

# Weybridge Methodist Church

## Newsletter July/August 2017



**40 Glorious years**

**The Weybridge contribution to the Godalming Flower festival  
and 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

**with thanks to Carol**

## Let all mortal flesh keep silence



by Jill Baker, Vice President of the Methodist Conference 2017/18

Writing about silence is almost as ironic as speaking about silence. If the heart of silence is an absence of words, then a blank sheet of paper (or screen) might be the best way in... but a few observations, none the less.

Last week the 2017 Methodist Conference met in Birmingham; a gathering of around 300 people, with many reports to debate and decisions to take. Not a natural arena for silence, and quite a contrast to the setting where I drafted these thoughts; during a “Five-Day Community for Spiritual Formation”<sup>[1]</sup> in Northern Ireland just a few weeks earlier. As the name suggests, around thirty of us lived in community for five days, hoping to be spiritually a little more formed by the end of it – time will tell. Alongside teaching, worship, listening time and wonderful Irish hospitality, one of the tools for the formation was silence. After each presentation, morning and afternoon, we kept an hour’s silence, and following Night Prayer remained silent until Morning Prayer next day.

This could be a delight but could also be a challenge. Silence can be threatening; we often use noise and activity to distract ourselves from our deepest emotions and from an encounter with ourselves. Silence can break down defenses and make us vulnerable. Silence can also be abused; whilst it may be a tool it must not be a weapon. If a person has been silenced by others, they have been violated. Too often in the power struggle which has never been far from the history of Christianity, bible texts have been used to silence women and other groups.

Silence is not our natural state and has to be learned. We do not come into this world in silence; a silent baby would struggle to survive. Susanna Wesley may have been able to teach her children to cry softly<sup>[2]</sup>, but that is not a widespread practice! Indeed, the idea of “suffering in silence” in adulthood has about it a stoic quality which, whilst it may be commendable at times, also suggests a martyred attitude, an unhealthy repression which will, in time, bear bad fruit. The psalmist seems to agree; “While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long”.<sup>[3]</sup>

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So why might we consider silence a practice worth learning? There are around a hundred references to silence or keeping silent in Scripture, many of them occurring in the “wisdom literature”. Perhaps that affords a first reason; Proverbs reminds us; “Even fools who keep silent are considered wise; when they close their lips, they are deemed intelligent.”<sup>[4]</sup> Silence can save us from speaking hastily, rashly, hurtfully, selfishly. Monks living permanently in community have been known to reflect that it is the silence which enables the community to survive.

Perhaps the most famous Bible reference to silence is Elijah’s encounter with God at Horeb<sup>5</sup>. Elijah is expecting God to “pass by”. Wind, earthquake and fire all fail to reveal God’s presence, but then comes the “still small voice”<sup>[5]</sup>. Almost the only thing I remember from three years of studying Hebrew at Durham is our professor’s own translation of this almost untranslatable phrase, “a rarefied, audible silence”. Elijah certainly recognises the presence of God in this silence, for he covers his face as he goes to the entrance to the cave. The voice follows, but the silence comes first.

So silence has two directions (at least); we learn to be silent before God – sometimes waiting for God to speak, but often rather learning to hear God in the silence. In human relationships silence is often used to express disapproval, anger or indifference. Sometimes it may simply mean that our interlocutor is no longer present to us. But at other times, silence in conversation may itself be a language. Barbara Brown Taylor’s little gem of a book, “When God is silent – divine language beyond words” explores this idea very helpfully. Silence may not mean absence, but may be a deep communication; the silence of lovers, the silence of those who are communicating without words.

The final biblical reference to silence comes in the book of Revelation<sup>[6]</sup>; after the seventh seal has been opened by the Lamb, “there was silence in heaven for about half an hour”. A fascinating thought!

1 [www.5daycommunity.com](http://www.5daycommunity.com)

2 Susanna Wesley. Thoughts on Raising Children, July 24, 1732.

3 Psalm 32:3

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4 Proverbs 17:28

5 I Kings 19:12

6 Revelation 8:1



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**Prayers:  
Please pray for**

- Mel Quennell who is having surgery this week
- Fiona, who is still experiencing health problems.
- Tiffany who continues to struggle following her surgery
- The Bedding & Clothes bank

*Remember that Lili holds a time of prayer every Sunday before the morning service in the small hall from 9.30am.*

*Barnabas prayer group aims to meet every Tuesday between 7.30 – 9.30 pm at Stans home.*

*Please contact Jose or Stan to confirm that it will take place*

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Thanks.....

To all those who rallied round so quickly following the break-in last month. We were blessed in that the damage was minimal and nothing was taken. The Vestry door will be replaced shortly and all will be back to normal. We take this occurrence as a reminder we should always lock the external door when on the premises alone and never open the main church doors unless there is someone else on site with you.

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## Diary Dates for July 2017

Sun 2 July at 10.30	Morning Worship Rev Paul Hulme	<i>Steward: Linda Music : Paul Refreshments :Paula</i>
Sat 8 July 10 - 12	Coffee Morning	Addlestone Methodist Church
Sun 9 July 10.30 am	Morning Worship Rev Andrew Smith	<i>Steward: Jose Music : Muriel Smith Refreshments :Lili</i>
Wed 12 July 12.30	Munch with Mozart David Markby	<i>Weybridge URC church</i>
Thurs 13 July 1.30 - 4	Weybridge Old Folks Club	<i>Our turn to run the kitchen</i>
Sat 15 July	<b><u>NO BEDDING &amp; CLOTHES BANK</u></b>	
Sun 16 July 10.30 am	Morning Worship & Communion Rev David Faulkner <i>Gifts for food bank</i>	<i>Steward: Pru Music : Adrian Communion: Paula Refreshments Linda</i>
Sun 23 July 10.30 am	Morning Worship Rev Barrie Tabraham <i>Gifts for food bank</i>	<i>Steward: Linda Music : Adrian Refreshments :TBC</i>
<b>Sun 30 July</b>	<b>NO SERVICE DUE TO</b>	<b>RIDE LONDON</b>
Sun 30 July	Pudding & Praise at Walton Methodist Church <i>See page 7</i>	<i>Steward: Linda Music : Adrian Refreshments : TBC</i>

N.B Please refer to the June Newsletter for requirements and delivery dates for items for the Whitechapel Mission appeal at Godalming United Church

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### Diary Dates for August 2017

Sun 6 Aug at 10.30am	Morning Worship with Jean Shepherd	<i>Steward: Pru Music : i-pad Refreshments: Paula</i>
Sat 12 Aug 10 – 12	Coffee Morning at Addlestone	
Sun 13 Aug at 10.30	Morning Worship with Elizabeth Gurd	<i>Steward: Stan Music : Jose Refreshments: Lili</i>
<i>The Mayfield Hall floor is being Treated on Thursday 17 August and there will be NO access to the Hall from 17 – 20 inclusive</i>		
Sat 19 Aug 11.30 – 1.30	Bedding & Clothes bank – <i>small hall</i>	
Sun 20 Aug at 10.30 am	Morning Worship with Lyn McKay	<i>Steward: Linda Music : Jose Refreshments: TBC</i>
Sun 27 Aug at 10.30 am	Morning Worship and Holy Communion <i>Gifts for food bank</i>	<i>Steward: Jose Music : Adrian Communion: Linda Refreshments TBC</i>
September		
Sun 3 Sept at 10.30 am	Morning Worship with Rev Peter Hills	<i>Steward: Pru Music : Jose Refreshments: Paula</i>



To all those departing for a time of holiday and refreshment, we wish you a relaxing break.

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BECOME A PART OF HISTORY AND

# MAKE YOUR MARK

SATURDAY 29TH JULY @ 11AM-3PM AND

SUNDAY 30TH JULY (RIDE SURREY) @ 9AM-1PM

WALTON METHODIST CHURCH

COME ALONG AND SIGN/ PERSONALISE ONE OF OUR NEW ROOF SLATES  
AND HELP US PAY FOR OUR NEW CHURCH ROOF.

Slates: £10 each or £15 for two

*There will also be..*

Refreshments

A history of the church

Activities including air hockey, table tennis, beetle drive, quiz and much more!

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

WALTONMETHODIST.COM

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## **News from the Circuit Leadership team**

### **Sabbaticals**

Rev Claire Hargreaves' Sabbatical has been confirmed for 1<sup>st</sup> September until 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

Rev Paul Hulme's Sabbatical has been confirmed for 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### **Stationing**

Following Rev Claire Hargreaves' communication to the Circuit Stewards that she will not be seeking a re-invitation, the Circuit expects to be going into stationing for the Addlestone/Walton-on-Thames/Weybridge section in the September 2017/18 year, in the hope of a successful match commencing the 2018/19 Connexional year.

### **Staffing Strategy**

The June Circuit Meeting was convened specifically to discuss the Five-Year Strategic Staffing Plan which the Circuit Leadership Team brought to the March Circuit Meeting. Local church representatives on Circuit Meeting were asked to take the plan back to their churches to discuss it in the appropriate church meeting, and to send the feedback to the Circuit Stewards.

The feedback on the proposed sections was:

Addlestone/Byfleet/Walton-on-Thames/Weybridge – the churches supported the section grouping, but asked whether the Deacon appointment could be brought forward, and whether the Deacon could work only in this section;

Cranleigh/Merrow/West Horsley – feedback from Cranleigh was that grouping the church with Godalming would be better than the proposed grouping, and West Horsley felt that moving Cranleigh from the section in favour of Stoughton would result in a better section, which also is a historical grouping;

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Guildford St Mary's/Stoughton/Superintendent/University Chaplaincy – feedback is that this section is too heavy a workload and should be revisited in terms of appointment of the Superintendent to this section, or moving Stoughton into a section with Merrow and West Horsley as a historical section;

Godalming – the situation at GUC is under consideration as both parent denominations explore future ministry in single congregation LEPs;

Knaphill/St Michael's Sheerwater/Trinity Woking – concerns were expressed about the workload, and the way a presbyter would work across the section.

Broader concerns expressed related to:

The assumption of the plan that the Circuit will look –in five years' time – as it does now, and raised the importance of other strategic thinking which needs to be done to develop a staffing plan, and included the submission of a plan for working through these questions;

The requirement for a Plan B on the staffing plan if there is not a successful match for in the stationing process for the planned vacancy.

The CLT considered all the feedback, and an amended plan was put to the Circuit Meeting, which agreed that work should continue on developing the plan.

In addition to the plan, the CLT is bringing an item to the September Circuit Meeting proposing the Circuit resourcing of local churches to discern their calling.

### **Appreciating Church**

Two taster sessions were facilitated by members of the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network – one at Addlestone attended by 13 people (from Addlestone, Byfleet, Cranleigh, Godalming, Walton, Weybridge, Trinity Woking) and one at Cranleigh attended by nine people (from Cranleigh, Godalming, Merrow, West Horsley, Trinity Woking).

These sessions have provided various people within the Circuit with a better understanding of how Appreciative Inquiry could be used to resource local churches to affirm their ministry and discern their calling.

We encourage you to talk to those members from your church who attended the sessions, and hope that the churches which asked for Circuit support in developing these areas of church life in their applications for Lay Workers two years ago will feed back to the Circuit their response to the offer of a group working with Appreciative Inquiry; and that individuals with a heart for nurturing church growth will consider becoming a part of such a working team within the Circuit.

If anyone has any questions about this work, or would like to talk to the Circuit about this opportunity, please contact Rev Claire Potter or Margaret Ireland.

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On Sunday 2 July our morning worship was led by Rev Paul Hulme from the Godalming church. Paul successfully persuaded everyone to sit together at the front of the church - a first – so it was a lovely intimate service during which we were reminded that Jesus is ‘The Good Shepherd’.

Paul also talked about using hymns as the basis of our daily prayers; he said that we are not always in the mood for prayer (and he included himself in that statement) and hymns can help us focus on prayer or even express what we want to say. Our prayers of thanksgiving were offered using the words of the hymn ‘For the beauty of the earth’. Paul left us with the following plea:

Be our strength in hours of weakness  
In our wanderings be our guide  
Through endeavour, failure, danger  
Father be there at our side



## **The Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee— opportunity for a new member**

The EDI Committee is seeking a new member, the vacancy is for someone with knowledge and experience of promoting EDI around disability and impairment, please see the attached role description for further details.

If you are interested in this position, the next step would be to let Jennifer Crook, the Connexional EDI Adviser, know and to write an expression of interest outlining: why you would like to be a member of the EDI Committee and how you meet the attributes outlined in the role description,

The deadline to receive this expression of interest is 9am on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017**.

Following this the Chair of the EDI Committee the Revd Stephen Poxon will then have a conversation with you discussing your understanding of EDI, your interest in and understanding of the role. Final decisions are made by the Methodist Council.

For more details please contact Jennifer Crook at [crooki@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:crooki@methodistchurch.org.uk)

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**



**Join us on Friday 29 September from 10 – 12**

**For**

**Tea/Coffee, Cake Stall and Bring & Buy Stall**

**At**

**Walton Methodist Church, Terrace Rd, Walton,  
KT12 2SR**

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