

Baptists and Methodists together at Hampton Methodist Church



March 2025



At Hampton Court Flower Show 2017

Hampton Methodist Church, Percy Road, Hampton, TW12 2JT

Hampton Mission Partnership is a member of Churches Together around Hampton

Church website <https://hamptonmissionpartnership.org.uk>

Friends

As I am writing this article we are approaching the period, which is called in the Christian Church, Lent. This is a period of 40 days leading from Ash Wednesday to Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It is to be a period of solemn reflection on oneself and our own place in the world. It ends or far better to say culminates in the joyous celebrations which take place as we acknowledge in the Christian Church that Jesus is alive today and lives for evermore.

Having said that I want us just to consider what it means to the Christian and the significance for the world that Jesus did rise from the dead. There is a book, a relatively old book written by a man called Frank Morison, who was a lawyer. He set out from the evidence which was available to disprove that Jesus was risen from the dead. He used material from the gospels together with material from other historical sources to put to bed the theory that Jesus had risen from the dead. He was an atheist and set out to analyse the information from his legal background.

The only trouble was that as he delved deeper and deeper into what was available it had a profound effect upon him and his investigations convinced him that the resurrection really happened and he became a Christian.

There are many bad things happening in the world in which we live and we only have to turn on our television sets to see what evil is happening in the Ukraine and in the lands around Israel to recognise that man after all these years has not received the ability to live alongside his fellow man. Life for all of us is relatively short yet God gives us a tremendous opportunity to find for ourselves the way to eternal life.

There are more Christians in China than there are people living in this country. I know it's a big country but Christianity in many forms is outlawed in that country.

Friends don't let life pass you by. Look at your own lives and consider the claims of Jesus. Come to church at any time you like and remember that God loves each one of us and wants each one of us to make that response to him. Church is not a gathering of people who think they are more superior than others. It is a gathering of forgiven sinners who recognise their need of forgiveness and come with expectancy knowing that God is in the resurrection and rebuilding business.

May God bless you.

Your friend and pastor

Philip

My Mother Kept a Garden

My mother kept a garden,
A garden of the heart.
She planted all the good things
That gave my life its start.
She turned me to the sunshine
And encouraged me to dream,
Fostering and nurturing
The seeds of self-esteem.

And when the winds and rain came,
She protected me enough,
But not too much because she knew
I'd need to stand up strong and tough.
Her constant good example
Always taught me right from wrong,
Markers for my pathway
That will last a lifetime long.

I am my mother's garden.
I am her legacy.
And I hope today she feels the love
Reflected back from me.

Author unknown. Read by Paul at the Celebration of Wendy's Life, with my/me changed to our/us.



Wendy Salmon: a lifetime of service

Wendy had ordered some stair gates for the Extra Mile, and I was delivering them to the church. It was a beautiful October morning as I pulled up at the front of the church. There was a young lady sitting on the church bench enjoying the Autumn sunshine. I asked if she was enjoying a rest, "Oh yes" she said, "This is the only bench in the whole of Percy Road." I smiled but should have said "That's why Wendy had it put there!"

The bench sits in a small garden that is tended by gardeners organized by Wendy. It has a large newish blue noticeboard with a strapline that tells those who pass that we are here to worship God and serve Him in the Community, the final wording of which was Wendy's. The front of the Church has two entrances for vehicles, both protected from rogue parking by yellow lines. Yet another of Wendy's initiatives.

Brothers and Sisters, I could walk you round every corner of this Church and tell you what Wendy has done in each one. I won't because we don't have four hours spare.

But I do have a symbol of all that service and demanding work. It's Wendy's church keys, passed to me by Paul. There is a key for every lock in every place in the church. It's comprehensive, just like Wendy's service.

Wendy has been a constant at the church for everyone, attending as we often say since before she was born. It is here that she grew up in faith, alongside David, it is here that she brought Paul and Alison to Sunday School, it is here that she brought Sebastion and Isaac to Messy Church.

For twenty-five years, a quarter of a century, she was the Lettings Officer, managing every booking and letting of the halls. This is a vital task for hundreds of community groups who have enjoyed holding their activities and events at the church. It is also essential to the financial well-being of the church. Without this income the church would simply be insolvent and have to close.

Now you might be forgiven for thinking that someone who had been at the church for so long would be a stick in the mud and against change and innovative ideas. Not a bit of it. Wendy was always looking for new activities to encourage folk to attend and help us worship to the glory of God.

Let me briefly mention just a few of them. Following a most enjoyable weekend that she and Liz had visiting their lovely friend Hilary in the west country, we were told about the idea of having a monthly Breakfast Church in addition to the normal morning service. I must tell you I had doubts that we could get 12 to 15 folk to come to church as early as 9.15 am. But I should not have doubted! Breakfast Church has been a happy feature since that day. Wendy was also a big supporter of the idea that we Methodists should partner up with our friends at Hampton Baptist Church to become Hampton Mission Partnership. It was a joy for this to come about.

The word Mission is deliberately in the middle of the Church's new name, and that chimes so well with Wendy's natural charitable heart. For as many years as anyone can remember she organized collections for the charity NCH (National Children's Homes, now known as Action for Children). When Vicci Davidson wanted to start a Circuit Baby Basics charity, Wendy was one of the Co- Founders. This was followed by the brave decision to extend this work beyond children aged 0-3 months and Wendy was a Co-Founder of the charitable outreach "The Extra Mile" which did its very first delivery in September 2015. Since then, it has supported an amazing 5,000 children in the local area. Not content with these demanding activities, in 2018 she founded the Bike Hub which provides bikes for refugees and asylum seekers.

I want you to imagine that the roads around the church have been closed to traffic. All the length of Percy Road are five thousand children representing all those helped by The Extra Mile. If we turn into Priory Road, it is full of nearly two thousand folk on bikes representing all the asylum seekers and refugees who have received a bike from our Bike Hub. Then, turn right into Hatherop Road to see thousands of mums with Moses baskets, representing all those helped by Baby Basics. This charitable endeavour requires great teamwork, alongside great courage, and great love. Wendy had shed loads of such qualities.

Alongside all this Wendy quietly and effectively did her work as a Pastoral Visitor. A feature of this was what you might call "Care and Cake." So many have over the years had their lives brightened by a chat and a

delicious cake. I had a lovely message from 14-year-old Israela who told me of the delight she had every birthday receiving a marvellous cake baked by Wendy, always different, always stunning, always yummy.

Let me say a word about Wendy's faith. It was rock solid!

She loved to study the word, and hosted hundreds of housegroups at her home in Hatherop Road. After Covid she enjoyed going to the home group organized by Chris. She keenly attended Bible study at "Insights" and more recently at Bible Fellowship. When Covid shut these gatherings down, clever David Priddy "invented" something called Zoom and Wendy was able to join and thoroughly enjoy Friday Fellowship. It was great for her to have new virtual friends who she took to heart.

Covid also played a part in one of Wendy's other great talents- singing. She was as many of you know a choir member for well over thirty years and it is so special that many of the Choir members came and sang at the Celebration Service in Wendy's name.

But Covid closed the church and even when we reopened there was no singing. No singing- you can't say that to Wendy! Then we heard from our Superintendent Minister David Innes that the Government had relaxed the regulations to allow churches to have up to six singers.

The talented Jacques, who had hand built the AV system so that services could be streamed out to the world, fixed up mics and we asked for volunteer singers. I had barely sent the email when Wendy's reply flew back- I'll be one! So, at your leisure you can go on You Tube and hear Wendy, Chris, Janet, Maggie, with guests like Dorothy leading in tuneful praise. We still have the system, and it is great for learning new hymns (something Wendy loved) with our brilliant music group.

So, our sister Wendy was both a Martha and a Mary. She worked her socks off for her family, for the church, and for the Lord.

I am sure that she will forgive me for saying that the way she dealt with her illness was a stunning witness to her faith.

Yes, she was supported through countless hospital visits, treatments, and procedures, and she loved dearly her supporters who were alongside her, but she never, never, lost her faith.

Let me steal a slogan from her beloved David.

Wendy Salmon: a lifetime of service and a faith that was truly sure and steadfast.

Mark Gilks



Housegroup lunch July 2015



They sang carols for an hour outside Waitrose and raised £110.20 for the Extra Mile



Israella's 14th birthday cake



Wendy's cake celebrating collecting 1000 bikes for the Bike Project



Some of the Extra Mile team

Reflections and prayers at the Celebration of Wendy's life

Before our prayers a few personal reflections from me, Wendy's brother-in-law. Some lives have more lasting effect on us than others, be they family or friends, don't they? From the number of people here in church today and watching the webcast, I know Wendy's life is one of those that has touched many, many people and will never be forgotten by them.

I knew Wendy, or as she was affectionately known to the close family, Wig, for a very long time, over 56 years in fact. She was just 15 years old when I first met her when she was living with the family in Belgrade Road. She was learning to play the piano then I recall and was keen on Beatles and Rolling Stones records, Mary Quant clothes and wild makeup and hair dyes and a little later on had a boyfriend called Brian. The family has already told you the rest of her story so I won't repeat it! Except two further facts: Wendy loved coming to stay with us at our Norfolk home after David died and made some good friends there and she was a lifelong Liberal Democrat and leaflet deliverer for the party for many years.

For me 3 memorable characteristics stand out which sum up Wendy's personality and life.

First: A Life of Action.

Wendy's Christian faith was the central motivation of all she did. She had a deeply held belief and trust in Jesus as her personal Lord and Saviour whom she knew personally, intimately, but her Christian faith was not just an intellectual exercise, a mental acceptance of God's grace and of the salvation Jesus had won for her dying on the cross and rising again, but it was also a demonstration of passionate action in practice which sought to reach out to help those in need. She wasn't just a listener to the word of God but a doer of it. Her Christianity reflected exactly what James in his letter in the New Testament told his readers they must do in 1 v22-24 and 2 v15-17.

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

"Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

That was Wendy! She lived out her Christianity in all her work, both inside this church and outside, in the various groups she helped to start or run in the community. The list of these organisations is truly impressive but modesty prevented her making anything of the number or her role in them.

Second: A Life of Christian Service.

Wendy's whole life was one of quiet, undemonstrative but constant service of others. When she saw human need this was an opportunity for her to serve her Lord: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and elderly, support the weak and welcome the stranger, the outcast and the refugee.

She lived out Jesus's command in Mark 10 v44-45: "... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant..."

So whether it was baking a cake to take on a visit to a local housebound or elderly person, arranging storage of used bikes at the church to be distributed to refugees and asylum seekers to provide transport for them to access essential services and education, supporting the local Food Bank, obtaining baby equipment or knitting clothes for the Baby Basics project to help women in/leaving prison or in extreme poverty with childcare needs, Wendy was there to serve their needs.

And members here are well aware of the extent of her service to this church too using her administrative skills on different committees, and her gifts of patience, compassion, kindness and commonsense. She played peacemaker more than once such as when the local Baptist Church and the Methodist congregation merged into the Hampton Mission Partnership in 2019, or sorting out coffee arrangements and hall booking and door key problems.

Third: A Life of Praise.

Music, and especially singing, was a constant source of joy as well as an emotional release and strength for her throughout her life. Singing was a huge part of Wendy's life. It embodied and reflected her Christian faith, as for many of us, and expressed her personal experience of salvation and praise for what God had done for her in Jesus. Hence we are singing some of Wendy's favourite Christian songs in this service.

Apart from singing in this church where she worshipped her entire life, she sang soprano in the Teddington Choral Society for 35 years. I recall some years ago having a very happy evening when we participated with her and David in a scratch singalong choral performance of the Messiah at St Mary's, Hampton.

Through song Wendy could express her assurance and hope that whatever happened her future eternity was secure with Jesus, even when her husband David died. As her cancer worsened last year she faced her own death with great courage, calmness, cheerfulness and dignity. How did she manage that? Another of her favourite songs, "10,000 Reasons: Bless the Lord" tells us how praise of our loving God who supports and sustains us to the very end of our lives through death, is key:

"And on that day When my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will Sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore
Forevermore."

Wendy's whole life became a song of action, service and praise. When Elaine and I saw Wig the evening before she died in Kingston Hospital and we all had communion together, she was still absolutely lucid and she was still singing to the very end. We sang, 'And Can It Be' and 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus'. Now she can sing the Hallelujah Chorus for as long as she likes with David again in heaven accompanied by the best scratch choir of angels you will ever hear!

So to our prayers.

I believe the takeaway memory Wendy would want us to remember her by from her life and this service is the ongoing challenge that James sets all Christians in Chapter 1 verse 22:

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

1. A prayer that recalls the organisations and people she helped through her voluntary work.

"Dear Lord, we thank you so much for the service, love, support and practical help Wendy brought to so many in this community and beyond in our country and in the Third World throughout her life. Thank you that she realised serving you means being an active doer of the word not just a listener of it.

We pray that those who received Wendy's kindness, practical love and care may come to recognise the source of that love was Jesus Christ and put their own faith and trust in him as she did.

In Wendy's memory we ask that through your Holy Spirit and the service of others, you will continue to bless the organisations she helped to found, or worked in, so they may meet today's needs and be beacons of God's light, grace and hope in the darkness for those who are suffering, in despair, distress or poverty.

Particularly we pray for: Baby Basics in Sunbury, The Extra Mile, Churches Together Around Hampton, Action For Children, the Food Bank, the Bike Project and Hampton Mission Partnership.

We ask this in Jesus' name. AMEN"

2. A time of silent reflection for you to recollect and remember with love, gratitude and thanksgiving all Wendy meant to you as a close member of the family, a mother, sister, grandmother, aunt, relative or as a friend, church member, former teaching colleague or a fellow volunteer in one of her charitable organisations. Thank God you will carry those memories with you for the rest of your life and pray you cherish them to honour her.

“Grant us, Lord, the wisdom and the grace to use aright the time that is left to us here on earth. Lead us to repent of our sins, the evil we have done and the good we have not done; and strengthen us to follow the steps of your Son, in the way that leads to the fullness of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” AMEN.

3. A Prayer for all of us who mourn the loss of Wendy so quickly taken from us at the end and especially the close family: Paul and Nicola, Sebastian and Isaac, Alison, Matt and Fern and Elaine and myself, Charlotte and Oliver. For all of us grieving her physical passing we ask that Jesus will help us through this time of darkness day by day to cope without her physical presence and that we may have the comfort of the Holy Spirit to bring us into the light of the knowledge that she is now safe with Jesus forever.

“Lord Jesus, you wept at the grave of Lazarus and comforted his sisters Martha and Mary, look with compassion on all those who mourn today, especially those whose loss is keenest because their love was greatest. Give us the comfort of your presence and the hope, joy and peace of the Holy Spirit we need to face life again in the days ahead. We pray this in and through the name of Jesus who died and rose again to bring us victory over sin and the grave.” AMEN.

4. A personal challenge to all who are followers of Jesus to live our Christian lives as Wendy did: to be a doer of the word and not just a listener to Jesus’s words.

How will you sing Wendy’s song of: Action, Service and Praise every day?

“O God my creator and redeemer, help me not to be a mere listener of your word but a doer of it. May I, as Wendy did, seek to serve Jesus as my Saviour and Master in all I do, to love every person as you have loved me and to help everyone in need whatever their background or circumstances. Show me what you have uniquely called me to do and may others see Jesus reflected in this service and want to follow him too. May I learn how to sing Wendy’s song so that her lasting legacy will be clearly seen in my actions, service and praise that are lived out every day for Jesus. Through Jesus Christ my Lord.” AMEN.

5. A blessing in memory of Wendy whose trials are now over that she will, ‘glorify God and enjoy him forever’ and rejoice with the angels, finally at peace, reunited with David and her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ forever. A verse from earlier in James Chapter 1 v 12

“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

And Matthew 25 verses 23

Wendy: “Well done, good and faithful servant.... Enter into the joy of your lord.”

So Wendy, much loved family member, relative, friend and colleague:

‘May you rest in peace and rise in glory!’ And the people said: AMEN!

Rev Cllr Robert Donald

Assistant Clergyman St Luke’s St Albans



Lunch break during 2019 Woman to Woman Conference at Methodist Central Hall

Wendy's Reflections on Hampton Methodist Church (September 2016)

I could say I was born into Hampton Methodist Church. My parents were both strong Christians. My father was originally an Anglican and attended St. Mary's Church as a choir boy and he became a Methodist when he met my mum. They were married in 1948 in the large hall, which was the church before our present building.

Both my parents were very involved in our church. My mother was a Sunday School leader, Class leader and Leader of the Women's Fellowship group with her great friend Ethel Clark. My father was a choir member and communion steward.

Sunday School in those days had large numbers and met on a Sunday afternoon. There were many families with children in our church. The first minister I remember the name of was Rev Martin Yeomans who was minister from 1954 -1958, so I was five years old when he left. There have been 11 ministers/pastors since then all bringing their different gifts in leadership. (Now 13.)

In 1963 our current church was opened. I was there when the foundation stone was laid and I remember it pouring with rain as we held an open-air dedication. I was also present when 'Aunty' Weir opened the church - we have the special key in the archives that she used to open the door.

Over the years I have been involved in many ways in our church -choir member, Sunday School teacher, Leader of the Mother and Toddler group (which I took over from Ros Sandberg), Inters club leader, Property committee secretary, Secretary for Action for Children since 1979, Hall lettings secretary since 1997 - I sometimes wonder what happened to the '6 year rule' for these two?! And more recently as Steward and being involved in Messy Church, Baby Basics and The Extra Mile.

In 1971 I went to Southlands Methodist Teacher training college where I studied for three years to be a Primary School teacher, specialising in the Nursery/Infant, 3 -7 years age range. My major subject was Religious Studies and minor was Art/Craft.

When I qualified as a teacher I took up my first appointment at Crane Infant school on the Butts Farm Estate, Hanworth in September 1974. It was a very happy school with a young head teacher, a supportive staff and lovely children who were all eager to learn.

In April 1975, just four days before my 22nd birthday, I suffered a devastating blow when my dear father took his own life. I was still living at home with my mother and with support from the church we managed to get through a very difficult time. I will never forget the support of Rev Harry Dodd (minister at the time) and other church members to our family. This is what being part of a church family is all about.

It was soon after this that David moved in across the road and started to attend our church. God certainly had a clear plan for me there as we were married in 1978 in our church. Paul was born in 1981 and Alison in 1990 - both of them grew up in our church.

My mother developed dementia in the latter years of her life and eventually had to move to residential care when it was no longer safe for her to live at home. She was still able to join in hymns word perfectly until

about a year before she died. She eventually died in Sunbury Nursing Home in 2001 by which time she didn't know me or my sister.

In 2010 David was diagnosed with cancer and we travelled a road of mountains and valleys together as he underwent many sessions of chemotherapy, radiotherapy and a major operation. I finally lost him two years ago in 2014. Again, I have found that I have received great support from friends at church and by faith and with God's grace I have survived.

The church has had great changes over the many years that I have been a member. We no longer have large numbers of children in our Sunday School (Discovery Club) as Sundays have become a day when many other things happen for young people, so often church seems to take second place.

I have been encouraged by several newcomers that have joined us in recent months, making us now a truly multicultural congregation- I wonder if we are meeting the needs of these new folk in terms of style of worship and different styles of music? I am excited about our forthcoming Alpha course which is such an opportunity to encourage those newcomers and draw others that are on 'the fringe' into our fellowship.

With regard to our church building, I would love to see it used as a multi-functional space where we could hold a great variety of events - this would obviously involve the removal of the pews, which seems to be the way churches are moving forward. Take for example All Saints Church, and the URC Hampton Hill, where on Tuesdays the church is filled with mums, grandmas, babies and toddlers for 'Place to Play.' We are also now the only church in the Circuit that has pews. It would be great to have a kitchen area in the church where we could serve hot drinks at times when the church was in use for events. All Saints has a new kitchen in their church - take a look next time you are there.

I think we could look at ways of encouraging more men into our congregation-perhaps a men's house group?

I think we should have a way of following up anyone who comes regularly to our church and then is suddenly missing for several weeks - if this is the responsibility of the Pastoral stewards it needs to be taken seriously and systematically. Also a system for recording the details of newcomers - an e mail address would be sufficient, so that we can follow them up and invite them to our events at church.

One final thought - how could we be connecting with the many regular users of our halls week in week out for activities? Perhaps the Welcome Pack might be a start?

Wendy Salmon

When Wendy's mum, Eva, died, Wendy wanted to purchase something useful for our church in her memory, so she bought the book stand which is now in the car park foyer. Books can be borrowed by all users of the church and halls.

It now seems entirely appropriate that Alison, Matt and Fern recently brought Wendy's books to church and the first of these are now on the stand ready to be enjoyed by others.



In May 2024, Baby Basics Sunbury marked the occasion of our 10th Anniversary with a Circuit Service and tea at Sunbury Methodist Church. Our guest speaker was Louise Ellis, National Development Director of Baby Basics UK, who travelled from Sheffield for the occasion. The church was filled with our volunteers, supporters and referrers, along with friends from around the Circuit. At that time we marked 2,279 referrals that had been responded to since we started in 2014.

Since that time, the number of referrals has increased dramatically, with the total at the end of December 2024 standing at 2,483. This increase has continued into 2025 as more and more families are finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Over those years we have responded to calls for help from midwives, health visitors, social workers and other charities, who work with refugee families, teenage mums, women who have fled abusive relationships, those who have no recourse to public funds and any woman or family who the referrer feels would benefit from our help. Our standard offer is a Moses basket filled with items such as toiletries, clothes, nappies, bedding and toys, which gives a new mum somewhere for their baby to sleep as well as important things for baby's first few days/weeks. This also gives mum some peace of mind, knowing that she does not have to worry about finding these things. We have had some lovely comments, such as this from a young mum:

"Omg, I'm going through all the stuff in the basket and all I can say is thank you so much! It's way more than I expected. I honestly don't have to figure out buying clothes for him now. Thank you to the people who made up the basket"

We cover a wide area, and take referrals on the word of the healthcare professional. Our only stipulation geographically is that the referrer is able to collect the basket from our storeroom at the church.

We have a team of ten volunteers who man our storeroom on Wednesday afternoons to make up baskets, receive donations from supporters, and hand over baskets to referrers who are collecting in order to pass the baskets on to their clients. I'd particularly like to acknowledge the contribution made by Wendy Salmon, who was part of the team from the start, and who will be very much missed.

We rely on our supporters for donations in order to fill the baskets. Pre-loved Moses baskets are always welcomed, and clothing sized 0-3months is welcomed when our stocks get low. A list of items that we would be happy to receive can be found on our website at <https://e-voice.org.uk/sunbury-methodist-church/baby-basics/> We are grateful to organisations such as the Hygiene Bank in Hampton, and Stripey Stork in Reigate for some of our supplies, but we do have to buy a lot of items new, which means that we are constantly on the lookout for new funding streams, whether this be grant applications or donations from charitable organisations and individual donors.

We are very grateful for the prayers of everyone in the churches of the Teddington Circuit and the surrounding communities. We couldn't do it without that support.

If you would like to get involved in the work of Baby Basics Sunbury, please get in touch at babybasicssunbury@gmail.com

"There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land." Deuteronomy 15:11

Jill Fraser and Mary Somerville

It's Wednesday and you're Welcome!

Happy news! On Wednesday afternoons the church welcomes everyone to come along to some most enjoyable events. The sessions alternate between a really friendly drop-in called Cuppa and Company and our popular Bible Fellowship.

Cuppa and Company is held every fortnight and starts at 2.00pm in the Small Hall. It's an opportunity to come and spend an hour or so chatting with friends about everything and anything in a relaxed, comfortable environment. It is a lovely place to invite your friends and neighbours and everyone is welcome.

Alternating with Cuppa and Company is our Bible Fellowship which has either a Bible Study or a themed discussion and prayer. The emphasis is on practical and supportive ways to share and grow our faith.

The Bible study passage that we are currently looking at is the Sermon on the Mount, which can be found in chapters Five to Seven in Matthew's Gospel. This choice was based on our view of the importance of this block of Jesus' teachings.

It has proved to be a timely choice! The clash between Jesus' teaching and the world of superpower politics has been intense of late.

The American Evangelical Christian Leader Russell Moore has recently pointed out that many pastors in the U.S. had told him disturbing stories about their congregants being upset when they heard references to passages from the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus espoused the principles of forgiveness and mercy that are central to Christian doctrine.

He reports "Multiple Pastors tell me, essentially the same story about quotes about Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount....and often have someone come up after a service to say, "Where did you get those liberal talking points?" Moore adds, "And what was alarming to me is that in most of the scenarios, when the Pastor would say." I'm literally quoting Jesus Christ, the response would be," Yes, but that doesn't work anymore. That's weak."

So, it seems to Russell Moore that for many churchgoers the teachings of Jesus are simply seen as "too weak" for a Christianity that has decided to worship power instead.

Now the problem is that when you worship power, things like mercy, empathy, and compassion will begin to sound like a compromise or a weakness, or even worse, they sound like sins.

Jesus didn't use all his heavenly power to force the world to obey his will. Jesus gave up his life out of love for the world, even for the broken, the sinner, and yes, even for your enemies.

Jesus didn't live by the love of power. Jesus lived by the power of love.

So, why not come along to hear and discuss these vital teachings at your very own Bible Fellowship, and on the following Wednesday enjoy good company at Cuppa and Company. You are all warmly welcome!

Linda and Mark



Cuppa and Company

Church Lettings and The Bike Project

As the Church Halls Lettings Officer and the Bike Project Coordinator, I just wanted to provide some information regarding these roles and responsibilities – members of the Church Council will probably be aware but those not members of the Church Council may not be.

Church Lettings

I took over as the Church Halls Lettings Officer two years ago, starting with the financial year running from 1st September 2022, and therefore this is my third year in office. This post was previously held by Wendy Salmon for 25 years. I doubt whether I will last that long in this position as I will be 78 later in March 2025!

I have found it a challenging role as it is essentially a 7 day a week job, having to deal with regular emails from existing regular users of our halls as well as prospective new users, and also individuals who want to make bookings for parties at the weekend. All this has to be coordinated and a fair amount of diplomacy is also required as there are occasional ‘clashes’ between users of both halls when both are booked at the same time, and the issue of noise levels is raised. This is because the user of one hall may require quiet from the other hall in order to hold their event or vice versa.

My job involves issuing monthly invoices to the regular hall users, and arranging bookings for parties and other one-off events, arranging for keys to be provided for these events, and arranging payments for these events.

At the beginning of each financial year my responsibility is to issue new Standard License Agreements for the regular users to sign. Other church organisations that use our premises are also required annually to provide a ‘Statement of Beliefs’ and to complete a Schedule 14A, and this I am responsible for organising.

If I am away for any length of time this can create a problem, in that I have nobody to whom I can delegate my responsibilities. This would apply if I am away for 4 or 5 weeks which does happen if I visit my relatives in Australia, or my daughter in Germany. Short absences of around 2 weeks do not present a problem.

To book either of the halls for parties, the cost is £27 per hour for the small hall and £30 per hour for the large hall. There is also a 4 hour party rate (£88 for the small hall and £104 for the large hall). An email can be sent via a link on the Hampton Mission Partnership website and these emails are also forwarded to me

I have enjoyed my time as the Lettings Officer and hopefully I am considered to be doing a good job, but it does take up more of my time than I had first envisaged.

The Bike Project

For anyone that does not know about this project, I will elaborate.

The Bike Project is a charity that collects second hand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. The charity has set up drop off points for people who want to donate a bike, in the London area and elsewhere, and Hampton Methodist Church is one such drop off point, or Hub.

Wendy Salmon was the Bike Project Coordinator until recently, and after her passing Hampton Mission Partnership was seeking someone to take on these duties, as this is one project that Wendy was very passionate about and wished that it would continue after her death.

After much careful thought and prayer I offered my services to undertake this role, and consequently I am the new Bike Project Coordinator at Hampton Methodist Church.

My responsibilities are: -

- To action any emails or telephone calls received from potential donors, by arranging for the bikes to be registered on The Bike Project website.
- Arranging for the bikes to be dropped off at Hampton Methodist Church, and stored securely.
- Completing a Check In form on The Bike Project website for each bike that is donated.
- Arranging for The Bike Project to collect the bikes when our storage has reached capacity and can be accommodated in the pick up vehicle.

Again, this is a 7 day job, as donors send emails very regularly and these require a speedy response in order to ensure that donors are informed of the procedure for registering the bikes and the drop off days and times.

Since I have been doing this job, I have been grateful for the assistance of Barry Reeves, Michael Dennison, members of the Computer Club and The Extra Mile team, in order to deal with donors who drop off bikes when I am not available. However, any extra help is always welcome.....

Anybody that wants to donate a bike has to register the bike first on The Bike Project website by accessing: www.thebikeproject.co.uk/donate-bike. They will then receive a reference number which must be sent to me with the brand and colour of the bike. Alternatively an email can be sent to: bikehub@hamptonmissionpartnership.org.uk and all these emails are forwarded to me for action.

I have now retired from what was my 'Day Job' but I find that I am now just as busy, if not more so, than when I was working!

Willem Sandberg



Green Thai chicken curry

Marrowing the chicken overnight maximises the flavour of this very spicy curry. Once cooked, the finished curry can be stored chilled or reheated as required. For a milder curry, substitute green peppers for the green chillies.

Serves 4
 1 serving 305 kcal/4.7g fat
 Preparation time 25 minutes
 Marinating time 1 hour
 Cooking time 30 minutes

- 1 Make the paste by grinding all the ingredients in either a food processor or liquidiser. Scrape the paste into a bowl, then rinse out the food processor bowl with a little water.
- 2 Add the chicken pieces to the paste and mix well. Allow to marinate for a minimum of 1 hour or ideally overnight.
- 3 In a non-stick pan dry-fry the onion until soft, then add the chicken and cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring continuously. Add the remaining ingredients except the cornflour and fresh coriander.
- 4 Slake the cornflour with a little cold water and stir into the sauce. Simmer gently for 15-20 minutes until the sauce thickens and the chicken is cooked through. Just before serving, stir in the fresh coriander.



For the curry paste
 3 garlic cloves, peeled
 1 tbsp ground coriander
 ½ tsp ground turmeric
 ¼ tsp fenugreek seeds or ground fenugreek
 2-3 small whole fresh green chillies
 seeds removed from 8 crushed cardamom pods
 2 tps chopped fresh lemongrass
 2 tps vegetable stock powder
 4 large skinless chicken breasts, cut into pieces
 1 large red onion, finely chopped
 1 tsp tamarind paste or hot fruit chutney
 4 kaffir lime leaves
 1 x 400ml can reduced-fat coconut milk
 1 tbsp cornflour
 2 tpsps chopped fresh coriander

102 POULTRY - CASSEROLES AND CURRIES

TIRAMISU

(SERVES 6-8)

When making double quantity 3 packs sponge fingers are reqd.

3 (size 1) egg yolks	3 tablespoons rum
2oz (50g) caster sugar	about 28 sponge fingers
an 8oz (225g) tub of mascarpone (Italian cream cheese)	2oz (50g) plain chocolate, chopped
2 (size 1) egg whites	You'll need a 3-pint (1.7 litre) loaf tin, measuring 9in x 5in (23cm x 13cm) at the top
¼ pint (150 ml) very strong espresso coffee	

First put the egg yolks into a medium-sized bowl together with the sugar and beat with an electric hand whisk on high speed for about 3 minutes, or until the mixture forms a light, pale mousse.

In a separate (large) bowl stir the mascarpone to soften it, then gradually beat in the egg yolk mixture. Between each addition beat well until the mixture is smooth before adding more.

Now wash and dry the beaters on the whisk so they are perfectly clean, then in a third separate bowl whisk the egg whites until they form soft peaks. Fold this into the mascarpone mixture and put the bowl to one side.

Next pour the coffee and rum into a shallow dish and dip 7 or 8 sponge fingers in the liquid. Arrange these horizontally across the base of the tin, then cover them with half the mascarpone mixture and sprinkle that with half the chopped chocolate. Now cover with a further layer of dipped sponge fingers, followed by the rest of the mascarpone mixture and chopped chocolate. Top this with a final layer of dipped sponge fingers, cover the tin with foil or clingfilm and refrigerate overnight.

To serve, slide a palette knife all around the sides of the tin and turn the whole thing out on to a serving dish. Serve cut into slices. Note: because this dessert contains raw eggs, it may not be suitable for very young children or very old people.

FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES MURPHY

The tiramisu was mentioned more than once in sympathy cards to the family!



The official Platinum Jubilee pudding made by Wendy for our Big Jubilee Lunch in 2022



Jubilee Kitchen



Enjoying Wendy's fish pie at Friday Focus in May 2013



The recent activities of Ladies Guild

The good news is that since September 2024 we have had four new members joining us. This is excellent as, during the last few years, our numbers have decreased due to several people moving away.

Autumn 2024 marked our 60th anniversary and we celebrated with an enjoyable lunch at La Familia. We have members who joined many years ago and, amazingly, two founder members - Joyce and Janet - who still attend regularly. We spent one session recounting our memories of "What we were doing in 1964" which varied from being at primary school to being mums with young children.

Joyce has been assiduous in keeping notes of our activities over the years and we enjoyed looking at photos, membership lists and programmes etc. For a good number of years, members took part in local carnival processions, in amazing costumes and riding on floats built on the backs of lorries before Health and Safety prevented this. One theme involved members wearing black fishnet tights! Not something we are likely to repeat now.

In October and November we had three interesting talks. The first was given by Geoff Lambert from Medical Detection Dogs, describing how dogs, because of their incredible sense of smell, can be trained to detect, among other things, different types of cancers and also give early warnings to people of imminent problems well before the patient feels any symptoms coming on. Several visitors joined us for this presentation which coincided with Louise's sale of jewellery and art work. A wonderful amount of £142.95 was raised for The Extra Mile, and a good quantity of jewellery, cards and art work was bought.

Next we had a talk by Cllr. Suzette Nicholson about her year as Mayor from 2023 - 2024. We learned a lot about aspects of this which we had not considered before, plus she was able to answer our questions on local issues.

To follow this, we heard about our member Jacquie's experience of having a small part in the new film "The Thursday Murder Club". We are all looking forward to seeing this when it is released. We enjoyed our usual Carols and Mince Pies when Philip accompanied and led the singing. Together with church members and friends we all had a splendid Christmas Lunch at Sunbury. So far this year we have had a Beetle Drive and a wide-ranging talk by Rev. Simon Lane.

We are looking forward to hearing a talk about the Seven Saxon Kings' Embroideries being undertaken at Kingston Parish Church, on Tuesday 25 March. We have all realised that we know very little of Saxon history, so look forward to learning more about the royal connections with Kingston upon Thames. There is a fascinating short film on the website of Kingston Parish Church about the Embroideries. [The Seven Saxon Kings Embroidery Project - All Saints Church](#) Everyone is welcome to come to this meeting and will be asked to pay £3 as the cost of the speaker is higher than we usually pay.

To finish we will have an Easter Lunch with worship led by Philip.

Janice Thompson



60th anniversary lunch

Books

The Last Laugh by Steve Legg

Steve Legg is a Christian speaker, comedian and magician. He has performed gigs all over the world and has attracted acclaim from the likes of Paul Daniels and Canon and Ball. He is also local to West Sussex where I now live and some of the places he talks about in Littlehampton I know very well.

This book covers his reflections, thoughts and some of the issues he has to address while he negotiated cancer. He manages to see the funny side of things and continues to spread joy and share his faith journey with others all while traversing the tricky issues of recurring cancerous lumps and of not being able to work due to being too ill. He addresses the question of where is God in all of this? His positive outlook is an inspiration to all facing a difficult time and is a short easy to read little book.

I can thoroughly recommend it whether you are currently going through tough times or not. Although it did not end well for Steve, he passed away in September 2024, he knew where he was destined for and was at peace.

It's a Dog's Life: Finding the profound in the peculiar by Jeff Lucas

A slimline book, ideal for train or plane journeys as well as bedtime reading. This little book has very short chapters of no more than two or three pages and only 127 pages in all.

Jeff has been preaching for many years, both here and in America and his lively jovial style comes across in all his stories. He reflects on aspects and experiences he has had throughout his varied career and many a time I could identify with what situations he has been in. His anecdotes are amusing, but sometimes reflective as you can learn from all of these experiences.

I would recommend this if you would like a light hearted look at life and it would also make an excellent gift for someone.

Pam Harrison

The Girl from Montego Bay: the autobiography of Britain's first black woman bishop by Rose Hudson-Wilkin

Having seen her on tv on various occasions I wanted to find out more about the life of the Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin CD MBE KHC. She was born in Jamaica in 1961 and had a very challenging early life when her mother left her and her father neglected her. Early on she said, 'Lord, I will be faithful to your calling and when the Church says 'yes' to women, I will be ready.'

She has a great love for the country of her birth and first moved to England when she was 18 to train as an evangelist with the Church Army. Here she met her future husband and steadfast supporter, Ken. As a student she had a poster that read, 'Do not go where the path leads. Go where there is no path and leave a trail.'

She was ordained as a priest in 1994 following the vote to allow women into the priesthood and faced discrimination and prejudice with boldness, never afraid to challenge the status quo. She became the first ever woman chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons and was commended for introducing to the Commons prayers that were relevant to current situations. In 2019 she became Bishop of Dover.

It was a most enjoyable read with much warmth and humour, like when Queen Elizabeth wanted her to be one of her chaplains and Rose and Ken were invited to dinner at Windsor Castle and another situation when she became known as 'the vicar on the roof!'

Liz Windaybank

Magazine editors: Willem Sandberg and Liz Windaybank

CAREHOME CLOTHING DONATIONS

Could you donate clothes for care home residents in need?

Local charity, Embracing Age, is compiling emergency clothing packs for care homes. We need clothes for men and women, in good condition, that are easy to put on and take off including:

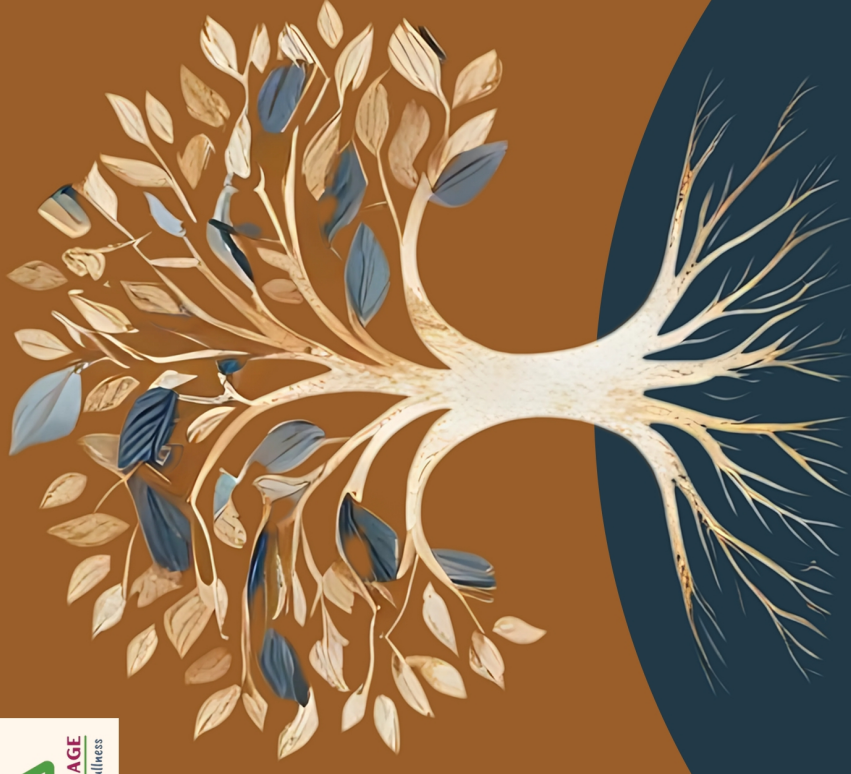
- Blouses & shirts
- Cardigans & jumpers
- T- shirts & tops
- Dresses/Elasticated skirts
- Trousers & tracksuit bottoms
- Nightwear & dressing gowns
- Ponchos & shawls
- Vests & stretchy socks
- Hats, gloves & scarves
- Jackets & Fleeces (waist/thigh length)
- Clothes Hangers

If you can knit or crochet, we also have patterns for bed capes we would love to include in the clothing packs.

Contact: mary@embracingage.org.uk to arrange a collection. Thank you!



embracingage.org.uk/richmond
Reg. Charity No. 1160400



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