who have been unwell, recovering from operations, awaiting tests or who have lost love ones.

Please remember in your prayers those who are unable to get to church: Evelyn Grainger-Smith, Hilder Tetteh, Sheila O'Donoghue, Marie Moss, Daphne Tremain.

Please continue to pray for the future of our Church, its vision and mission.

Prayers for our community: We pray for all who live and work in our care homes.

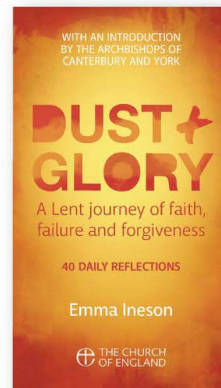
Prayers for the World: We pray for our world, that peace and hope may abound and that we can offer a 'sanctuary' to one and all.

Please pray for all who have been affected by the huge earthquakes that has caused widespread destruction and deaths in Turkey and Syria. And for the continuing conflict in the Ukraine and other wars and unrest around the world.

Amen

Book Reviews

from Parish Pump



Dust and Glory – 40 daily reflections for Lent on faith, failure and forgiveness | Emma Ineson | CHP | £1.99

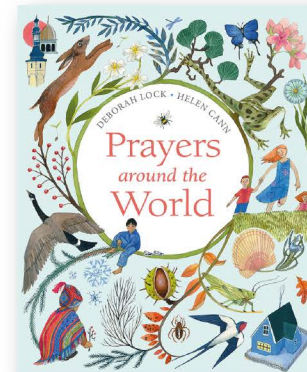
Dust and Glory is the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2023. Offering 40 daily reflections for Lent on faith, failure and forgiveness, it invites you to find God in the mess of everyday life.

Each week it considers the idea of failure from a different angle and explores the difference God's redeeming work in Jesus makes to the struggles and shortcomings of human life. Make sense of life's challenges, and draw closer to God during Lent.

The book will also be the 2023 Big Church Read for Lent.

Prayers Around the World | Deborah Lock and Helen Cann Lion Children's Books | £7.99

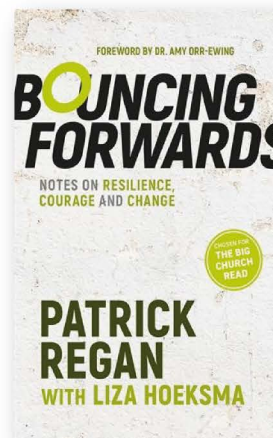
Across the continents, this beautifully illustrated book of prayers reflects on God's amazing world, celebrating different countries, landscapes and traditions. From fishing villages to the African plains, farming in Peru to the snowy landscape of Greenland, blossoms in Japan and leaf kicking in Eastern Europe and to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, these prayers share God's love and care for His world.



Bouncing Forwards – Notes on resilience, courage and change Patrick Regan OBE | SPCK | £9.99

“You'll bounce back.” How many of us have heard these well meaning words when faced with mental or physical health challenges, trauma or the loss of dreams? And yet, life's battles can leave us scarred and changed. Why would we want to go back when what we've been through has taught us so much? It's time to bounce forwards instead.

Nobody is immune from the storms of life. This practical book may help you to grow in resilience and become better equipped for the journey. Patrick Regan OBE is the CEO of Kintsugi Hope, and the founder and president of urban youth work charity XLP. He is the author of several books and a regular host on TBN.



WEDNESDAY

Prayer & Praise



Third Avenue
CHURCH & COMMUNITY
GILLINGHAM METHODISTS | Part of the North Kent Circuit

OUR **SPRING SERVICES** WITH BE HELD ON
WEDNESDAYS 22 MAR, 26 APR & 24 MAY.

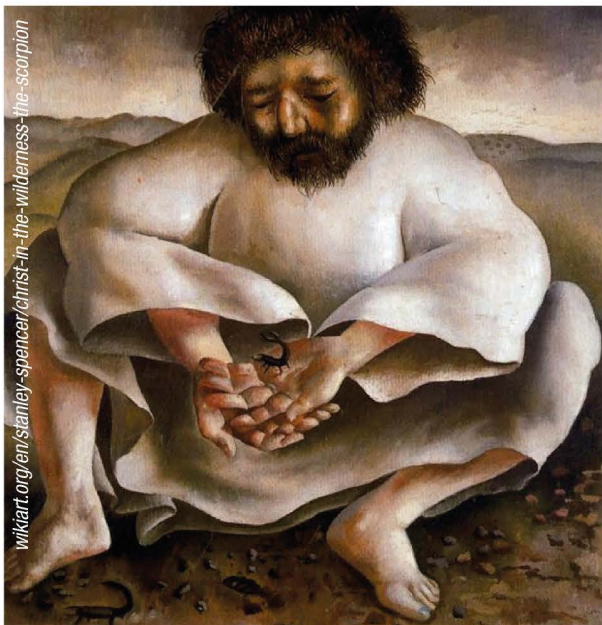
Our **midweek worship service** gives you an opportunity to meet up, connect and worship God in between our Sunday Morning Services.

Meeting on the **fourth Wednesday** in the month at **11am** for about half an hour, with the act of **Holy Communion**, then stay on to enjoy a chat over a cup of tea.

Christ in the Wilderness ~ Scorpions

Stanley Spencer

God in the Arts



wikiart.org/en/stanley-spencer/christ-in-the-wilderness-the-scorpion

Angels and dirt he called it: the divine seen in the ordinary. So, in a painting of Christ carrying His cross, Jesus has the face of the local grocer.

Another villager modelled for this Jesus in the wilderness: a strong, hefty, broad figure. This is a great contrast to the Christ of stained-glass windows who often seems too good to be part of our world. Here is real life: a large man filling the canvas with His head, His hands and His feet. This figure of Jesus comes as a shock: a very human model, ordinary with nothing handsome or special about Him, apart from His tunic which seems to sprawl and undulate like the hills around. Here is a Jesus born into this world and one with this world.

There are two focal points in the painting – the neat, little scorpion and the massive, unkempt head contemplating each other. One is life in all its hefty reality; the other a tiny creature able to squeeze that life out by one swift flick of its tail.

Jesus is shown in the wilderness pondering the life and ministry called of Him by God – a life and ministry that will take Him from the countryside into the towns and villages and take Him also to the death of Good Friday. Will He find the strength and renewal to embrace that ministry during His time in the desert?

During Lent as we follow Jesus, we seek to live for God. That may mean dying to all that separates us from God. He has a ministry, a calling for each of us. As we contemplate that calling in this season of Lent, we may find it is a calling that leads us through these 40 days to life and Easter life – we may find it a journey that calls us to die to self to find our God.

Parish Pump

Rev Michael Burgess writes...

Forty Days and Forty Nights

At the end of February we enter the season of Lent: those 40 days when we follow Jesus into the wilderness and prepare ourselves to celebrate His Easter victory. In the last century an artist called Stanley Spencer planned to create a series of 40 paintings, each depicting a day in the wilderness. In the end he completed nine, one of which is this edition's painting from 1939: **Christ in the Wilderness ~ Scorpions**. It is held in a private collection.

Stanley Spencer lived and worked in the village of Cookham in Berkshire. The village and the local countryside were the setting for many of his paintings, and the village's inhabitants his models. Through their everyday life he was trying to glimpse and convey the transcendent.

Become a litter picker and earn money!

Litter pickers will be able to make about 20p per can or bottle from a new deposit scheme in England and Wales, according to an environment minister.

From 2025, bottles and cans will include a deposit, likely to be 20p, that can be reclaimed when containers are returned to reverse vending machines at designated sites, according to a recent government statement.

As one environment minister explained, "there will be an opportunity for people to go around collecting up litter and so forth, and taking it back, and receiving the deposit, which we think might benefit a range of charities and individuals."

The scheme will include all polyethylene terephthalate plastic bottles and cans up to three litres in size, meaning households will have to take

their rubbish to a recycling point instead of leaving them on the kerbside for collection.

Councils will be able to cash in on any bottles and cans left in the recycling by collecting the deposit. The exact amount of the deposit will be decided by a new quango that will run the scheme, which was first announced in 2017.

The scheme is expected to save local authorities around £35 million a year by reducing the amount of recycling they pick up. The UK uses 14 billion plastic drink bottles, and nine billion drink cans every year. The country already recycles around 70 per cent of these.

Parish Pump

In the meantime, Gillingham Eco-Hub Kent organise regular litter picking around the community and would value your help. You can follow them out on Facebook



Walking group
Every **Tuesday @10am**
Meet outside **M&S, Dockside**
Contact Karen Willing for more details
07791 012363 | karen.willing@yahoo.co.uk

Third Avenue
CHURCH & COMMUNITY

Lola News

As it was last year since our last update, a happy healthy new year to all.

I have been indoors a bit more recently as have been sleeping, especially after my walks nowadays. You could say catnapping without the cats! Although that would not bother me. I am very chilled and calm with anything and anyone that comes my way. I am so very lucky to have a family that care and make my life so very comfortable and happy.

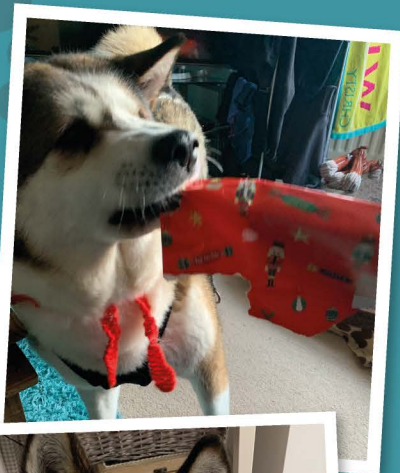
Last Christmas I was very spoilt, I have a new red fleece lined coat. So with my triple fur one, have 4 layers on occasion. I do feel the cold so much more now, like a lot of us I guess this time of year.

There is a doggy friend called Mabel who lives near by, who is another husky type dog. Only about a year old, so a bit hard to keep up when we meet nowadays! But I so look forward to seeing her.

I have been to visit a lady with dementia recently and it was very positive. I hope I did make feel a bit better, less anxious and worried about what is going on around her.

It certainly made me feel good. We both fell asleep with smiles on our faces, I am told.

Well maybe 40 winks now or at least a couple of hours. Sweet dreams.



love Trudy & Lola x

Please pray for the victims of the earthquake In Turkey and Syria, and also for all of those who are working so hard to help them. This prayer is from Operation Mobilisation, who has been working in the affected area for more than 10 years.

Prayer for the Earthquake Victims

Heavenly Father, We look on with desperation at the events unfolding in Turkey and Syria and turn our faces towards you, our sovereign Lord.

Your profound and powerful love brings hope, even in the midst of the most devastating circumstances.

While we feel distant and helpless, we know that you are present and able to bring transformation.

Draw near, Father God.

Draw near to those who are grieving.

Draw near to those who are working tirelessly to provide essential aid.

Draw near to Jesus followers who are beacons of your love in the darkness.

Draw near to those in critical roles providing co-ordination, logistical support, and life-saving medical treatment.

Draw near to all those who need to know that you are with them.

We choose to trust in your unfailing love. **Amen**

Save the Date National Day of Reflection & Great Daffodil Appeal

For the third year running, **Marie Curie** will lead the **National Day of Reflection** on Thursday 23rd March.



Care and support
through terminal illness

It is a day for everyone to remember loved ones who have died, and to support people who are grieving. There will be a minute's silence at noon, a nationwide network of Walls of Reflection, and a series of grief-themed online events.

Taking place on the third anniversary that the UK went into lockdown, the National Day of Reflection raises awareness of the impact of grief on our lives and of the need for better support. Millions of people across the UK – adults as well as children – are grieving now and need support, whether in the workplace, at home, in schools or across communities.

The National Day of Reflection also ties in with the charity's flagship annual fundraising appeal in March – **the Great Daffodil Appeal** – with people donating and wearing one of their iconic daffodil pin badges. Every year thousands of supporters from across the UK come together to raise money to support the charity's nurses, doctors, and hospice staff so they can continue to provide expert care to people at end of life, and their families.

More details at mariecurie.org.uk/dayofreflection

District news

All units made decorations and enjoyed being part of the Christmas Tree Festival at Third Avenue. The theme for our decorations was wool representing Girlguiding - the common thread that ties us together.

Tegan, from 13th Gillingham Guides won the STAART Art competition run by students at the University of Greenwich. **Enid**, from 14th Gillingham Rainbows, came 9th and both their pictures are on show in the gallery at the University of Greenwich, Medway campus.

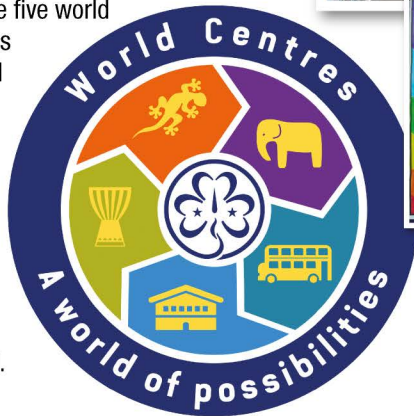
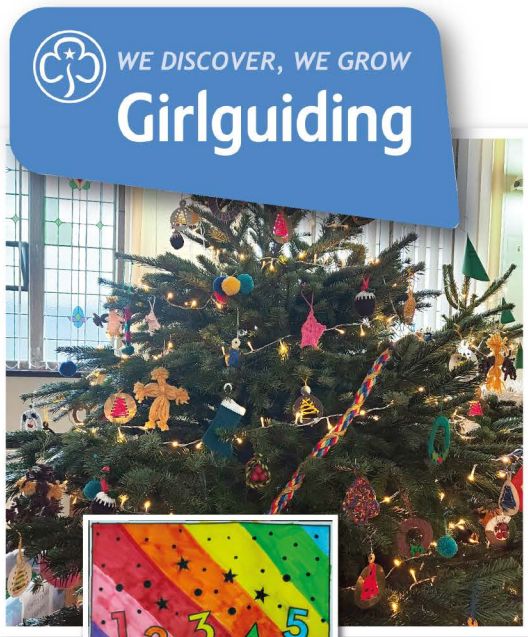
Thinking Day was on 22 February where we learned about Girlguiding and Girl Scouts around the world, celebrating traditions and amazing achievements. We also joined together on 26 February with Third Avenue Church & Community for a **World Thinking Day Service**.

We travelled to the five world Girlguiding Centres exploring a **World of Possibilities**.

All units attended the St Paul's Drama Group pantomime, Wizard of Oz. A fantastic show and well done to everyone involved.

Our Guides are working towards their **Know Yourself** theme award and for one of the activities they decorated belief rocks. They made a display of their rocks and afterwards took the rocks home to give to someone special or to hide them for someone to find. So keep your eyes open and you might be rewarded with a special find.

Together with the Brownies, the Guides had a fun trip to Soar trampoline centre and all went away with a badge for their camp blankets.



Brownies



In our meetings this term **our Brownies** have completed the **make a change** skills builder and have awarded many varied interest badges; collector, mindfulness, baking, performing and speaking out. We have also had the pleasure of presenting two Brownies with their Bronze awards. An amazing accomplishment; to gain this award they had to achieve two Theme awards. For each Theme award they needed to earn 1 Interest badge, 1 Skills Builder badge and 4 hours of unit meeting activities for that theme.

If you visit Rochester Cathedral in February please take a look up at the ceiling at the amazing **peace dove art installation**. Each of our Brownies added their own message of peace to a paper dove made by the artist and have been included with hundreds of others in this special display.



Our Rainbows celebrated 35 years of Rainbows and completed the birthday badge which involved time travelling, creating a skittle rainbow and having a rainbow themed birthday party.

We also celebrated a Rainbow completing all 12 interest badges as she received a **Well Done Award** from the District Commissioner. This is a really big achievement and only 3 other Rainbows have achieved this so far.



Hayley | District Commissioner and Helen | Snowy Owl

Hartlip

Methodist Church & Retreat Centre

Our services in the last month have involved both visiting and being visited.

On the Sunday of the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** we were invited to attend the Parish Church. This is one of the times we can share together, something which we all enjoyed.

Then we welcomed **Frances Chiverton-Jones**, a representative of **Porchlight**, a charity which started in Canterbury and now works in a fairly widespread area of the South East. They work with the homeless, and now in some cases those in danger of becoming homeless. They assist in finding emergency accommodation and advice and run a variety of projects where people can access advice to support them towards turning their lives around.

Everyone is different with different needs: advice might be financial, might be a listening ear, providing a safe non-judgmental space to find what peoples' needs are and where they can talk with others, possibly pointing people towards health provision and so much more.

Porchlight has been our charity of the year and we presented Frances with a donation during her visit.

This years charity is **Gillingham Street Angels**.

The Retreat Centre continues to welcome church groups and non-church groups. I understand Basil Brush and a monkey are among the members of groups from the most recent bookings!

Margaret Bowerman

Porchlight

Changing attitudes • Changing lives

www.porchlight.org.uk



Brian & Joan Davies

Brian Davies was an exceptional Local Preacher and, to me personally, an exceptional friend. Alongside him for over 61 years of marriage was Brian's wife Joan who sadly died just 8 weeks before Brian. I also have to speak of Joan, for it is fair to say that in so many contexts, I cannot speak of Brian without also speaking of Joan — and perhaps, no more so, where, in recent times, they cared and nursed each other at home during their respective illnesses. We all recognised over the years that each of them had their individual special gifts to offer to their family, the church and the wider community but also worked more powerfully at times when they worked together as a couple. Examples of this were shown in their joint pastoral work, at Hartlip and Third Avenue, their kindness

and caring for folk and their brilliant joint organisational skills and management of the SE Methodist Music and Arts Festivals over so many years. They were also known as being great hosts at various venues of Methodist Holiday Hotels where Brian came into his own as 'Mr Entertainer' — meanwhile Joan worked quietly in the background. They both always loved being with people.

For sure, Brian was a true disciple of his deep Christian faith — he loved his Lord. Attending Luton Road Methodist Church as a teenager, he'd become a member of a Mission Band at 16, sharing in leading worship. By 21 he had qualified



as a Fully Accredited Methodist Local Preacher.

Over the years he became a highly esteemed and outstanding preacher. Indeed, he didn't just preach locally but was often invited to preach in many parts of the country. Locally, he was renowned as a solid, unwavering, authoritative and dependable preacher. He mentioned recently that he had had the privilege of preaching for 63 years and said that 'My call to preach is as real today as it was when I was 16'. Brian also had a reputation and special gift for taking funerals due to his quiet and sensitive approach and seeing the family involved all the way through. He kept diary notes and a year later, on the anniversary of the funeral, he would be on the phone to the family to see how they were doing - a true sign of Brian's compassion for people.



Away from the preaching side, I and many others regarded Brian as 'Mr Methodist'. His knowledge of things 'Methodist' was second to none. During his life time I counted that he had taken on 14 separate important lay jobs across every aspect of church life at a local, Circuit, District and Connexional level. Two aspects stand out for me; one, some years ago and one more recent. One day in 1983, Brian was a member of the Connexional Candidates Committee at Church House in London, when he voted for the acceptance and entry into the Methodist Ministry of a very young Graham Thompson.

Rolling the clock forward then from 1983, Brian was beside himself with pride when Graham, now his son in law, was appointed President of the Methodist Church from July 2022.

The second aspect is to acknowledge the 10 years after retirement, when he worked in a voluntary capacity at Third Avenue, as their Lay Pastoral Worker. There is no doubt that he had a compassionate heart for the people and their difficulties and challenges. It was in his actions as well as his words that he showed his true discipleship. There is another aspect attached to

his discipleship and that is to recognise his sympathy and understanding for his fellow man in carrying out nearly 17 years as Chair of the Board of Visitors at Maidstone Prison. And, he always visited for lunchtime on Christmas Day to make sure the prisoners got a good lunch!

Brian's deep trust and faith in God never wavered — he was confident as to where his journey would finally take him. And, I'm sure it was that

very faith that gave him the inner strength to bravely face his serious operations and treatment during the past two years.

I know it's a cliché, but Brian became like a real brother to me. I referred to him as 'My brother' whenever we parted. He always referred to me as 'My friend'. In A and E at Medway Hospital on the Saturday night before he died, we prayed together and said our

farewells but not before he said to me in his typical Brian way 'You've got five minutes to get out of here' — this was him thinking still about me and not himself, knowing that I had to be in London for a crucial family conference the next morning.

All we can ask is that whether our lives are short or long we will have lived abundantly. Brian you more than lived abundantly — 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant' — rest in peace my brother.

Derek Gallagher

God
is good
all the time.
All the time,
God is
Good

Heather's Poetry Page

A Weighty Problem

Traditionally, at the beginning of January, some people make new resolutions. I don't generally subscribe to this idea myself, mainly because I know that by the end of the month, I would have failed dismally. This year, however, I did briefly consider doing something about my increasing lack of mobility and fitness.

I hasten to add that those thoughts were short-lived and certainly didn't inspire me to embark on a new exercise regime. But they did prompt me to write this poem whilst enjoying a cuppa, sitting in my favourite armchair.

Now that's what I call exercise!

Heather Gallagher



Now when I was small
I'd no worries at all
and could jump, skip and hop with great ease.
I could dance with such grace
with a smile on my face
And never once thought of my knees.

But time takes its toll,
So goodbye forward roll
and hello to my clumsy, stiff limbs.
I'm now under attack
from this pain in my back
when I stand up in church to sing hymns.

It's clear that of late
I've put on too much weight
so my joints are now struggling to cope.
And my body won't do
what I'm asking it to.
It's no wonder I'm losing all hope!

Now if anyone hears
how to turn back the years,
please do tell me as soon as you can.
I really do yearn
for those days to return.
I was forty the last time I ran!

So now here I sit,
wondering how to get fit
as I dunk Malted Milks in my tea.
But, sadly, I fear
it's abundantly clear
that it's far too much effort for me.

'Cos I don't have the heart
or quite know where to start
when it comes down to burning off fat.
And it can't be much fun,
so when all's said and done,
I'm not going to try and that's that!

Hartlip Methodist Church & Retreat Centre



Spring tea

Saturday 20th May
2.30pm ~ 4.30pm

Join us for afternoon Tea
with various stalls & cakes

My thirty Glorious years

Rosemarie Barnes



On Sunday evening January 29th, we, at Hartlip, had a Local Arrangement when I was honoured to present my favourite hymn choices and give a general overview of **my thirty years as organist at Hartlip** with interspersed details of my life leading up to “my calling.”

Derek Gallagher was kind enough to help me in the presentation with readings and prayers of intercession and Heather was playing the organ.

I was fortunate enough to have my youngest daughter, granddaughter and her fiancé there to support me as my husband, Graham, is housebound and could not attend.

It was well received by the congregation and I was overwhelmed to receive a gift from the membership as a thank you for thirty years of service presented by Derek at the end. In true Methodist tradition, I greeted everyone on the way out and they were all most complimentary and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it.

What follows is a transcript of my presentation.

I began with a prayer:

Thank you Lord for the blessings you have bestowed on our lives. You have protected us with more than we could ever have imagined.

You have surrounded us with people who care and always look after us and given us our families and friends who bless us every day with kind words and actions.

Help us to learn through the power of words and music.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Christmas 1992, Graham and I attended a party at a friend’s house and I got into conversation with Peter Castle who many of you will remember as a local preacher in this Circuit.

“I hear you’re a Methodist,” he said, “where do you go?” “Nowhere at present,” I said. “I do sometimes go to the Baptist Church at Parkwood, although I consider myself a Methodist.”

“You should come and hear me preach at Hartlip,” he said, “a lovely little church. I’ll let you know when I’m preaching there again.”

I thought this was an odd approach but thought he might be an Evangelist wanting to spread the gospel!

Several days later, Peter phoned with a date in January 1993 and so Graham and I went along and listened to him. I can’t pretend to remember his sermon but I do remember him reminding everyone to welcome new comers in typical Methodist tradition. I enjoyed the service and singing and was afterwards introduced to Mavis Ferrett, the Senior Steward, who welcomed me with open arms when Peter said I was an organist and might be able to help them out.

I realised that this was what it was all about and Mavis asked if I’d like to have a go on the organ. The organist that evening asked me not to move any of the stops! I played the first thing that came

into my head, my favourite hymn, The day thou gavest Lord is ended and I liked what I played and agreed that I might indeed be able to help them out.

I was working full time at that time as a District Nurse in the Dartford and Gravesend area and was on call every other weekend, so my time was limited but I liked what I saw and hoped that the organist and I could come to some agreement, maybe with me playing alternate weeks. However, apparently she had been looking to leave and that was why I had been approached. Sure enough, a week or so later, Mavis phoned and asked if I could play on Sunday, February 14th. She wondered if I might be celebrating. I had not realised it was Valentine’s Day and having been married for over thirty years, I assured her that we didn’t celebrate!

So, on February 14th, I played for the service when the late Joan Jarvis was the local preacher who greeted me fondly. I like to think we had a special bond after that. She was a lovely lady, about my age and the hymns she had chosen were right up my street, traditional hymns from the Methodist Hymn Book and so my very first service went very well. There were several members who welcomed me and so my association with Hartlip began. God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform, as the saying goes.

The organ that we had at that time was, to say the least, a little temperamental and it faced to the wall so the organist had her back to the preacher, not a very satisfactory arrangement.

One evening as I was listening to the sermon, still with the organ switched on, an ethereal voice called out, “Bill, can you do a pickup on Parkwood in fifteen minutes?” We had a direct link to Rainham Cabs! I could often hear them talking in the background. Very strange.

So, that’s an introduction to my first choice of hymn this evening, my favourite for a variety of reasons, which will become clear later.

The day thou gavest, Lord is ended.

A bit of background about me. . . I was born into Methodism. My dad was the organist of the chapel in a little village in Dorset, called Gussage



St Michael, situated between Blandford and Wimborne and eighteen miles from Salisbury Cathedral in Wiltshire. My mum was governess to two little girls in that village while she saved some money before going to Teacher Training College and she attended the Methodist chapel each Sunday.

On this occasion, in May 1929, her employer asked her to speak to young Mr Reeks, the organist, and ask him who had won the Cup Final the day before. So, after the service, my Mum timidly approached the organist who was pleased to tell her that Bolton Wanderers had beaten Portsmouth, who were loosely our local team and his next words, “What are you doing for the rest of the day?” were the start of their courtship, woven around the chapel. I think Mr Shepherd, her employer, secretly got them together and so the rest is history. It was, however, another nine years before they got married as there were no council houses available. The housing situation really hasn’t changed a great deal.

My next choice of hymn is **And can it be**, a good Wesley hymn which I like very much. It reminds me so much of my childhood attending chapel, with Dad playing and my brother and I sitting in the second row in front of the organ with Mum and my paternal grandfather on the opposite side in the

same row. He sang bass with enthusiasm and beat out the rhythm on the seat in front of him and whenever the preacher said something he heartily agreed with, uttered "Hallelujah" in his deep bass voice.

When I later played the organ, I realised that he sang a harmonised version rather than bass, but nevertheless he was an enthusiastic singer and encouraged us to sing heartily. Incidentally, my Mum had the sweetest soprano voice, so we were very well voiced in the family.

I was born on Sunday 29th October 1939, just after the war



began and exactly one year and six days after my parents were married. I was taken to chapel two Sundays later in my Silver Cross pram, when the preacher was our Methodist minister who christened me at a later date. Apparently I slept all through the service. He later came to lunch with us and then he preached again in the evening. We certainly got our money's worth from the minister in those days.

We were fortunate to have a thriving Sunday School attached to the chapel and children came from several villages to join us and we met at 10am each Sunday morning and then went into the vestry whilst the sermon was on from 11am in the chapel. We all went back again in the afternoon at 2.30pm and then some of us attended evening service at 6pm. So we were well organised on a

Sunday and steeped in Methodism..

My brother and I went to the Church of England school which was a quarter of a mile from home and children from neighbouring villages were bussed in every day. The chapel and C of E Church where my Dad's cousin was the organist, was a little further down the road..

I make no apologies for my next choice of hymn, which is a carol and not so very often sung these days. I think it's a great shame that we only sing carols at Christmas time although as a three and a half year old I changed all that!

It was at our Sunday School Anniversary in June and I had been chosen to sing a solo. All the family were there, including my maternal grandparents who had come for the day having travelled by bus for some forty miles to join in the celebration.

Someone announced "Now Rosemarie will sing for us," a note was played on the organ and I sang from start to finish, unaccompanied, "Away in a Manger" word perfect and my maternal grand father clapped so loudly...

The only problem was, I should have sung All things bright and beautiful! I was asked later why I had changed it and I said "Cos I like it!" and thats why I have chosen it tonight. **Away in a manger.**

I earlier explained my reason for choosing my favourite hymn The day thou gavest. Verse 4, particularly, says As o'er each continent and island, the dawn leads on another day and then The sun that bids us rest is waking our brethren neath the western sky. These are very poignant words that mean so much to me. My grandfather, my mum's dad, was one of a family of sixteen and one of his brothers emigrated to New Zealand as a young man, where he married and had a family. One of his sons, my cousin Ralph, was in the New Zealand Airforce and visited us when he came to fly over here in England.

My Uncle Percy, Dad's brother, was a Prisoner of war (POW) in Japan and so we also thought of him and hoped that we would indeed see him again.

He had volunteered to serve King and Country as the family business only supported one reserved occupation, and as Dad had a family, albeit only me at that time, he joined the RAF and was captured on a mission in the Far East. My poor paternal grandmother died in 1942, not knowing whether he was alive or dead. We later heard that he was indeed a POW and the treatment prisoners received from their captors has been well documented.

My Dad was always grateful to him although their conversations were few and my younger sister was born exactly nine months after his return to this country as a celebration of his safe return. I went to Bournemouth station with my dad and grandad to bring him home. He was indeed a changed man. The whole village was decked with bunting! Where it came from, no one seemed to know but it was everywhere.

Many years later since I've been at Hartlip, my grandson, Luke, spent a year at College in New Zealand learning, amongst other things his rugby skills and where he also learnt the Haka and of course when we sang those lines, I naturally thought of him.

Another carol, just because I like it and we, at Hartlip, sing it so well, especially with help from other churches at our famous Carols by Candlelight service. This time, **O come all ye faithful.**

This, this is the God we adore is short and to the point and the reason why we come to this lovely building, to celebrate what we believe.

I have fond memories of Local Preacher, the late Dr Bob Berry, once asking me to play it not just twice but three times and the singing that night raised the rafters. It was true Methodist singing and it wasn't written by Wesley but by Joseph Hart who was a Calvinist minister in London in the 1700s and had many a falling out with John Wesley. He later apologised to Wesley for his misguided thoughts.

I still look to Brian Davies' pew for guidance as to whether we should repeat verses of hymns. Brian was a true Christian very like my dad and I remember in Derek's Eulogy to Brian he said he had never heard him utter an oath or any bad

language. My Dad was the same, even though they were both keen supporters of their local football teams. A rare breed indeed!

Great Is Thy faithfulness is a rousing hymn by Thomas Chisholm and we, at Hartlip, sing it with enormous zeal and once again I have always looked to Brian for guidance as to whether we repeat the refrain. Now I think of him and always repeat the refrain in his memory. I'm sure I'm not the only one who thinks of Brian and Joan with such love and reverence. They are both sorely missed.

May the mind of Christ my Saviour, I always play to the tune St Leonards. It's a beautiful tune which I often play during the Offertory and extemporise to fit in with long or short breaks. My dad used to do the same and he would get carried away playing "endless twiddly bits," as my mum used to call them.

It was the very first hymn I played at our Chapel at Gussage when I was eight years old. The winter of 1947 was horrendous in our local villages in Dorset, where we walked along the hedgerows which were covered in snow for a very long period. My dad was ill for some considerable time and the lady who deputised for him on occasions was also ill. "You'll have to play on Sunday Ro," he said. "It's the minister coming and he'll phone the hymns to grandad on Thursday so you can practise. You'll be alright, my lovely, he always chooses lovely hymns."

My Uncle Percy, dad's brother, made me some blocks to put on the pedals of the organ as my legs were a bit short and I had to practise pedalling whilst playing the three manuals.

Well, I did it and after that, the lady who used to deputise for Dad said I could carry on as she preferred to sing in the congregation so until Dad came back I carried on. It was a good grounding and my Dad had been my guardian angel. "I knew you could do it," he said. My paternal grandad, never known for his praises, enthusiastically told everyone in the village stores how proud he was of me throughout the following week. Praise indeed!

The Old Rugged Cross is from Sankey's Hymnal which we used a great deal at Gussage. A lot of the hymns were Spirituals and came from the USA but they were very expressive of the times and this one in particular was a favourite. On many occasions throughout our Wimborne Circuit my Dad would be asked to sing a solo and this one and Bless This House were his favourites and we children knew the words off by heart.



Last September, when my brother died, we found he had planned the service for his funeral and had chosen this hymn. Both my sister and I were amazed that it had obviously made such a big impression on him as a young boy. So let's sing it with gusto and mean all the words just like they were written all those years ago.

A funny thing happened in late 1948 just before the National Health Service was formed. Both my parents had their teeth removed allegedly for pyorrhoea as did a great deal of people before private health care was superseded by the NHS.

The first Sunday after he had his new dentures, my dad played and heartily sang And can it be... whereupon his top set shot out and he caught them in his right hand continuing to play with his left and he never wore them again! Only mum and me and my brother knew, so deftly did he carry on. Just a humorous memory to make you all smile.

One dark wet and windy Sunday evening in November 1953, my brother and I cycled the mile up to the chapel from our new home at the shop which my Grandfather had lived until his death in 1952, on the same day as the King. We arrived in darkness, unlocked the big oak door and went through and put the heating on in the vestry which we used in the winter time and waited for the local preacher to arrive. He was Mr William Cailles, the Superintendent of the local paper mills at Witchampton, three to four miles away. He arrived just before 6pm and stuck his head round the door whilst I was playing a medley and said "Is this all there are, just the two of you?"

I stopped playing and replied, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." "Never mind about that," he said,

"if I get a move on I can get back to Witchampton in time for the sermon.

Don't forget to lock up." With that, he was gone. My brother, bless him, was incandescent at his abrupt arrival and departure and suggested we had a hymn together, just the two of us.

"Your favourite Ro," he said, and so we sang The Day thou gavest together before locking up, turning the fire off and cycling home. My Dad said on our arrival at home "You're early, what happened?" I said "Bill

Cailles cycled back to Witchampton without even a prayer" and my brother said, "he never even took off his bicycle clips and couldn't get out quick enough. I'm never going again when he is preaching."

My Dad said that he probably wanted to hear the sermon being preached at the other chapel and to pray with his own neighbours. He added "And it's Mr Cailles, my girl, not Bill to you." I was not impressed and my mum was horrified that he had been so dismissive of us both. My brother never did go again when he was preaching, he always seemed to have aches and pains appear mysteriously which prevented him from cycling to chapel even though he had been on a farm beat the previous day. What memories!

One of the newer hymns in our Hymn book is perhaps now one of my favourites. I first heard it played when I was welcomed into membership along with Pam Hollington (who sadly died this January) in 1993 and I often play it during communion. **Father I place into your hands**, written by Jennie Hewer who is a very talented composer.

I couldn't remember the year Mavis Ferrett died, but on consulting records, found it was 2002. Her funeral was held at St Michael's Church in the village and I was asked and honoured to play the organ. I do remember how well the singing went with so many Methodists in the congregation and several people from their church commented on it. I have been asked many times to play when their organist is not available and I always try to speed up the tempo a bit because of memories of my

childhood, attending the village church where it seemed to take for ever to sing one hymn.

The Bishop of Salisbury visited our village school for Patronal Festival in my final year at Junior school, so I must have been ten, perhaps nearly eleven. The Bishop, hearing us all sing heartily, picked me out and asked why I wasn't in the church choir who were singing that day and I replied, "Because I'm Chapel!" and he turned away and left for home.

So finally, my last two choices.

I started by telling you how Graham and I came to hear Peter preach and Graham has encouraged me always in every way possible. It was he who encouraged me to take up District Nursing, never to take no for an answer and to always question why things are not always what they may seem.



Until recently, due to his ill health, he always attended our Christmas Carol service, often accompanied by one of our daughters, grandchildren or friends and he is my greatest admirer and has been for sixty one years. He tells everyone about me. At times this is very embarrassing but done with love.

When I took him home to meet my parents for the first time he had no idea that I played the organ until my dad casually asked in the car on the way to chapel, "Would you like to play this morning Ro?" and although he sang along with everyone else, my Dad said he knew he would be a good

partner/husband because he treated everyone with respect and listened after asking questions.

He adored my mum and dad although he teased my mum a lot. She had been a teacher before she married as I mentioned at the start and after my dad died just a year after we were married, he was the first to encourage her to return to teaching when she moved up to Kent to be near us, because she knew Graham was dependable and would stay in one place. He always called her Mother in law after the Radio programme Mrs Dale's Diary that many may remember and he was devastated at her loss as were we all, just two years after retiring. When I decided that I would indeed help Hartlip out, as Peter had intended, we had no musical instrument at home so he bought me, as a belated Christmas present, a keyboard which I have to this day for practising on.

He has, as the late Queen said of Prince Philip, been my strength and stay over the years and always encourages me whenever I am playing as he knows that my faith and attendance with friends at Hartlip has helped me through the past thirty years.

Love Divine, sung to Blaenwern was sung in Methodist chapels throughout the British Isles in the late fifties and the tune was new to everyone. We chose it for our wedding as did many others at that time.

Now to finish, **O Perfect Love**, also sung at our wedding, as a tribute to my lovely husband who knows me better than I know myself.

There are so many other lovely hymns I could have chosen but they'll have to wait for another time, perhaps when I celebrate forty years.

I want to thank Robin for giving me the chance to celebrate my thirty years and thank Derek and Heather for their guidance and thank you all for listening and hopefully realising just what this lovely building and our congregation of friends mean to me. Thank you all.

Rosemarie Barnes

Could YOU be our next Church Treasurer?

At the end of August 2024 I am stepping down as Church Treasurer after 10 years. I have prepared a volunteer role descriptor for this so if you feel you have the time (at least 5 hours a week, plus meetings) and the skill set, please contact me.

There is plenty of time to work through the process from September 2023 to August 2024, so you would be fully prepared.

I am very happy to chat to anyone who may be interested!

Carol Waldock
treasurer@gillinghammethodists.uk

The Family Trust

As you know, we provide a variety of activities in primary and secondary schools which are designed to inspire the next generation to explore Christianity.

Every week, our Kingsquad leaders are in schools exploring bible stories with over 100 children; our termly Collective Worship reaches over 30,000 children and our Christmas show was so popular, we had 30 schools on a waiting list. All of our projects are running at capacity and without your support we will struggle to respond to demand this year.

We are excited for the year ahead and all the God given opportunities that await us but the economic climate facing the charity sector is bleak and to achieve our vision of seeing a generation impacted by God, we need your help. Our Prayer Spaces and Kingsquad clubs need your volunteer hours. Our Collective Worship needs your financial contributions. Our team and the children we are reaching need your prayers.

A one-off donation of £300 would help us staff a Kingsquad club for one term.

A regular donation of £50 a month would help us provide a programme of Collective Worship to 3 local schools reaching around 800 children.

Just 3 volunteers supporting our Prayer Space project would save us in the region of £1200 a year.

If you are able to make a donation, you can send a cheque to our Maidstone office or you can make a bank transfer using the details below and adding your church name as a reference:

Account | The Family Trust
Bank sort code | 40-52-40
Account number | 00018624

If members of your congregation are able to donate, they can do so via our CAF Donate page: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/2113#>

If you, your children's worker or someone in your church have the capacity to volunteer with us, they can sign up for more information on our website or call our office to speak to our team.

Whatever help you can provide will make a difference not only to us, but to all the children who get to take part in our activities.

On behalf of all of those who will be reached by your contributions, thank you.

Jennifer Douglas | Administrator | The Family Trust

What is No Mow May and why does it matter?

Put quite simply, plants need pollinators and pollinators need plants. However, we know that both are in sharp decline.

Letting the grasses and wild flowers bloom not only looks beautiful but provides homes and food for our pollinators and other wildlife.

Why are meadows and green spaces important?

Plants are the foundation of life and shape our world; However, since the 1930's, we have lost

nearly 7.5 million acres (97%) of flower-rich meadows and pastures and with them vital food for our wildlife and pollinators – Our outdoor spaces can help address this loss. Wild flower grasslands are also good for us! Looking at a wild flower meadow for just 6 seconds can lower your blood pressure and make you feel happier. Wild flower meadows are also carbon stores. Flower-rich grasslands can store 30% more carbon than flower-less grasslands.

www.plantlife.org.uk

What can I do?

You can take part in #NoMowMay at home and say 'no to the mow' in your own garden to create a more biodiverse and wildlife friendly area.



Even our weeds have been saved!

We are supporting #NoMowMay

by saying **no to the mower** this May to help our bees, butterflies, wildlife and us! www.plantlife.org.uk

Third Avenue
CHURCH & COMMUNITY
GILLINGHAM METHODISTS | Part of the North Kent Circuit

Once we have passed NoMowMay we will be looking at cutting the grass regularly, leaving the wild flower part of the gardens to bloom throughout the summer. If you can spare a couple of hours to be on the **grass cutting rota**, please speak to Mark - mark@gillinghammethodists.uk



Since my last article for the magazine, the drama group have just finished performing the panto **Wizard of Oz** to 5 very different audiences, with the two matinees mainly children and the evening performances mainly adults. All seemed to go well and we have had much praise from many people. Thank you all for your support.

Our next production will be on **7th & 8th July** in the Community Hall. At the moment I am unable to give you details of the performance as, unfortunately, our Director has had to withdraw her services, due to family circumstances and we may have to re-consider our options.

However, our Junior section will be performing the panto **Sleeping Beauty** on **Saturday 29th April**. Do come & support them and you can pay on the door.

Keith Jackson | stpaulsdramagroup.co.uk

Time to Dream Margaret Garland

My eyes are full of sleep. My brain almost comatose. My arms hang loosely by my side, And all I want is peace.	We went to work, embraced the toil, Whether or not we would, We built our lives, our homes, ourselves, Until we come to this, A rocking chair, a cozy cushion, and time, time.
Peace to remember bygone days, When over the sands we ran, Enjoying the sandcastles. The sun, the sea, the sky.	Time to remember, time to doze, time to dream.

Days of youthful exuberance,
Of promises of joy, then life overtook us,
This happy girl and boy.



Part of the Medway Maritime
Food and Drink Festival

Rotary Charity Dragon Boat Challenge Sunday 28th May 2023



Medway Chinese Methodist Church & North Kent Methodist Circuit would like to recruit a team of 20 crew to participate in this amazing fundraising event ~ includes 16 paddlers, a drummer and 3 reserves, so you can rotate paddlers for each race. No prior rowing experience required; training will be given on the day. Please note that all participants will need to be present from **9am to 5pm**.

If you are interested to participate and would like further details, please contact: **Henry Chung | henrychung2022@gmail.com | 07810 006828**

Word Search

Leeks for St David's day, daffodils for the rest of the month: March brings us Spring. St Patrick, who brought Christianity to Ireland, is remembered with parades. Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are celebrated with more daffodils and Sunday lunch 'out'. March brings us the Annunciation, when the angel first appeared to Mary to tell her of her coming pregnancy. March is the month of Lent, of prayer and preparation for Easter.

Leeks	Mum	Sunday	parades
Daffodils	Mother	Lunch	Mary
Spring	Angel	Pregnancy	Magnificat
Patrick	Ireland	preparation	Fasting
Day	Wales	prayer	Lent



*Give me a sense of humour, Lord,
give me the grace to see a joke,
to get some humour out of life,
and pass it on to other folk.*

Go!

A teenager was always asking his father if he could borrow the family car. Pushed to the limit, the father asked his son why he thought that God had given him two feet. Without hesitation, the son replied, "That's easy, one for the clutch and one for the accelerator."

Present

For their elderly Minister's 70th birthday, the congregation at St Paul's decided to give him a present of a new suit. The vicar was so moved by the gift that the following Sunday he stood before everyone and began his homily with a tear in his eye, "Today I am preaching to you in my birthday suit."

Giving up for Lent

At the end of the pre-Lent sermon, the Minister suggested, as an example to the rest of the community, that the congregation should worship in an unheated church for the whole of Lent. As they made their way into the chill Sunday air the vicar addressed one member of the congregation, asking what she had decided to give up for Lent. "Church," she replied firmly.

Sick

During a church service my young niece had to go outside, as she did not feel well. She returned a few minutes later and admitted: 'I have been a little sick. But it doesn't matter, there's a box at the door marked 'for the sick'.'

Parish Pump

Parish Pump

Sudoku | Easy

2		3	6		8			
	4			2		8		3
8		1		4		6		
	6	5			7		4	9
3								1
7	9		1			3	5	
		8		5		1		6
5		9		1			3	
			4		9	5		2

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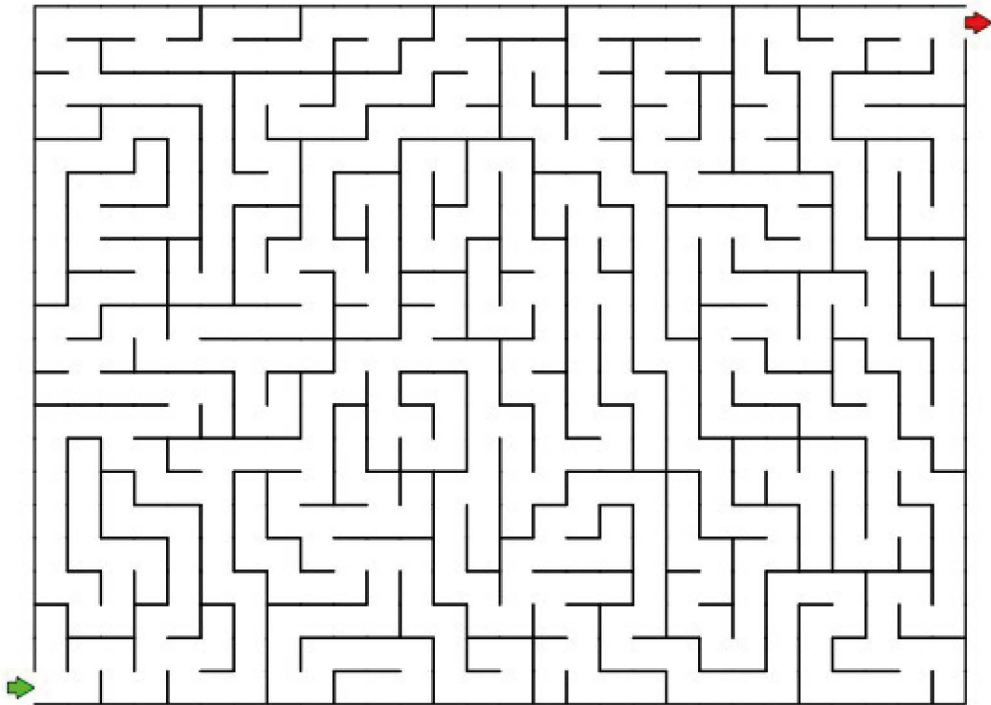
Intermediate

	2	4	3	8				
				6				7
	5	8				4		
4				1				
		7		5				
				2				8
		1				6	7	
3			5					
				4	9	2	1	

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Solutions on Page 38

Maze



	1	2		3		4		5		6		
7												8
9								10				
						11	12					
13			14		15					16		
			17									
18		19								20		
				21								
22										23	24	
				25		26		27				
28						29						
	30											

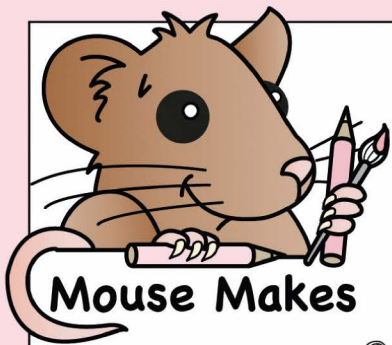
Crossword

Across

- These letters come between Romans and Galatians (11)
- 'You will not — me to the grave' (Psalm 16:10) (7)
- King of Moab to whom the Israelites were subject for 18 years (Judges 3:14) (5)
- Town possessing mineral spring (3)
- Mede (anag.) (4)
- High-fidelity (abbrev.) (4)
- He succeeded his father Rehoboam as king of Judah (1 Kings 14:31) (6)
- A son of Simeon (Genesis 46:10) (4)
- Controversial religious book of the 1970s, The — of God Incarnate (4)
- 'He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you — — and hear' (Acts 2:33) (3,3)
- 'You — me together in my mother's womb' (Psalm 139:13) (4)
- Edit (anag.) (4)
- 'Who has believed our message and to whom has the — of the Lord been revealed?' (Isaiah 53:1) (3)
- Abraham's brother (Genesis 22:23) (5)
- 'When Mordecai learned of — that had been —, he tore his clothes' (Esther 4:1) (3,4)
- Sympathetic (Proverbs 11:16) (4-7)

Down

- 'That was why his parents said, "He is — —; ask him"' (John 9:23) (2,3)
- Integrated Services Digital Network (1,1,1,1) 4
- 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his — of thousands' (1 Samuel 18:7) (4)
- Concept (John 8:14) (4)
- 'Do we, then, — the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law' (Romans 3:31) (7)
- Industrious (2 Timothy 2:6) (11)
- 'I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be — in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you (Ephesians 1:18) (11)
- 'Out of the same mouth come — and cursing' (James 3:10) (6)
- This was how many of the Jewish leaders described Jesus (John 10:20) (3)
- Vitality (Job 20:11) (6)
- He urged David to kill Saul at Hakilah (1 Samuel 26:8) (7)
- 'So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul — with the church and taught great numbers of people' (Acts 11:26) (3)
- 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord — —' (Deuteronomy 6:4) (2,3)
- Parched (Matthew 12:43) (4)
- 'In the image of God he created him; — and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27) (4)
- Disparagement (Psalm 15:3) (4)



Mouse Makes

WHO IS MY MOTHER?

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| CAIN | ELIZABETH |
| ISAAC | HANNAH |
| JESUS | RACHEL |
| JACOB | REBEKAH |
| TIMOTHY | EVE |
| JOSEPH | MARY |
| SAMUEL | SARAH |
| JOHN | EUNICE |

Look up the Bible verses then find the answers and the names below in the word search

- REBEKAH
- ELIZABETH
- EUNICE
- RUTH
- MARY
- RACHEL
- LEAH
- ZIPLAH
- MOTHER
- MUM

BIBLE MOTHERS

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?

Genesis 4:1-2

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?

Genesis 17:19

Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?

1 Samuel 1:20

Who was Ruth's Mother-in-Law?

Ruth 1:1-5

Eunice was Timothy's mother, but who was her mother?

2 Timothy 1:5

Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

Exodus 6:20

Look up the Bible verses and find out who the Bible mothers are.

M -----
Matt 1:16

O -----
2 Tim 1:5

T -----
1 Kings 1:11

H -----
1 Sam 1:20

E -----
Gen 34:1

R -----
Gen 30:22



How many other words can you make from:
MOTHERING SUNDAY



E E L O I S Z I L A M J H
U V N Z M A R Y Z U O Z R
N E A D U R U T H L T I A
I J O C H A B E D E H L C
C I M B J H M U M A E P H
E L I Z A B E T H H R A E
R E B E K A H A N N A H L

Puzzle solutions...

Sudoku | Easy

2	5	3	6	7	8	9	1	4
9	4	6	5	2	1	8	7	3
8	7	1	9	4	3	6	2	5
1	6	5	3	8	7	2	4	9
3	8	4	2	9	5	7	6	1
7	9	2	1	6	4	3	5	8
4	3	8	7	5	2	1	9	6
5	2	9	8	1	6	4	3	7
6	1	7	4	3	9	5	8	2

Intermediate

6	2	4	3	8	7	5	9	1
1	3	9	4	5	6	8	2	7
7	5	8	1	9	2	4	3	6
4	9	6	8	1	3	7	5	2
2	8	3	7	6	5	1	4	9
5	1	7	9	2	4	3	6	8
9	4	1	2	3	8	6	7	5
3	6	2	5	7	1	9	8	4
8	7	5	6	4	9	2	1	3

Crossword

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

Word Search

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

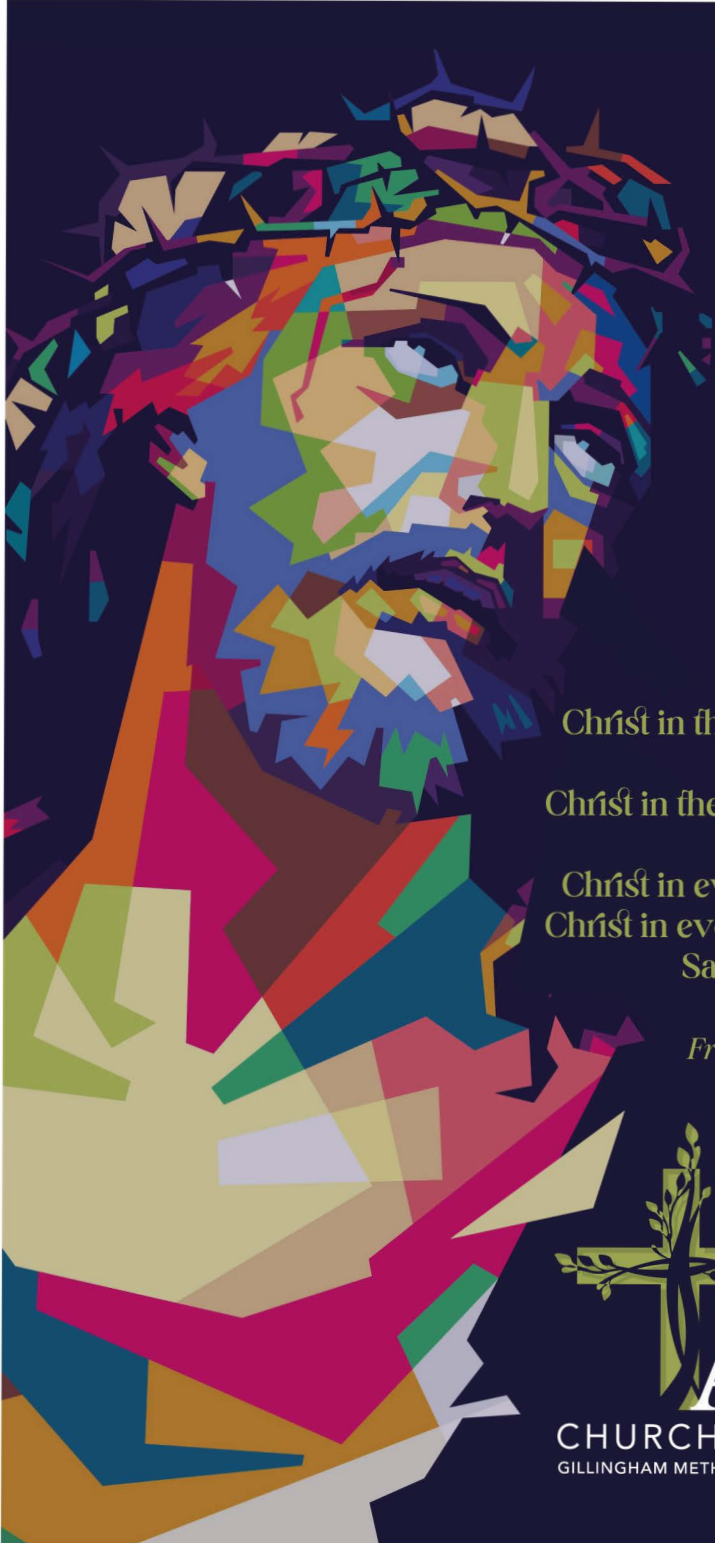


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Please note that Dona uses our legal name: Gillingham Methodist Church.

REV ROBIN SELMES

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Christ be with me
Christ before me
Christ behind me
Christ in me
Christ beneath me
Christ above me
Christ on my right
Christ on my left
Christ where I lie
Christ where I sit
Christ where I arise
Christ in the heart of every man
who thinks of me
Christ in the mouth of every man
who speaks of me
Christ in every eye that sees me
Christ in every ear that hears me
Salvation is of the Lord.

From St Patrick's Breastplate



**Third
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