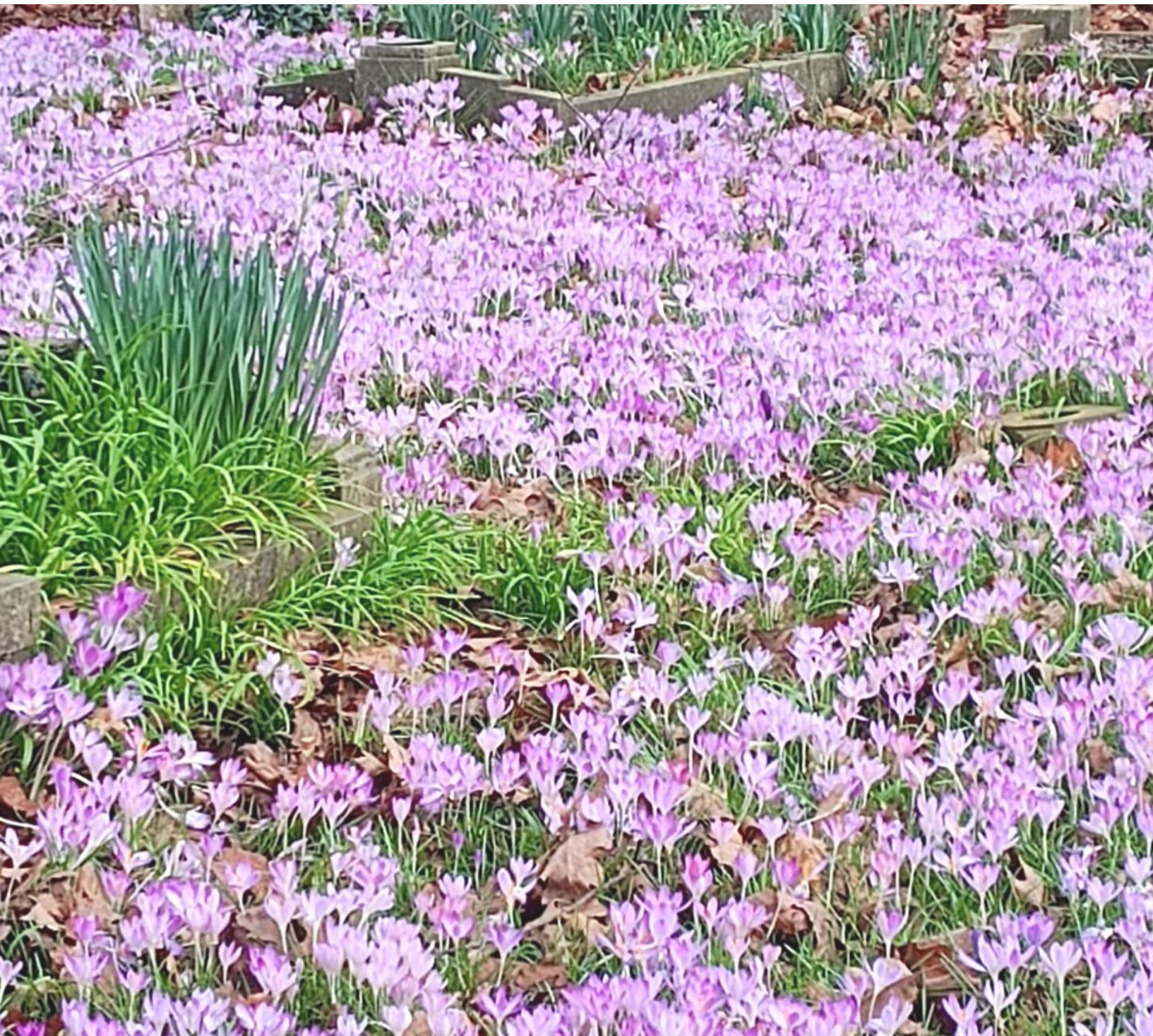


April 2026



Baptists and Methodists together at Hampton Methodist Church



Hampton Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton, TW12 2JT
Hampton Mission Partnership is a member of Churches Together around Hampton
Church website: hamptonmissionpartnership.org.uk

Life is full of ups and downs of all sorts. Some of these ups and downs we take in our stride as just the sort of things that every one of us has to bear with as we continue on our lives. In our middle years life seems easy as we carry on with our chosen careers, mortgages are paid off, our children develop a sense of responsibility and everything looks a lot rosier than it once did.

I suspect that sort of life is the sort that few of us have or will experience. As I think of the people that I know, most of them have had some crisis in their lives at some point. I think of people who have divorced with families to bring up and all the problems and difficulties of that to sort out. I think of people who have lost a parent suddenly at a relatively early age. I think of people who have been taken ill in the middle or early in life and their whole understanding and plans for their own lives are put on the shelf and have to change. When I think about it there are very few of us for whom life is plain sailing all the way through.

You might be thinking where is this leading and what is he going to be saying at the end of all this.

Well, God never promised that life would be easy, and another thing, this earthly life is not forever. Many people live this earthly life as though it were going to last for eternity. I think that the majority of us who suffer during our lives are blessed. Shall I tell you why? It enables us to look at life and have a deeper and more realistic attitude and a real concept of what eternity is.

Jesus lived, so we are led to believe, into his early 30s. He suffered, as did the vast majority of his disciples, a painful physical death and more than that a total separation from his Father. He took our sin upon himself in order that we might be forgiven and reconciled to God.

Jesus had a plan for his own life and that was to die on the cross. Money can be used either for good or evil. Jesus as we read the gospels was solely focussed on doing the will of his Father.

If our focus is totally on doing the will of the Father we will be satisfied. It will matter not what happens in our own lives. It won't matter what happens to our earthly lives.

Let us keep our eyes focussed on God, let us take Jesus as our example, let us be guided by the Holy Spirit and whatever happens to us whether that be for good or evil let us centre our thoughts on what God can do through us and let him work through us and with us.

As we approach Easter let us remember that Jesus is alive for evermore and we too can be if we live for him and in him. To quote a song 'What a wonderful change in my heart has been wrought since Jesus came into my heart.'

Your pastor and friend.

Philip Slater

Sabbatical

Years ago, I read somewhere the comment that the 1912 Primitive Methodist Hymnal Supplement was a “gem”. I added a copy to my library when I found one and it has gathered dust over the years. Recently, I rediscovered it and began to play through the tunes for sight-reading practice.

It is indeed unlike any other hymn book that I have used. For a start, there are eight different tunes for the Lord’s Prayer. Most of the hymns are unknown to me, even though I have a fair knowledge of the 1933 Methodist Hymn Book that was still our hymn book when I began preaching in 1983. Even where I find familiar words in the 1912 book, the tune selected for them is unknown to me. When, very occasionally, I find a familiar tune, it is not set to the words that I might expect.

Ordinarily, I don’t have enough time to properly explore this book, but would love to do so. How was it compiled? How was it received when it was published? It doesn’t feel like a hymn book for “rangers” as the Primitive Methodists were often known. Why were so few of its hymns included in 1933 in the first hymn book of our united church? Compiled in the optimistic Edwardian era, did it fail to speak to an age that had seen the horrors of the war to end all wars? Are there really “gems” in there that need to be rediscovered? The tunes, at least, are very beautifully arranged for four part harmony.

For my sabbatical, I propose to go on an open-ended adventure (pilgrimage?) with the 1912 hymn book and see where it leads me. I may visit some of the places that the hymn tunes are named after or the places where they were written, and see if I can see the link. “Arizona” may be a bit far, though a desert may be a suitable location for my Lenten journey.

Someone must have already explored this little known book. Are there scholarly articles about it? How does it compare with other contemporary hymn books such as the 1910 Congregation Hymnal (which was still in use at one church where I sometimes preached in the 1980s).

My grandfather, whom I never met, was a Primitive Methodist. What might he have thought of the book? There is no link between him and my own engagement with the Methodist Church which began through my mother attending the Sunday School from the age of 3 at an ex-UMFC church. During the sabbatical, I would worship at a different church each Sunday and anticipate finding a wide spectrum of worship experiences. How will today’s worship compare with the worship that could be created from the 1912 book?

How might the sabbatical be shared? Perhaps an article for one of the Methodist History societies to summarise my findings. A Sing an (Old) Song workshop to explore some of the hymns. I’ve no doubt that there will be gems, old and newly created, which I’ll be unable not to share in some format!

David Innes

Tribute to Jill Harker (December 1942 – October 2025)

Jill was born in the middle of the Second World War and lived in Hampton. Jill's father was a Methodist Local Preacher and as a small child, Jill would often accompany him, sitting on a small saddle on the crossbar of his bike. Church and teaching were big themes (and great loves) in her life. Both her parents taught at Sunday School (at Hanworth Methodist Church) and once she was in her early teens, Jill joined them. She attended Twickenham County Grammar School for Girls and went on to Exeter University where she read Maths (with Psychology). Her Christian faith grew and she started training as a Methodist Local Preacher so she could teach the Bible to others. After graduating she returned to this area and first had a flat in Teddington. She was appointed as a Maths teacher (at The Lady Eleanor Holles School, Hampton), and for the next 20 years she taught a whole generation of girls, becoming Head of the Maths Department and then Senior Mistress, before moving to private one-to-one tutoring for a further 20 years, getting another generation of young people through their maths exams.

Jill met David on holiday in Norway. They were married in the scorching summer of 1976, and they reached their ruby anniversary together. They set up home in Hampton and Jill lived in that house for the next 45 years. David had poor health in the latter stages and died in 2017.

Jill set up Worship Leader training in the Teddington Circuit and led several courses, which she developed, creating six sessions covering nine topics. To deliver these courses, Jill worked with other Local Preachers and an existing Worship Leader.

Jill made an enormous contribution to the lives of many Local Preachers as Tutor in this Circuit and as recently reported in the London District News, Jill was 'widely known to Local Preachers from around the London District for her tutor role on the old London Course. This innovative course allowed many On Trials to fast-track their studies' with weekly training sessions and a residential retreat every 2-3 months.

I first met Jill over fifty years ago when I visited her in her flat in Teddington for training; I was helping at Sunday School in Hampton and can only assume now that was what I went for! Because Jill was a local preacher I would see her at services at our church and when I put myself forward for worship leader training I was delighted to learn that she would be our trainer. I benefitted from her strong faith and her no-nonsense teaching style. I worked with her in my role as a worship leader undertaking services at churches around the circuit and helping at one of the last worship leader trainings that Jill did.

Jill made a contribution to so many lives and I feel blessed to have benefitted from her faith and wisdom. Rest in peace Jill.

Hazel Greasby

Verses of Hope: the National Peace Poetry Competition

On 1 October 2025 the winners of this competition were announced and our Fae won! The competition commemorated the 80th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Students from across the country were encouraged to submit original poems to explore issues of hope and peace and to amplify the voices of young people.

Fae said, 'As conflict continues to shape the 21st century, I wrote 'The Cold Summer' to reflect on the cruelty of war, drawing on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to highlight the human cost. The devastation serves as a constant reminder of the urgent need for peace and the value of innocent lives. I am very grateful to have my poem chosen as the winning entry, allowing this message of peace to have a stronger voice.'

The awardees, parents and educators were invited to attend a special ceremony in London where students had the opportunity to read their poems and receive awards.

The Cold Summer

Fae Chui, Surbiton High School, Secondary Entry



Cherry pink

Petals exhale spring's shadows.

Forest green

Leaves shield a Kiji.

A petal plummets into a child's palm,

Then sours and shrivels into ashes.

Autumn came early in 1945.

All the vibrant petals,

All the exuberant leaves

Plunged.

They fled their home

Whose limbs were snapped off rip by rip,

Abandoning their heart in the cold summer.

The house that was once a sanctuary,

A mother with paper skin and wooden bones,

protected her children from the horrors outside,

Head held high.

But her arms, her legs, her neck were churned into a twisted clatter.

She was left to freeze with nothing but the breeze as her companion.

So the house and the tree rotted.

A snow blanket covered their remains,

Thrown off when it got too hot

Revealing a snowfall of blush-tinted petals.

They whispered stories of their ancestors

As they revelled in their peaceful upbringing.

The Mighty Convoy to the Ukraine

So I was sitting reading the Sunday Times and read an article about an organisation in Teddington called the Mighty Convoy, run by Simon Brake. I turned the page to read the rest of the paper but kept returning to the article. I then mentioned it to Cathy, quite expecting her to veto the idea of me joining them, but she didn't. The idea was that two potential drivers had to raise £7000 to cover the cost of a 4X4 vehicle or an ambulance + supplies. This gives you the opportunity to drive for 36 hours with no overnight stop to deliver the vehicle and the supplies to Lviv. The drivers then make their own way back home.

After sounding out my contacts locally, my friend Nick agreed to be my driving partner. The next challenge was to raise £7000. This was quite daunting and we planned many potential activities but amazingly in five weeks we raised £8600 from lots of generous donations from friends, family, the churches and the local community. We were stunned by this generosity. We raised this money in the summer, but for various reasons, we couldn't join a convoy until the end of November.

I was extremely anxious about the driving for 36 hours through Europe in the dark without much sleep. However, the die was cast and we were set off early on Thursday 27th November. Cathy dropped us off for a team breakfast at 6.00 and we set off at 7.00.

I have been on a few adventures but this seemed very intense. We used Le Shuttle to cross the channel. The drive through France and Belgium got increasingly busy, so we took a detour. We were number two in the convoy but it was clear that Nick and I weren't driving fast enough to satisfy the others because we had to get to the Polish/Ukrainian border by 15.00 the next day before the border closed. Because of heavy traffic we had to take a different route but late afternoon we arrived in Germany and the fun really started.

The German autobahns have four lanes, the first two are full of lorries, the fourth lane has cars doing whatever speed they like (no speed limit) which leaves the third lane. My preferred speed of 65/70 MPH was clearly not fast enough for this lane so it was very stressful. By morning we found ourselves in Poland. Nick was fast asleep. We were driving due east, snow was all around and it was very beautiful and although I was way back from the convoy, I was enjoying a stress free drive. Then, the sun came up, right in my face, my windscreen was filthy, visibility was impaired but I ploughed on. When I arrived at the next planned stop, I arrived first because everyone else had stopped to clean their windscreens!

We arrived at the Polish border at 15.00 and I was warned about the Polish border guards but nothing could have prepared me for the grilling I got from the bossiest woman I have ever met, I was tired, hungry and after half an hour of her, quivering with fear. We arrived in Lviv in the evening and went out for a group meal with lots of meat and then we had a good night's sleep although there were a couple of aid raid sirens during the night.

In Lviv, you could see evidence of the war. The churches had metal sheets covering the windows and there were shrines to the fallen all around the town. We had an official handing over ceremony at a Christian organisation and we were told some harrowing tales. It was quite likely that our vehicles would be attacked on their first trip out to the front line by Russian drones. Simon received some awards because it was convoy number 20 and he had driven for about 14 of them as well as organizing the others.

Listening to Uliana speak as a young Ukrainian with her partner at the front line, made the whole horror of the war a reality. Because of this, Nick and I will continue to support the Mighty Convoy in a variety of ways but we won't be driving again!

James Trevelyan

See page 17 for a fundraising event for The Mighty Convoy



At the border



A church with covered windows

Szopki krakowskie

After James's trip to the Ukraine, he made his way from Lviv back to the Polish border and then a taxi to Kraków. I flew out to Kraków to meet him and to have a holiday. The Christmas markets had started and the city looked very festive.

While we were there, they were getting ready for their famous szopki krakowskie. This is a festival of Nativity models and they're unlike any other nativity scenes in the world: tall, shimmering, colourful, and inspired by Kraków's own architecture. UNESCO even recognised the tradition as part of the world's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The scenes are made by local artists, woodworkers, model makers, local schools and professional artists. On the first Thursday in December, everyone gathers by the statue of Adam Mickiewicz (a poet) in the Main Market Square to present their creations for the official competition.

Unfortunately, we left before the Kraków bugle call at 12:00 when a procession of nativity scenes set off around the Main Market Square, led by a folk band. The creators then brought their works to Krzysztofory Palace, where they were judged by a jury consisting of historians, art historians, architects and artists. However, we did buy a Kraków nativity scene to add to my growing collection that comes out each Christmas and this one certainly stands out as being very different!

Cathy Trevelyan



Our nativity scene



Displayed in the city



One of the winners

WEINACHTEN IN DEUTSCHLAND – Dezember 2025

Or, as we would say in English 'Christmas in Germany'!

For Christmas 2025 I visited my daughter Rhona and her family. The Family consists of Rhona and her husband Mark, their 3 children Grace (18), Amy (17), Ethan (14), 2 dogs and 5 rabbits. This is the Lockwood Family.

The preparations for Christmas are quite affected by the fact that Amy has a birthday on the 16th December and I was there to celebrate that.

The preparation started by buying a Christmas tree, an event that includes the whole family (animals excepted!). We visited a nearby Christmas Tree farm, and on arrival you are presented with a saw. You then wander through the field where all the trees are planted and select one, then take the saw and cut it off at the root. It is then put through the machine into a net and brought home.

Traditionally the Germans do not have turkey as their main meal at Christmas, but you can order one, which Rhona did from a local supermarket.

Before Christmas we all attended a Christingle Service at the Anglican Church Basel (ACB) - this is the church that they all attend - and the family provided the music on that occasion (Ethan on drums and glockenspiel, Amy on cello, Mark and Grace on piano and Rhona on violin).

Then on the 14th December we attended the church's Carol Service which was held in the Heiliggeistkirche Basel (they use this for the Carol Service as the ACB building is not large enough). We also went to a Christmas market in Basel where you can buy Gluhwein, pancakes and many other Christmas delicacies, and of course there were many stands where you could buy Christmas goods and presents.

Another event that took place is carol singing in the woods near to Rhona and Mark's house. This is organised by one of the neighbours and there is a bonfire, beers to drink + non alcoholic drinks as required, and we sing carols in German, English and French. We all take flammable torches with us to light the way and the space that is used.

In Germany, traditionally Christmas is celebrated on Christmas Eve when the main meal is eaten, presents are given and church services attended. However, Rhona and family, being English, celebrate Christmas on Christmas Day. We enjoyed a lovely meal, followed by Christmas Pudding, and later mince pies. You can't but mincemeat in Germany for obvious reasons, but Rhona makes her own.

Of course it was quite cold during my stay with temperatures dropping below freezing at times, and there was also plenty of snow on the ground.

So it was a happy family occasion enjoyed by all, and Rhona and family send all their best wishes to the Hampton Mission Partnership family!

Herzlichen Glückwunsch an die Hampton Mission Partnership!

Willem Sandberg

A new life at 60!

Following the sudden death of my dad in November 1992, mum found herself without her husband of 36 years, when she was just shy of her 60th birthday. Dad had taken early retirement from the BBC, where he had worked for over 25 years. He had worked hard and saved well for the retirement he was going to share with mum.

Mum was suddenly left with just her imagination as to the exotic places they would visit together on holiday. Instead of visiting far flung places, mum's exotic trips were in the back seat of a car sitting between her two young grandchildren. It was the Isle of Wight, instead of maybe Barbados!

Once she had started to recover from the shock and following a period of grieving, mum started to find out what life could be without dad. She soon started to attend the newly formed Hampton Baptist Church. She soon felt very much at home and formed many long-lasting friendships. This really was the start of her "new life at 60!" She regularly attended the mid-week home groups, offering her home as one of the venues.

Eventually, in April 2003, mum made the decision to be baptised and to become a full member of the church. Mum put her gardening expertise to good use by maintaining the small garden at the front of the church. This was just one of the many ways she would serve the HBC community and made her a much loved and reliable member of the church.

Mum's own garden was always immaculate. She would spend hours tending to the flower beds and her vegetable and fruit bushes plot. We were the grateful recipients of some of the produce of her labour. As the years passed by I could see the time coming when mum would no longer be able to manage the garden. As a family, we tried to persuade her that she ought to think about moving. Mum was having none of it. So, it was sad to see the garden slip into decline when eventually she was no longer able look after it the way she used to.

Mum was a well-known figure in the village, especially in the days when she was able to cycle. Not only would she cycle around Hampton, but twice a week she would cycle to see me and the grandchildren in Teddington, before we moved to Hampton Hill. She would also visit her mum in Molesey. Mum had a knee replacement in January 2006, but this didn't keep her off her bike for long. I think it was less than six weeks before she was on the road again.

By the time Covid hit us in March 2020 mum's health was already on the downward slope. But she was able to master a new skill, even though she was in her late 80's; my brother, Steve, got her an iPad. She used it to watch the on-line services and have regular "Facetime" calls. The conversation would often start with "I better turn me tele down!"

My mum was always one to give anything a go. She was a very determined lady who our pastor Philip once described as "tough as old boots!" I don't think he was far wrong. Mum's parting gift to the life of HMP was to knit her normal large quantity of Christmas angels which were hung on the church wall in Christmas 2024.

As a family, Christmas is another time when mum is greatly missed. Following dad's death and for the next 30 years mum would spend a few days staying with us. She would come laden with vast amounts of home-made sausage rolls and mince pies, as well as boxes of biscuits and chocolates.

My brother and I were deeply touched by the response to mum's passing. The services at Kingston Crematorium and at HMP were a fitting tribute to a much loved mum, nanna and member of the Hampton community.



Tricia's 60th celebration



Christmas angels 2021



Jean outside her flat in Teddington - March 2025

TEA & MEMORIES

"Nice company,
friendly people"

"Thank you for a
very friendly warm
welcome and fun
games"

"This session is so
friendly, always
someone to talk to"

Tea & Memories is a friendly, welcoming and informal space for people living with dementia or memory loss and the people who care for them. It is a much loved and very important part of our outreach, confirmed by the many comments we receive from our participants at each session. We are calm, inclusive, and understanding and we aspire to be a place where people affected by dementia, as well as their carers, can feel understood, valued, and less alone.

Our participants tell us that they love the quizzes, table games and bingo, crafts, memorabilia and trips down memory lane, the chance to chat and catch up with their fellow participants. At a recent session, one carer told us that this was the first time they had laughed all week. We are also blessed to receive a monthly donation of a delicious cake from the wonderful Cafe Plenty in Station Road, Hampton. We continue to welcome new participants each month who have heard about Tea & Memories through word of mouth, Age UK, social prescribers (clinics and GP practices), social media, flyers and posters.

We really don't need to tell you any more; please let the photos tell the story!

The Tea & Memories team are Louise, Hazel, Liz, Helena, Linda, Georgia and Doreen, an amazing volunteer from the Hampton branch of Age UK.

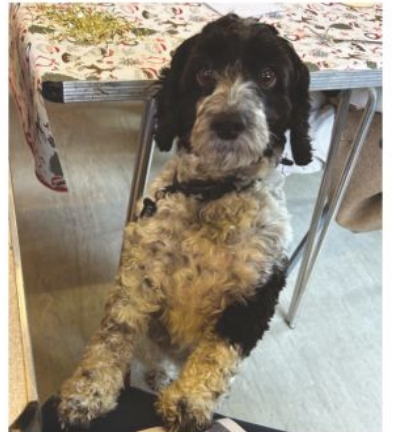
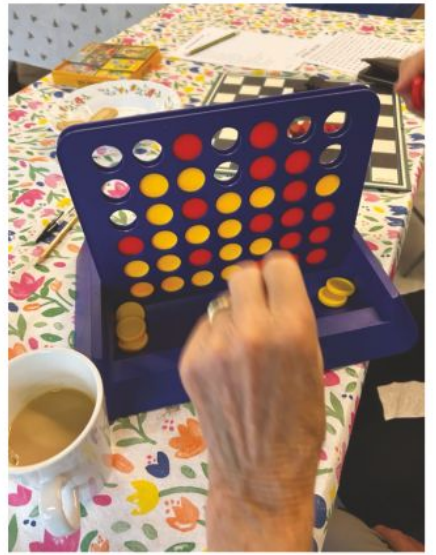
Tea & Memories is on the first Friday of the month, 11am-12.30pm. Future dates are:

6th March, 3rd April, 1st May, 5th June, 3rd July, 4th September, 2nd October, 6th November, 4th December.

tea@hamptonmissionpartnership.org.uk

*"A picture is worth a
thousand words"*





Memories of Olive

It's been a bit of both a history and maths lesson for me as I've been thinking about the years when I knew Olive. My eldest son was 6 months old when we moved to Hampton, so that provides a helpful starting point. Liz kindly sent me the Order of Service for Olive's funeral which gave her date of birth on the front cover so, by subtracting 1930 from 1977 (Simon's year of birth) I realise that Olive was 47 when I joined the church. Further calculations remind me that I was at HMC for 38 years before moving to Devon in 2015 which means I'm now recalling memories that go back 48 years.

Olive was a constant presence in the church through all my years of association. She was always there, always with a ready and welcoming smile, always supportive, with a positive attitude and someone in whom you could have complete trust and confidence. In her unassuming manner she joined in wholeheartedly with church activities.

During my early days she was a leader in the Sunday School and in my latter years she helped with Messy Church, using the opportunities to share the love of Jesus and setting a loving example to young children. When it was decided to have coffee after morning services, who volunteered to serve and wash up? Lovely

Olive. When we launched Friday Focus lunches in the late 1990s (by which time Olive was of retirement age), who offered to go on the rota to provide a two course lunch for around 30 people? You've guessed it, dear Olive. When I organised a choir for special services Olive was ever enthusiastic and enhanced the singing with her beautiful soprano voice.

Ladies Guild benefited from Olive's membership, too, and I particularly remember the way she would close the meetings with a prayer incorporating the words of 'Make me a channel of your peace'. I can almost hear her say it now, making each verse so meaningful and personal, such a witness and testimony to her faith.

I love receiving the HMP magazines from Liz and have just looked through the box where I keep past editions to find the one that included a photo of Olive celebrating her 90th birthday. It gave me a lump in my throat then and it still does now as I see her radiant, smiling face, looking just as she always has done and always will do in my memory.

God bless you, dearest Olive.

Hilary



Nearing her 90th birthday



Messy Church at Hampton Carnival 2011 (we won 3rd place for the best stall). Left to right:
Olive, Pam Goodwin, Liz W, Janet Butler, Hazel



At Ladies Guild 50th birthday, Olive with Jeannie Trotter and Joan Hart

A Day to Remember – visit to the Titanic Exhibition

I became intrigued and interested in the Titanic story while listening to a podcast on BBC Sounds entitled “Titanic -Ship of Dreams” which is narrated by Paul McGann, whose great uncle served on the Titanic as a ‘trimmer’ in the engine room (he was one of the survivors). You can still listen to this podcast by searching BBC Sounds.

When I heard that there was an Exhibition on in London I was keen to visit this, and found that there were others who also wanted to attend, so I organised the trip. So the Famous 5 + 1 set off from Hampton on Monday 12th January to Dock X in the Canada Water Retail Park which is where the exhibition was held. The people that went were: Eunice, Helena, Liz Lucie, Barry, Janice (The Famous 5) and Willem (the +1)!

It is an ‘immersive’ exhibition during which through headsets and audio you can see around the whole ship and experience the tragedy as it unfolded. There are also displays of the clothing people wore, the crockery and cutlery used, and the menus that were served. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and found it difficult at times to come to terms with what occurred during the 2 hours and 40 minutes which it took for the ship to sink following the iceberg strike.

For those who don’t know the story of the Titanic, this ship (which at the time was the largest ocean liner afloat) was launched on the 31st May, 1911, and the fitting out of the 52,310 ton ship was completed on the 2nd April 1912. Its maiden voyage started in Southampton on the 10th April 1912, and it struck an iceberg at 11:40 pm on the 11th April 1912, before sinking at 2:20 am on the 12th April 1912.

There was a class system operating on the ship - 1st Class, 2nd Class and 3rd Class. If you were in 1st Class you had a much better chance of survival and in 3rd Class the least likelihood. This was borne out in the numbers that survived, depending where on the ship they were berthed. Not forgetting that the sea around the ship was freezing (they were in an ice field), and this would give rise to hypothermia, heart attacks and more if you landed up in the water for any length of time.

The title of my article is loosely based on the book called “A Night to Remember” by Walter Lord, which is considered to be the definitive, classic tale of the sinking of the Titanic. This is also the name of the first film about the Titanic disaster, starring Kenneth More, Honor Blackman and David McCallum, among others.

Willem Sandberg



Return visit to India

David Priddy was back in India in January. It was a busy and blessed time with visits to the church that Ashford Common Baptist Church partners with, two of the charities 'his' charity work with and a wedding. The trip lived up to the name of the aircraft he flew on: Amazing Grace. Those interested can join the experience through a video of the trip which can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/S5kh24XmEbQ> or go to @ashfordcommonbaptist on YouTube. It's just short of 16 minutes – that's equivalent to a minute a day of the trip.

David sends thanks again for your interest and support.



MURDER MYSTERY EVENING

Death on the Mile

A playful whodunnit for families and friends

Saturday 25th April 7.00pm

Adults £10

Children - free
Hot drinks and cakes included

All profits The Mighty Convoy

Teddington Methodist Church
1 Stanley Road, TW11 8TP

Remembering Brenda Messingham

Brenda attended Teddington Baptist Church until she married Bill in 1960. When Gail, their elder daughter was three in 1965, as there was no Baptist Church in Hampton then, Brenda took her to Percy Road for Sunday School and soon after spent 12 years as a teacher with the children under seven. During that time John and Trudy were christened in 1965 and 1970.

Hazel says, 'I first knew Brenda over fifty years ago when I started to help at Sunday School. Brenda used to lead the Sunday School and I would go to her house for preparation meetings -it was all very formal in those days. Brenda and Bill were very active members of the church. They were both Boys Brigade leaders and Bill was a steward for many years. Colin mentioned to me that he helped Bill remove the pews from the area of the church that is now used for the music group; it used to be pews for the choir and it had been decided that the area could be put to greater use without the pews! Brenda and Bill were both people who could always be relied upon to help out whatever the activity in the church.' After training with Hampton Baptist and Sunbury Methodist, Brenda was involved in leading the first Alpha course at Hampton Methodist with Pastor Jim Stockley.

Hilary says, 'Although it was a long time ago, I remember both Bill and Brenda with fondness. Bill the quiet one, a faithful leader in BB when my son David was a member and someone who kept the church garden looking lovely. Brenda so open and friendly, very easy to get along with as conversation came naturally to her. You didn't have to worry about what to talk about as, after you had maybe just said hello to her, or made a non-specific comment, Brenda would be able to pick it up and carry on. I also seem to remember she had a natural affinity with children, a motherly nature that was attractive to little ones who felt safe and loved in her presence.'

I became a member of Hampton Methodist Church in June 1989 at the same time as Pam Harrison, and Bill was a church steward. Rev Ronald Kemp made an appeal for more people to get involved, so I asked Bill what it involved and became a steward for the first time in 1991. That was a memorable year for other reasons also...

Brenda was a good friend of mine and often looked after my daughter after school. Picking her up one day I discovered that Brenda had a brother and not many months later the Messinghams became not only friends but also family when John and I were married at HMC in October 1991. Bill stepped in to 'give me away' and thereafter if he phoned I would be told that my dad wanted to speak to me!

They left Hampton in October 1997, moving to Cleethorpes where they had previously enjoyed many holidays. They joined St Andrew's Methodist Church but after 12 years the morning service changed to

9.30 am and it became more difficult to attend regularly. In 2011 they joined the Anglican church within easy walking distance where they were made very welcome and they were very happy there.

Bill died in October 2019. Last year Brenda started going to Cleethorpes Baptist Church and she said it was like she had come full circle, back in the Baptist Church. She died unexpectedly on 13 January 2026.

Liz Windybank



Chaplain's Corner v Dover Athletic – 7th March 2026

Back in July, before the current league season kicked-off, there were 747 teams that had entered in this season's Emirates FA Cup. This weekend will see that whittled down to the final eight. The teams that started on the cup trail back in July knew that they had no chance of reaching the end of the road to Wembley, but they were hopeful that they could journey on that road for as long as possible, with the aim of pocketing some much needed funds, via prize money and gate receipts.

The further a team progresses, the higher the chances become of hosting a team from a higher division. By the time the "big boys" join the road in the third round, most of the teams are concentrating on the league.

The FA Cup usually has some surprises in store. The biggest of which this season, so far, has been Macclesfield of the National League North, knocking out last season's winners, Crystal Palace. There may be more to come yet.

Our involvement in this season's competition came to an end in October, when Eastleigh, from the National League visited Beveree Stadium. But, for the eight left in the draw next Monday, the end of the road is getting very close. Only two will eventually make it all the way, one of which will win the prize.

Many other sports and TV shows, like Master Chef and Strictly Come Dancing have a knock out element to them, where the aim is progress as far as possible on the road to the final, and maybe claim the ultimate prize. The road to the finals is usually littered with hard luck stories and disappointments. Unfortunately, there can only be one winner in these competitions!!

The job application process is very much like a knock out competition these days, with various stages to negotiate. Along the way candidates are eliminated until there is just one successful applicant left. Those unsuccessful should pick themselves up, and try again.

We are currently in the period of Lent, in the Christian calendar, which leads us up to the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Jesus and His close disciples were on the road that will eventually find them in Jerusalem. On route Jesus continues His ministry of healing the sick and teaching the crowds that were following Him everywhere He and His friends went.

Jesus' earthly journey was nearly at its end. Despite being accompanied by so many people on the journey, He was the only one who could go all the way – to the cross at Calvary. It seemed that He was defeated at His crucifixion, but He won the ultimate prize by rising again. Although Jesus is the victor over death – he wants us all to experience the prize of eternal life!! Will you join the celebrations?

Paul Barker

Paul is Chaplain to the Richmond and Hampton Football Club. This was his item for the match programme for the match v Dover Athletic on 7 March. Included here as it is perfect for Lent.

Bible reading notes

The Bible Reading Fellowship produces notes in January, May and September to help with reading the bible every day. At Hampton Mission Partnership you can order them from me to make it even easier! Email me at mike@mssz.co.uk

There are five different series and hopefully one that suits you. 'New Daylight' is their most popular and there is a deluxe version with bigger text. 'Guidelines' is intended for church leaders and students, providing more in-depth study for today's mission and ministry. The focus of 'The Upper Room' is finding God in daily experience. 'Day by Day with God' is written for women by women who have found the bible a source of strength and inspiration for life. 'Bible Reflections for Older People' has 40 bible reflections and prayer suggestions plus interviews and ideas to encourage and inspire.

Liz W uses 'The Upper Room: where the world meets to pray' and she says this:

Over the years I have used several types of daily bible reading notes and have finally found the one that I look forward to reading every day. Each day the notes are by different people from all over the world. A short heading describing the theme of the day is followed by a bible reading which I usually read at least a couple of times to mull over what is being said. This is followed by the meditation on the passage from the day's contributor then a short prayer and 'thought for the day'. Finally there is a 'prayer focus' somehow relating to the day's theme. For example, today's heading is Immeasurable God' with a reading from Psalm 147. The prayer focus is for maths teachers!

Eunice says, *In the days of Jim Stockley our beloved Pastor, (so a day or two ago), Alan Dennison introduced me to 'Daylight Bible Study Notes' (now 'New Daylight') and ever since I have been on a bible study journey which has not only informed my biblical knowledge but more importantly has been a companion in my spiritual development. Time and again I have encountered God in these notes and our relationship continues to develop and deepen.*

A few years ago, Alan asked me to try 'Day by Day with God'. Many of the contributors I had met in 'New Daylight' e.g. Elaine Storkey, Veronika Zundel, Amy Boucher Pye and Lyndall Bywater, so reading their work is often like catching up with old friends and of course I have been introduced to 'new friends.' These are young writers who bring new and fresh insights to the bible. The 'Day by Day' bible study notes aim to 'root women's lives in the bible' but they are too good just to be read by women; everyone should be reading them. They will certainly enrich the lives of all who read them. In these days of equality and gender-fluidity it seems rather anachronistic to aim any bible notes to any specific gender, as Paul says, Christ is for all, so pick up a copy and enjoy your own personal adventure with God as you journey through the bible.

For more information have a look at the BRF website <https://brfonline.org.uk>

Mike Dennison

Small group meetings

Practising the Way

At Goring we have just started a new course in our small groups which meet each week, called Practising the Way: Be with Jesus, become like him, do as he did. This is based on the book by John Mark Comer and is a video with explanations and reflections and some very searching questions for us to answer in our discussion group after the video or by ourselves at home.

Some of the resources are a spiritual health check. This is just for ourselves to see where we are and what areas we might want to work on. Also, we discussed developing a daily prayer rhythm and how this helps us and sets us up for the day.

This week we were given a Formation Audit where we take an inventory of all the forces that are currently forming us and who we are. What habits make up our everyday life, our relationships, what stories we believe, culture, environment and our experiences.

We look forward to meeting each week and although we keep to time and always finish by midday, there is a lot of discussion.

Pam Harrison

The Messiah: the texts behind Handel's masterpiece by Douglas Connelly.

The church homegroup originated at Hampton Baptist Church and it now meets on a Tuesday afternoon at Maggie and Geoff's usually with seven of us. We start with a cuppa, biscuit and chat followed by a short time of prayer.

Chris then leads using a study guide and during Lent we have been looking at some of the key passages in the Old Testament about the longed-for Messiah and their fulfilment in the life and saving work of Jesus. Douglas Connelly's guide has eight studies in the Life Builder Study series. We read the chosen passage in the NIV and The Message and endeavoured to draw out the meaning together. Then we joined in singing songs/hymns that reflect what we have read. Finally, we enjoyed listening to the piece of music from The Messiah relevant to our study.

We occasionally spend a session focusing solely on worship led by Geoff and Maggie with singing, prayer and quiet reflection, often including a time of communion.

It has seemed so appropriate using Handel's wonderful Messiah as the focus of our study during Lent and I think we all looked forward to each week. Our next series of study will be about gratitude. Do speak to Chris if you would like to know more.

Liz Windaybank

Books – both are on the church bookstand

God on Mute by Pete Greig

Pete and his wife Sammy were, until recently, part of the ministry team at Emmaus Road Church, Guildford, director of Waverley Abbey and instigator of the 24-7 Prayer movement. He writes regularly for the podcast 'Lectio 365' which was derived from the Order of the Mustard Seed.

When their two children were very young Sammy developed a brain tumour and this resulted in regularly severe epileptic fits. Pete and their friends spent many hours searching for answers and praying for healing, but it seemed their prayers were not being heard or answered. Pete desperately searched for a book to help him make sense of what was happening, but could not find one so he wrote one himself to help others struggling with unanswered prayer.

God on Mute is a very interesting read and covers the stories of real people and their faith as well as giving some reasons why we think our prayers go unanswered and also what might be happening in reality.

A good recommendation for anyone going through troubled times who feels they are forgotten and not heard.

Pam Harrison

The God Conundrum: an easy guide to life, the universe and everything! By David K Harper

You may know the author as one of the experts on Bargain Hunt, usually colourfully dressed! When I saw an advert for this book I was intrigued and sent off for a copy. When it arrived I was struck by how unassuming it looked with not a single photo. It quickly became obvious that this wasn't a celebrity biography but a serious look at the meaning of life.

David began to investigate Christianity for the first time following his daughter's conversion and dramatic change. He says, 'It was nothing academic, just an ordinary inquisitive layman looking for answers.' He worked on his research full time for 11 months. He started by gathering opinions from those around him by asking three questions: How was the universe created; How did life appear on earth; and Was Jesus a real person? Then he looked at each area in depth, giving his sources in books, online and on YouTube so the reader can verify what he says.

He looks at the written historical evidence for Jesus from both non-believers and believers in Jesus as the Son of God from very early accounts written in the first and early second centuries then delves in to who wrote the New Testament. Then he looks in depth at the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Then he started reading the bible and praying and came to the conclusion that God really does exist, that Jesus is who he says he is and that Christianity is true. Finally he says 'The real proof that Christianity was true was shining in the face of my daughter.' He discovers that believing in your head that God is real is very different from knowing it in your heart.

I can thoroughly recommend this book whether you are a Christian or an agnostic or atheist. It is easy to follow and well researched and presented and I'm sure you will discover the answers to many questions you may have had.

Liz Windaybank

***Sunbury Methodist Church invites you to an evening with
Paul Jones & Fiona Hendley Jones
Hear how faith in God has changed their lives.***



***An uplifting, powerful and humorous story of their journey to meeting God.
From atheism, fear and deception to perfect peace and unconditional love.
Paul Jones - Manfred Mann, The Blues Band, BBC Radio 2, theatre and film
Fiona Hendley Jones - West End theatre, TV, Royal Shakespeare Company
Paul and Fiona met when both appearing at the Royal National Theatre
For many years now, they have travelled extensively, sharing their
testimony and ministering the Gospel.***

Saturday 11th April 2026 at 7:30pm

This is a free event but donations are always welcome.

Doors open at 7pm

Refreshments will be served after the event.

Come and hear what Jesus can do for you!

All are welcome to join us for worship with them on Sunday 12th at 10:30