

# Weybridge Methodist Church

**Newsletter March 2020**





## God in the night time by Rev Charity Hamilton

“My whole world and future was swept from under my feet and all the walls that I had taken so long to build around me collapsed” wrote Caroline Flack a few weeks before the 40 year old presenter found herself in a ‘night-time place’ and died by suicide. For any who haven’t found themselves in ‘night-time places’ Flack’s description of her world and future being swept from under her feet is an accurate one. In such places we lack the familiarity and

security of our known environment, everything is in flux, outside our control. So destructive is that lack of security and control that the very ground on which we stand is swept away; the instability of our selves becomes evident. Norman Sartorius writes, ‘Suicide is a fundamental breakdown of trust between individual and social environment’; it is exactly as Flack suggests. With no firm ground on which to plant ourselves, with no light we fail to thrive and the best option soon appears to be death.

Christianity has historically condemned suicide as homicide of the self, a willingness to take a life – even one’s own – has been seen as a significant sin. For centuries Christian burial was denied to those who died by suicide, and many were taught that those who die by suicide will be barred from heaven. Suicide in England and Wales was ‘committed’ as a criminal act, based upon the Church’s moral stance that suicide was ‘self-murder’. This view persisted until the 1961 Suicide Act decriminalised suicide. The idea of suicide as a significant sin comes primarily from Augustine who taught that if we do not love our own lives then we cannot love the lives of others, or God. This Christian theological approach to suicide is further developed in the reformation and by Luther, emphasizing our calling: that we each have a calling from God and so to die by suicide is to refuse God’s call to us.

In 1996 Rowan Williams developed an argument that sees all human life as vocation, writing that ‘it is hard to see how the resignation of life because of its intolerable burden can express the nature and activity of God.’ He explores how our lives are intricately bound up in the lives of

others and so the decision to end one's life is also a decision about the lives of others.

When confronted with difficulties, the question I find myself asking is 'where is God in this?' I agree with Williams, that all human life is bound up in God's calling and that on each of our lives there is a specific vocation. However, I believe that in the resignation of life there is much that can be expressed about the nature and activity of God; a story to be told about suffering, night-time, wrestling and being overwhelmed – in which God is an ever present speck of light within the darkest of nights. Suicide is not failure to live up to God's calling, it is simply a catastrophic severing or disconnection between an individual and their context in which God's calling becomes obscured by distress, trauma and a seeming never-ending night-time. God is still there though.

Within suicide it isn't enough for us to ask the question 'Where is God in this?' because for those of us who are not feeling our 'world and future swept from under our feet' our calling is to be the community which enacts God. In 2018 Middlesbrough was recorded as having the highest suicide rates out of 152 local authorities with twice the number of people dying to suicide than the national average. In a bid to reduce the number of deaths by suicide a Tees wide taskforce has been established to lower suicide rates. We are trying to create hope-filled communities in which suicide becomes less of an option but in which we recognise that for some, suicide will seem their only option. And that makes them no less called by God.

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## Thank you

- To all those who continue to help out at services by providing music, undertaking readings and providing refreshments. Your help is always appreciated.



### Prayer Time:

The 'mobile' prayer group is open to all. Please add prayer needs as they occur to you. If you

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wish to be added to this group, contact one of the stewards.

## Please pray for

- Stan & Mary as they struggle with poor health
  - Our church and Circuit as they face regular quarterly meetings
  - Baby Isaac who is slowly beginning to thrive
  - Carole Steele as she continues her recovers from surgery
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Adelaide and Sydney Samuel.

Also to Louella (who turns 12!) and Kelaai in sunny Australia

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## Flower Rota

As a church we thank to Carol who provides a splendid display of flowers in our church every week whatever the season. If you are asking Carol to create the display on your behalf, please remember to pay her!

There are still some spaces on the rota if you would like to sponsor a specific week to celebrate a birthday or anniversary or to remember a lost loved one. If you would just like to donate to the flower fund, please see Carol.



## WALK & TALK

Saturday 7 March at 2.30pm

In the hope that the weather has become more spring like by then, we will take a walk along the Broad Water and back along the river. Meet at Greside Rd KT13 8PZ. (Plenty of off street parking)

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# COFFEE, CONVERSATION & CONTEMPLATION (3 C's)

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30 am - Noon**



Join us for coffee



Join us for Conversation



A short time of Contemplation

Please enter through the main church doors on Heath Rd.

WEYBRIDGE METHODIST  
CHURCH

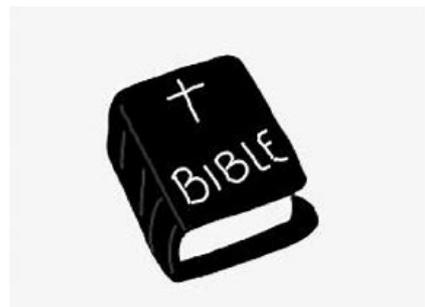
**CAFÉ CHURCH**

LED BY

REV CLAIRE HARGREAVES

SUNDAY 1 MARCH @ 6.15

FOR 6.30



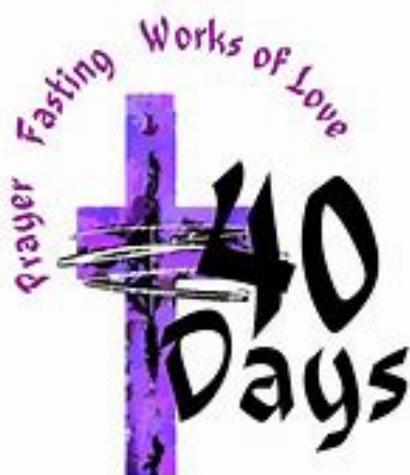
## Dates for the diary

Sunday 1 March	10.30 am Morning worship	Mr Dave Paterson <i>Steward – Pru</i> <i>Music – Jose</i> <i>Refreshments - Paula</i>
Sunday 1 March 6 for 6.30pm	Café Church	Rev Claire Hargreaves
Friday 6 March	10.30 Coffee, Conversation & Contemplation	Vestry
Saturday 7 March 2.30pm	Church Walk	Meet at Grenside Rd at 2.30pm
Sunday 8 March	10.30am Morning Worship	Mr John Oborn <i>Steward- Carol</i> <i>Music – TBC</i> <i>Refreshments - Lili</i>
Wednesday 11 March	Munch with Mozart with Katherine Diens-Williams at Weybridge United Reformed church	<i>12.30 lunch time.</i> <i>Bring your lunch – drinks provided</i>
Thursday 12 March	Weybridge Old Folks Club	<i>Our turn to assist</i>
Saturday 14 March 2020	Coffee Morning at Addlestone	10 - 12
Sunday 15 March	10.30am Morning Worship	Mrs Hilary Beckingham <i>Steward – Linda</i> <i>Music – Adrian</i> <i>Refreshments - Carol</i>
Tuesday 17 March 2.30pm	All Our Yesterdays	St James Parish Church
Thursday 19 March 7.45pm	Circuit Meeting	Woking
Friday 20 March	10.30 am – 12 Vestry	Coffee, Conversation & Contemplation
Saturday 21 March	11.30 – 1.30	Bedding & Clothes Bank
Sunday 22 March	10.30 am Morning Worship & Communion	Rev Sydney Samuel Lake <i>Steward – Jose</i>

		<i>Music – Adrian Communion - Linda Refreshments - TBC</i>
Sunday 29 March 2020	10.30 am	Rev David Faulkner Steward Linda Music - TBC Refreshments - Adelaide

### Advance Dates

Sunday 29 March 12.00	Merrow Methodist Church	Meeting for those interested in joining a trip to the Holy Land. <i>See notice board for details</i>
Thursday 9 April Maundy Thursday 8.00pm	Tenebrae Service led by Rev Claire Hargreaves	Woking Methodist Church



"As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst...

'Repent and believe' Jesus tells us. What are we to repent? Our indifference, our hardness of heart.

What are we to believe?

Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor -- He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta