

Baptists and Methodists together at Hampton Methodist Church



October 2025



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>

Dear friends

Church life can be very ordinary sometimes. However, here at Hampton we are enjoying a period of great variety in terms of the services with which I personally have been involved.

On 31 August we had a marvellous service where Andrew Wilson was received into membership and he has already embarked on his studies to be a local preacher. Andrew, whose parents live in Knaresborough in North Yorkshire, had a tremendous experience of God whilst driving up the A1. God spoke to him, and in spite of him being very intelligent and holding down a very good job, he felt that he was being guided by God in a different direction. His testimony on the day was very moving.

On 28 September we celebrated 10 years of The Extra Mile, which you may know tries to meet the needs of parents who have young children. During this service there was a video presentation from Rev Vicci Davidson, the minister who helped to initiate the project. There were also items by Alison Baker, who deals with all referrals to The Extra Mile, and Munira Wilson our local MP, who is also a great supporter. This was a lovely informative and inspirational service enjoyed and appreciated by all who were present.

On 12 October we will be celebrating our Harvest Festival. During this service we will be thanking God for his provision, and donating gifts which will be given to local projects where the welfare of people in need is a concern.

What has all this got to do with us and our life situation you may well be asking? Well it shows us that Jesus is interested in every part of our lives. He is interested in each of us as individuals, just as he is interested in Andrew. He is interested in everyone, whether they be refugees or people in need in our local community. God is interested in anyone who is reading this magazine. You may be in need; God is interested and weeps for you and with you. You may be someone who has the gifts that can meet the needs of others. In which case he wants you to use those gifts and enable them to be used in meeting the needs of others.

God bless you and don't just plod through life; get in touch with God and let him lead you and use you and bless you.

Your friend and pastor

Philip

You can catch up with our services online on the church website
<https://hamptonmissionpartnership.org.uk/online-services/>

Russell Parker – Life Timeline

Dear Church Family

On Sunday 16 March a service was held at Hampton Mission Partnership to celebrate the life of Rev Russell Parker, Sue Kotze's dad. It had been kindly suggested to hold the service in Hampton as it would be easier all round and easier to stream for those back in South Africa who wanted to join in. Some of you had met him as he baptised both Lex and Jac at Hampton many years ago.



We would like to express our thanks to you dear Church family for making the service such a special celebration! Thank you to those who kindly joined us for the second service of the day! For those who worked so hard to set up tables and food and serve tea twice! Thank you to the music group for giving your time to make the service so special. Thank you to Eunice for reading and helping with the flowers (amongst other things) and to Mark for being so inspired and bringing the joyous message of the resurrection that we could truly celebrate in.

Thank you all!

Here is the timeline that Mark read at the service. It is still available to watch on YouTube -if only for the electric performance of Dana DeWaal singing 'How Great Thou Art' – accompanied by his wife Anne!

Russell, or Rus as he was known - was born in 1942 in Chester-Le-Street, County Durham to Tom and Gladys Parker. Tom was Training with the Royal Navy Submarines in Stavanga when his son was born.

Rus only knew his father as a photo on the mantelpiece. He said he remembered seeing a German plane shot down – the pilot bailed and was found under a tree, smoking a cigarette, happy to be out of the war!

When the war ended Tom spent 2 or 3 weeks in Simon's Town and Cape Town and decided he wanted to come back and work with the less privileged. Tom studied at Cliff College and became a Methodist Minister.

In July 1947 Tom left for South Africa. Gladys and Rus followed in Oct '47. They went over in the Athlone Castle which was still kitted out for soldiers. Children were not allowed in the dining room but Russell hid under the table and sang God save the King!

The family arrived in the Northern Transvaal which was wild African bush with snakes and you could hear hyenas at night. Rus spent happy days running free on the farms of people in the congregations.

The family moved on to Randfontein, Durban and then Capetown. It was here that Rus met Aileen after Tom's first service at Rosebank Methodist Church. Rus admits to spotting her in the choir during the service! Rus went on to study at Rhodes University and become...you guessed it a Methodist Minister!

He was also part of a Band called the TikToks- so way ahead of their time! Their speciality was gospel and African American spirituals and they also got a crowd swinging on a Saturday night!

Aileen went nursing and gave Nelson Mandela his routine injections.

Plagued by illness his entire life Rus always said it was providence that God had provided a fully trained nurse as a wife! Aileen saved Rus's life numerous times over the years.

Rus and Aileen were married at Rosebank in 1967. They left immediately after their honeymoon for their first placement in Lydenburg...so back to the Transvaal. Throughout their ministry God's goodness and provision was evident as money was scarce and the generosity of folk kept their larder constantly full to overflowing. Andrew was born here. And Rus was ordained in 1970.

Next was Pretoria where Sue was born and again God's provision in a time of need as Sue was very ill and medical bills expensive. Rus got all the calls from the undertakers in the area and had a steady supply of funerals!...right up until the money for the hospital fees was met! He also ministered in the prisons and with people on Death Row. His popularity with the prisoners evident as after a break of a few weeks there was a deafening cheer from these men as Rus walked in to take the service!

Roodepoort Church saw lifelong friendships made and the legendary production of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Patience" performed and raising money for church funds.

Next was Newcastle in Natal – They spent 12 years here. They built up a Sunday School of over 400 children and trained people to teach them. The Lay Witness Missions, Cantatas, Youth camps and those Barn Dances! It was also here they were led into the realms of Spiritual warfare and that

continued throughout their ministry. They were a team. Rock solid in their faith and lead by example. Dedicated to faithfully growing their people spiritually and leading them to a stronger relationship with God. The 24-hour prayer chains where folk prayed throughout the night saw miracles and healing happen.

Their ministry continued in Kroonstad, Jansenville and Witbank. Jansenville was in the karoo and that brought its own challenges – the dirt roads and burst tyres in the middle of nowhere, snakes and the dangers of a kudu landing on your car windscreen was very real. They toured for 2 or 3 weeks taking the 'Jesus' film around remote areas. 22 young folk gave their lives to Christ in one day. Aileen also started a Sunday School by post and sent children in remote areas a letter every month.

At Witbank, having gone through their entire annual medical aid in a couple of months the idea of coming over to the UK was planted by Sue & Jacques. Rus had dreamt of working here in the UK but never imagined it would actually happen. The family will never forget Russell tumbling out of Methodist House saying 'They have offered me two places!!!' He couldn't believe it. There had been a meeting on the go to pray about the shortage of men for circuits. Providence once again!

Rus and A moved to Devon and then Rutland and finally retired to Whittington College which again only came about by the grace of God. It provided a Christian community for which Rus and A were very grateful.

God is Faithful, God is Good

Sue Kotze



World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer takes place each year on the first Friday in March and originally was called the Women's World Day of Prayer. Services are held locally and continue to be prepared by the Christian women from a different country each year; the same service is then used around the world on the same day. As we take part in the service, we are part of a wonderful wave of prayer which encircles the globe, praying with, and for, that country. It is a huge world-wide movement and the WDP in the UK is co-ordinated from an office in Tunbridge Wells. The collections taken are given out in grants to a huge number of projects both in the UK and abroad.

The service for 2025 was prepared by the women of the Cook Islands. As I became involved on our local committee, which consists of women from the Churches Around Hampton group, my first reaction was 'where exactly are the Cook Islands'? A look at the atlas established that yes, they are in the Pacific, but way out to the east of Australia. They consist of a group of 15 islands spread over nearly 800,000 square miles and they have celebrated 200 years of Christianity.

The theme for the service was 'I made you wonderful'. They wrote 'God knows us intimately and we are special to God in our uniqueness. When we open the doors of our hearts to this truth everything in our life changes. We glow from within and we begin treating others as beloved children of God. Through this service we hope people will be spiritually uplifted as they come to trust the great love of God'. Certainly the few of us from HMP and Ladies Guild that attended the service were uplifted – it was an amazing service which was attended by some 65 people from our area. Unbeknown to us at the time among the congregation was Carol Bourne, President of the National Committee of the UK who spoke at the end of the service. (She used to live in our area and still lives not far away). She highlighted the issues that concern the Cook Islands – seven of the islands are very low lying and will be badly affected by climate change, they have environmental issues such as over-fishing and deforestation. China is an increasing threat buying up their natural resources and tourism is altering their way of life. It was very interesting to learn about the problems the Cook Islands are facing.

Next year the women of Nigeria will be arranging the service and it will be held in St. James's Church in March 2026.

Hazel Greasby



Crediton Friday Focus hear about hymn writer Horatio Spafford

During a stewards' meeting at Crediton Methodist Church a new provision for older people was under discussion and I felt the germ of an idea rising inside me. Many years before we moved to Devon, I had helped set up a group at Hampton Methodist Church which we called 'Friday Focus'. It took the form of a monthly talk or video followed by a two-course lunch and was enjoyed by up to 30 mainly older people. I realized the provision of a meal would be too ambitious in the Crediton setting, but my mind started to race, settling on the possibility of an afternoon gathering with a presentation, followed by tea and cake.

Thus 'Friday Focus' Crediton-style was born and continues to flourish. There are three of us from the church who run it, taking turns to either present an illustrated talk ourselves or invite a speaker. My fellow leaders readily admit that baking isn't their forte, so providing homemade cakes is down to me and they are always very much appreciated. (My treacle cake has become a particular favourite!)

Earlier this year 'hymn writers' was the topic I chose for the next FF and, as I was preparing notes about the author, Horatio Spafford, Liz's weekly HMP email arrived, mentioning that the touring musical of his hymn 'It is well with my soul' was coming to Teddington Baptist Church. I wonder if any of you went to see it? Gareth Hines, a Baptist minister, had been inspired to write the musical in lockdown as the hymn, with its history of consoling people in times of crisis, had become particularly popular during the pandemic. In the following paragraphs is a condensed version of the talk I gave at that Friday Focus.

Horatio Spafford was a successful lawyer who owned a great deal of property in Chicago. Everything was going well for him, his wife and their four young children. Then, in 1871, a massive fire swept through parts of Chicago destroying lots of buildings, including many owned by Horatio.

Thinking a holiday would do his family good, Spafford arranged a trip to England where they would meet up with their friends, Moody and Sankey, who were on tour.

On the day of departure, Horatio was delayed because of a business emergency, so his wife and the girls carried on while Horatio planned to take the next ship and join them later.

However, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, there was a collision with another ship, the vessel sank and more than 200 people lost their lives, including all four of his daughters - Annie, aged 12, Maggie, 7, Bessie, 5, and Tanetta, just 2 years old. His wife, Anna, survived the tragedy. When she reached safety she sent a telegram to her husband that began: "Ship sank. I alone am saved. What shall I do?"

Horatio set sail for England to meet his devastated wife. At one point during the voyage, the captain of the ship, aware of the tragedy that had struck the Spafford family, slowed the vessel down to show Horatio the exact spot where the ship had sunk. It is said that Spafford returned to his cabin and wrote the words that became the hymn "It is well with my soul", representing the outpouring of his soul where the only possible comfort came from God.

The hymn tune, written by Philip Bliss, was named after the ship on which their children died – Ville du Havre.

Though it begins with loss, the hymn ends in Christian hope and after my talk we listened to a wonderful recording of it, sung by a massed choir.

Hilary Everitt

Goring Methodist Church Flower and Craft Festival – June 13th to 15th

Janice Davis, our Worship Leader at Goring had planned to have a flower festival over a year ago, but sadly she died before this came to fruition. So in memory of Janice, we decided to plan this instead of a summer fair for 2025. It was also thought to be a good opportunity to celebrate 80 years of Methodism in Goring by Sea; along with our earlier celebration lunch in March.

Planning started mid 2024 with several church members taking on leadership roles to organise various areas and with a team effort with most of the church membership being involved, somehow the weekend arrived and everything came together.

We chose as our theme 'All are Welcome' (based on the hymn 'Let us Build a House where Love can Dwell'). The ladies from Worthing Flower Club (Janice being a member) supplied several wonderful flower arrangements around the theme of the rainbow and rainbow colours. These were carefully placed on window sills in the order of rainbow colours and plants and other arrangements were displayed in the foyer, outside and around the altar. There was a sheep trail for children or anyone who wanted to do it – knitted sheep were 'hidden' amongst the craft and flower displays and all were named so people could tick off who they had found. A small wooden sheep was given as a token at the end. Each side of the altar table was an arrangement 'I watch the Sunrise' on one side and 'I watch the Sunset' on the other (based on Janice's favourite hymn 'I watch the Sunrise').

However, it wasn't just flowers on display; people within the church family had been asked to provide any crafts they had from their hobbies. A vast array of knitting, crocheting, cross stitch and embroidery, copper beating, painting, model making, millinery and tailoring, scrapbooking, stained glass and banner making plus many more. We certainly learned a lot about our church community we didn't know before.

The church lounge was transformed into a memorial area with a tribute to Janice as well as a quiet area where people could sit and put prayers on the prayer tree and take little mementos. There was also a display of the history of the church in Goring along with scrapbooks and pictures of people and events gone by.

On the Sunday we had our service in the middle of all the displays and it was a colourful back drop to our worship. It was a free entry to the church and people just had to pay for refreshments if they wanted any, of course there was the usual Methodist staple of cakes.

Pam Harrison



Hello Church family,

Wow, 2 years have really flown by here in Doncaster!! Fortunately, we managed to have settled into our new home and lifestyle here in the North quite well. Sixth form had been a whirlwind from new teachers and the atmosphere, but nonetheless we were guided by the Lord. Along with our hard work he brought us to our next stop - university. I (Vuyiswa) will be going to study Advertising and Marketing at Lancaster University, and Vianna will study Law at University of Hull. We're both excited for this new chapter.

Most importantly, Vianna and I made the best decision and got baptised on 20th July. It was a beautiful day, one full of tears and celebration. We look forward to deepening our faith, and embedding it into our everyday life; the church is good, but nothing beats Hampton !!!

Sending our love always,

The Girls & Stella xx



Chaplain's Corner v Ebbsfleet United 30th August 2025

The summer transfer window is about to be shut and this year has seen the record spend smashed again. At the time of writing this piece the total stood at just over £2.6bn!! The previous highest was just two years ago at £2.36bn. The top four premier league shoppers are - Liverpool - £292.82mill, Arsenal - £253mil, Chelsea - £241mill, and Manchester United - £198mill. These figures are truly mind blowing, when you consider there is a cost-of-living crisis going on for ordinary folks of this country!!

With all this transfer activity, I thought I would have a look into the history of the transfer fees and the continual upward trend. Transfer fees were first legalised in 1882. Back in those days such a transaction tied a player to the purchasing club indefinitely. The situation remained until 1963. George Eastham, who was part of England's World Cup squad, challenged this ruling. George was playing for Newcastle United at the time and wanted to move to Arsenal. The courts found in George's favour, as the ruling was deemed to be a "restraint of trade."

Then, in 1995 the "Bosman" ruling came in. This meant that when a player's contract expired they could move to another club for free. This has meant that clubs try to sell a player before that situation arises!!

Back in 1961 Denis Law became the first £100k player, when he moved from Manchester City to Torino, in Italy. His stay was short lived as he returned to the red side of Manchester a year later for £115k. In 1970 Martin Peters was sold for £200k and in 1977 Kevin Keegan cost Hamburg a record £1/2 mill. That record stood for a month. Nottingham Forest made Trevor Francis the first £1 million player.

The dawn of the Premier League era, with its extra TV money saw transfer fees rise rapidly. By 1996 Newcastle were paying £15mill for the services of Alan Shearer. A cool £30mill saw Rio Ferdinand sign for Manchester United. These transfer fees are dwarfed by some of the eye watering amounts being paid today. During this current window Liverpool have shelled out £116mill for Florian Wirtz from Bayer Leverkusen!!

To most of us these sums of money do not seem real. For us the cost of a loaf of bread and a pint of milk have a far bigger impact on our daily lives. The one similarity with transfer fees is the prices continue to rise.

What price would you pay for eternal life? The cost is too big for any financial transaction. Thankfully, Jesus has paid the price, in full, on the cross. All we must do is accept this as a gift. Our free transfer to heaven will then be secured!!

Paul Barker

Club Chaplain

This is an example of the informative and impactful items Paul does for the match programme for Hampton and Richmond Borough Football Club.

Let's Get the Kettle On

"Let's get the kettle on". It was one of Mum's most used phrases. Quintessentially British and ever present in the Salmon household regardless of the occasion. Indeed, it was used on the afternoon that Mum shared her cancer diagnosis with us, but just as readily in times of joy and celebration. It was certainly said on the day Fern Evangeline McWilliam (Evangeline after my maternal grandmother) was born on 30th October 2024. After a brief stay in hospital, we were able to bring her home on the evening of 5th November, Guy Fawkes night. The fireworks that evening definitely felt appropriate.

Mum rushed round the following day to visit her first granddaughter. An entire homemade lemon cake neatly wrapped in foil came with her. With breastfeeding round the clock, I clung to that cake like a lifeline for the next few days! Mum shared the recipe too, which she told me had been passed on to her by Willem Sandberg, and of course we got the kettle straight on.

After Mum passed away in January 2025, Fern's health visitor was brilliantly supportive as I navigated the dual realities of new motherhood and grief. Fern and I quickly fell into a new weekly rhythm, uncovering a whole new world of baby classes (who knew there was such a thing as baby yoga?!). But after Mum's funeral, a new task loomed: sorting through her house. 65 Hatherop Road, my childhood home and a place filled with family memories from over 35 years. Initially a rather daunting thought with my arms full juggling a wriggling baby...but with Mum's familiar words ringing in my ears, I got the kettle on.

Mum, Dad and Paul arrived at 65 Hatherop Road in 1988, moving just across the road from their previous home at number 34. However, this wasn't the first time that Mum had moved on Hatherop Road. In the 1960s, her parents moved from Belgrade Road into number 59. In the early 70s, Dad, having just begun his career at the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in Teddington, bought number 34. Mum, still living at 59, was introduced to him by her own mother, who had invited him to Hampton Methodist Church. A very successful bit of matchmaking as they were married there in 1978, and Mum moved in with him. Dad had always dreamt of a larger garden though, and when number 65 came onto the market, he leapt at the chance, despite just finishing extensive renovations at number 34. Mum wasn't immediately convinced. The house was smaller, needed a great deal of work, and the garden was overgrown with brambles right up to the back door. But Mum and Dad always loved a project, so they rolled up their sleeves. Dad laid a concrete patio, erected a greenhouse, built a shed and installed a swing and climbing frame. Mum planted apple and plum trees whilst securing the allotment plot at the end of the garden where we spent many weekends harvesting and planting as a family. The crops became a basis of Mum's various jams and chutneys which were lovingly shared with the community over the years. Internal decoration followed with new carpets, flooring, wallpaper and paint, eventually culminating in a 2-storey extension to provide a garage and fourth bedroom. I can only imagine the kettle was working overtime...

Bit by bit I began to chip away with the house clearance whenever I could, with support from Paul who visited once a month. We unearthed a trove of sentimental relics including my first pair of baby shoes, Grandad's army trunk from India, a well-used recipe book from which Mum had taught me how to cook and even a love letter from the early 70s written during Mum and Dad's courtship! Countless trips ensued back and forth to the food bank, hygiene bank, clothes bank and charity shops, with the basket of Fern's pram serving as my trusty luggage cart! Childhood books and toys which had been carefully stored in the loft were re-homed to Fern gifting me some snippets of nostalgia, whilst others were donated to our local children's centres. I was even more delighted

when Eunice contacted me to say there'd been various requests from TEM for kitchenware and furniture. It was truly heartwarming to know that Mum's lifetime of volunteering and serving others was somewhat being continued after her death. After a few months of sorting through the house, we ultimately brought in a clearance company to take care of the rest. On a sunny Friday afternoon, I arrived at the house to lock up one final time. As I passed through the kitchen, I noticed one item the team had missed: Mum's kettle.

"Let's get the kettle on". That simple phrase has certainly felt more fitting than ever as I approach my first year as a mother and my first year without mine. I may never be able to ask Mum any specifics, or rely on her emotional and practical support, but I do know that her legacy continues to live on through me and in the mother that I'll become. The phrases I'll say, the gestures I'll make, the cakes I'll bake and perhaps the motherly wisdom I may myself offer up one day.

Which brings me to a close here...as I really ought to get the kettle on...

Alison McWilliam (née Salmon)



6 Months Later... more or less...

During the last couple of weeks working at Surbiton Hill, a volunteer from the toddler group I ran asked what I was going to do on my very first day of self-employment. For a moment, I envisage taking my laptop to a local coffee shop, nursing a large mug of milky tea, doing Essential Business Admin. The bubble pops as I take out my phone to look at the calendar. It'll be the Easter Holidays, and I have 12 shows booked over that fortnight. April is chock full of birthday parties on the weekends, I have an audition for the charity Spread a Smile to come on board as a freelance entertainer, and I've got an invitation to a top-secret event at The Magic Circle. It's going to be a while before I sit in a coffee shop!

Going from a steady income and steady work to the unpredictability of self-employment is something I'm still learning to navigate. Obviously, there's the financial worries as payments come in dribs and drabs, never with any regularity. We've had to tighten our belts significantly and go without some of the luxuries we've been used to. There's also the worry of the quiet, which can be a breeding ground for negative voices in your head, telling you that perhaps you're not good enough and no one wants to book you. God continues to provide for us, and just when things feel too quiet last-minute bookings pop up, and things suddenly don't feel so tight.

For all the worries about where the next booking might be coming from, there has been a lot to love about being self-employed, especially as a magician. I have time to really devote to my business now, and also to myself. Instead of trying to cram everything into a tiny window of time, or never getting round to doing certain tasks for my business, I've finally been able to give my business the attention it needs. Tasks from redesigning logos, working on websites, better social media campaigns, following up previous clients, all things that just weren't a priority that I could now make a priority. I've been able to think about new routines, learn some new magic, try different ideas for balloon models, and connect with other magicians and small business owners in ways that I didn't have time to before.

I also have more time to put into my own health and wellbeing. I've joined a gym and go regularly in the daytime when the kids are at school. I spend more time reading, and when I'm unwell instead of pushing myself to work through it I can focus on getting better (well, unless I'm performing, in which case I take as many Lemsips as humanly possible, be at my shiniest for 3 hours, then crash at home after!) One of the greatest challenges as a performer and a parent is that the timings of these two lifestyles don't fully align. Performers tend to be out until late into the night, if not performing then with their fellow performers for a post-show meal and drink (which can be more than just socialising, it's where new opportunities can arise.) Parents, on the other hand, need to rise early in the morning, with bags, coats, and shoes on, ready to get to the school gate before 8:45am. Every Monday evening is member's night at The Magic Circle Headquarters in London, and I go there every week without fail. I'm not usually home until almost 1am, and then the alarm goes off at 6am to get the kids ready for school. Now that I'm a full-time magician, I keep my Tuesday mornings clear, so that once I've dropped off the kids at school, I can take things at a slower pace.

The most exciting thing has been that I've had opportunities come up midweek. I mentioned earlier about an audition for Spread a Smile, an absolutely phenomenal charity that arranges entertainer visits for children in hospitals. I went through a performed audition in front of the charity's CEOs, followed by an interview, before finding out I'd been accepted by the charity (the only performer from our cohort of auditionees who was selected.) Without a doubt, this has been the most wonderful thing I've done, ever. It sounds cheesy, but you really do go in and spread smiles! One child I visited in a semi-isolation room had been feeling very unwell, and was curled up under a

blanket on their bed. We offered to make a balloon model for them, and their adult said that would be OK but they probably weren't up for magic too. As I made this kid an intricate balloon model, the light seemed to come back into their eyes, and by the time I finished they were sat up, utterly captivated, with a smile back on their face. They looked at the balloon and back at me and said, "Did you say you do magic too?" So I did a little magic, and by the time we left they were a completely different kid to the one we first saw. Life seemed to return for a moment, and just for a few minutes they could be a kid again. There's nothing more valuable than being able to give families who need it most a bit of joy and a bit of respite from the medical world they've found themselves in.

Weekends of course are often taken up with parties and events. I'm lucky that my clientele are typically no more than 30 minutes from home, so I don't need to go too far when I work. Parties are very much my "bread and butter" income, and it's probably where I still shine. After all, after nearly 20 years of working with children and young people I'm pretty good with kids! I have great word of mouth too, and often hear from new clients that I've been recommended highly to them. It helps that I take good care of clients and go above and beyond for them, from video greetings before the big day, to staying longer to make sure every child gets the balloon they want, to sending out gift boxes after the party.



At present, I'm currently working on intentionally growing my business. A very experienced magician is mentoring a small group of us, and some of the seeds I've planted have started to reveal shoots. As well as performing with Spread a Smile in the week, I also have a residency with a nursery, doing weekly circus skills, games, magic, and nursery rhymes (all those toddler group singsongs have paid off!) I am also working on a gospel magic show that can be toured around churches – watch this space! Plus of course, I still have a good stream of people looking to book me for parties and events, so I'm always preparing for these as well as performing at them.

Someone I worked with in a previous life recently asked whether I was "enjoying being busy doing nothing." It has surprised me how much time running a business has taken, I'm not sure how I fitted

in a job! Sometimes I wonder if I've made the right decision, at the time of writing things have been going well, so I'm feeling pretty sure this wasn't such a bad idea!

This time two years ago I was preparing for my exam to join The Magic Circle. Two years later, I won Stage Magician of the Year at South London Magic Society. Magic life is weird, and so, so wonderful! Thank you to my wonderful magic family for encouraging and believing in me.



You can keep in touch with what I'm up to via social media:

Radish the Magician / @radish_the_magician

Bron Ivy Magic / @bronivymagic

You can also visit my websites: For children's magic: www.radishthemagician.com

For close up and parlour magic (for weddings, corporate events, and more): www.bronivymagic.com

Bron Coveney

News update from the Davidsons

Sophie re-engaged with local preaching a little while ago - covid and our move, plus Martina was all too much and she had pulled out. She has just had a very successful trial service, and we confidently expect the Local Preachers meeting to move her to on trial next week. She has also begun the candidating process for the Diaconal Order and has so far passed everything with flying colours. The big step will be at the end of January 2026 when she will have the final, 24-hour interview, and if that goes well, she will be studying part-time for three years, and then there will be another minister in the family. She and Tommy had a second baby, a son Rupert Mark, last October and we got back from leave to discover that we no longer have a baby in the house, but a toddler!

Elanor is also doing well. She has a serious boyfriend, who we like very much, and is training to be a professional magician and cabaret artist.

Mark and I continue to thrive, and having asked for a second five year stint, have just started that now.

Rev Vicci Davidson

The Extra Mile celebrates 10 years.

On 28 September we celebrated 10 years of The Extra Mile with a very special service led by Philip Slater. Rev Vicci Davidson shared her memories of how it all began, Alison Baker spoke movingly about her Extra Mile journey from weekly referrer to coordinator of referrals today, and Munira Wilson, MP for Twickenham, spoke about how a few visionary people responded to a need in a practical way. Alison told us that she had no administrative or organisational skills and felt she was the wrong person for the job in the Extra Mile team and Philip expressed how she was the right one as she had a real heart for families. Alison also paid tribute to 'our wonderful Wendy.'



Most of the Extra Mile team were there plus supporters coming from Farnham (with bags of hand knitted clothes and blankets and beautifully dressed dolls), Councillor Gareth Roberts and also some of the professionals who use The Extra Mile. This was followed by the obligatory cake, but this time a special one. We missed dear Wendy's famous baking skill!



We took the opportunity given by this anniversary to ask the Extra Mile team, our supporters and referrers to say what The Extra Mile means to them and below are just a few of the responses.

From the Extra Mile team: -

When I look back over the ten years of The Extra Mile, I am struck by the realisation that God used us to meet a need out there in the local community. It changed us as a church and I don't just mean visually! TEM not only gave us a vital piece of charitable outreach, but it also made us be more outward looking, enabling volunteers and supporters to rally around from other churches, other walks of life, to join in helping families going through a tough time. It helped us to build effective links with support groups, local charities, hard working council staff, not forgetting our local MP Munira and, of course, Ugo Monye! It also changed who we are – a group of ordinary people doing the Lord's work, knowing that we are empowered by The Holy Spirit.

We don't need to see the faces of the five thousand children we have helped. God knows them and loves them. That's good enough for us.

Eunice

I feel privileged to be a part of The Extra Mile team. It's so good that so many people give us some wonderful donations that we can put together to help mums and their children who are less fortunate than ourselves. Thank you Lord!

Maggie

For me, at the heart of TEM is obeying the command of Jesus that we should Love One Another. We saw a need in the community and have tried to show love and help to families and the professionals who come seeking support for them. I read somewhere that our smallest acts of kindness can bring healing to a broken heart. We have seen what relief our small charitable outreach can bring to struggling families and their hard-working professionals.

Liz W

For me, the Extra Mile is a chain of positivity. From the people who donate, then us sorting and allocating, then the professionals who refer and deliver and finally the families who receive. We're all getting something different from the chain but it's all positive.

Cathy

From our supporters: -

Here at The Hygiene Bank Hampton we have enjoyed working with the team at The Extra Mile for many years now. Their outreach into our local communities allows our toiletry donations to get to where they are needed most for targeted support with maximum impact.

Sarah Allen & The Project Team, The Hygiene Bank, Hampton

Project Linus UK has long had a mission to provide new, homemade quilts and blankets to give comfort and security to children who are distressed or disadvantaged across the UK. As the Area Co-ordinator for the London Borough of Richmond it has been a pleasure to work with The Extra Mile in Hampton over the past 10 years. I see their dedication to improving the lives of families in the area, and am full of admiration for their sterling work in the community. The ladies (and they are all

ladies) who make the quilts are so pleased to use their quilting skills for such a lovely charity. I believe our aims are perfectly aligned and hope that both projects will continue for the foreseeable future.

Jacquie Cranfield

For us, The Extra Mile means that our ladies at Farnham Assist Knit & Natter are able to contribute with their knitting to a good cause. They are fully aware that they are doing something worthwhile and helping others who are less fortunate and at the same time enjoying themselves.

Maureen and Vanessa

From the referrers: -

Many congratulations on an amazing 10 years! We at Spelthorne Family Centre are truly grateful for all that The Extra Mile provides for so many of the families we support. We especially appreciate how quickly you respond to our requests and how promptly you prepare clothes, toys and other items ready for us to collect.

Parents are always so happy to receive the clothing parcels and the children are delighted with their bags of toys and puzzles. We have seen parents moved to tears when they receive them. The thoughtful extra touch of a greeting card makes it all the more special. For some children, the only toys they have are the ones they receive from The Extra Mile.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for the amazing work.

Glynis McNamara

At Home-Start we support many families with children under 5, some of whom struggle to afford basic items such as toothpaste and nappies, all the way through to winter coats, books and toys. The Extra Mile is always our first port of call and we are so grateful for their kindness and willingness to help. These seemingly 'small' acts of generosity can actually be transformative for families, giving them hope and a feeling of worth.

Sharon Watson-Coleman, Family Support Co-ordinator

I am not sure I would be able to attend on Sunday; however it is important to me to express my sincere gratitude for everything that you do to support families. The families that I work with have benefitted hugely from kind donations. Some of the families have nothing so being able to provide them with items that they need is amazing. Not only that, but the whole process is also so simple. I drop you a message and you all do your very best to provide what is needed. This contributes hugely to positive outcomes for the families that I work with. The donations that I have collected are not only generous, but the process is so efficient. Your communication is so frequent and when I arrive to collect items I am always greeted by kindness.

I am so grateful.

Happy 10 years – and thank you again for all that you do!

Rebecca Parkes, Family Help Team, London Borough of Hounslow

Congratulations on your 10yr anniversary. I feel incredibly lucky to work in partnership with yourselves. You are all angels that make the biggest difference in families' lives. The biggest THANK YOU!!

Tracey Sutton, Achieving for Children

Being able to use The Extra Mile for the families we are supporting is often a real lifeline. Just by us saying to them we know somewhere that is able to help, or where we can source those items is such a great relief, and families are always so grateful.

Recently one family I supported said for her and the children, who have just fled domestic abuse, 'It's been like Christmas has come early for us' and she was so appreciative of the heartfelt handwritten note, which she went on to say, 'It makes me feel seen and cared for.'

Professionally when I refer I know requests are always dealt with promptly and with real care and consideration given to the items requested and it's always a pleasure to pop over to Hampton for a collection. Thank you so much and enjoy your celebrations

Ruth Putman, Outreach worker, Spelthorne Family Centres

On behalf of Queen Mary Maternity Department at West Middlesex University Hospital, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the invaluable support provided to our women and their families. Your wonderful team do an amazing job in sourcing and supplying essential items such as pushchairs, toiletries, baby clothes, nappies and other necessities. This makes a profound difference to the lives of many of our women who are facing difficult circumstances. These items are not only practical but also vital in helping families maintain a basic standard of living during a very important time in their lives.

We would like to give special thanks to Alison Baker for her dedication in taking our referral and ensuring that support reaches those most in need. The compassion and commitment shown by everyone at The Extra Mile is truly inspiring and we deeply appreciate all the work you do.

As you celebrate your 10th anniversary, we wish you our warmest congratulations. This milestone is a testament to the incredible impact you've had over the years. We're proud to be able to work alongside you. Without your service, many of our women would not have these essential items and your kindness helps to relieve stress and bring comfort during what can often be a challenging period.

Thank you once again for going THE EXTRA MILE for our women and their families.

Melany-Jane Knight, Maternity Support Worker, Daisy Team, Queen Mary Maternity Department, West Middlesex University Hospital

Sunday 16 November will be the Toy Service for The Extra Mile, which helps build up resources for the Christmas presents that we give to children that would otherwise have nothing. Books, toys and games for children under 5 are especially welcome.

Liz Windaybank



tearfund

Date: Saturday 15 November

Time: 7pm for a 7.30pm start (First Question)

Place: Hampton Methodist Church Large Hall, Percy Road, Hampton

Cost: Please give whatever you can but a minimum donation of £5 per person (cash or pay direct to the Just Giving page via a QR code on the night)

On Saturday 15 November 2025, thousands of people from hundreds of churches across the UK will unite for an epic evening of poverty-beating fun by joining together for the Tearfund Big Quiz Night. Tearfund is a Christian charity that is passionate about ending global poverty working alongside local church partners to empower communities to create a better future for themselves and all proceeds from the Quiz Night will go to them.

We will be hosting an event joining in with the Quiz at Hampton Mission Partnership, so why not make up a team (max of 6 people) or just come along on the night and meet up with others to form a team. Includes tea, coffee, soft drinks and table snacks, but feel free to bring your own drinks (no alcohol please) and things you like to eat on the night.

Books

Still Standing (100 lessons from an 'unsuccessful' life) by Tola Doll Fisher

Tola is editor of the Christian magazine Woman Alive. This is a very honest little book of some of the lessons in life she has learned so far. Very enjoyable easy to read in bed as there are short chapters which can easily be navigated whatever you are doing.

A little strange title considering to all outsiders she would seem to have a very successful life; but this covers some of the hiccups we all may have – serious illnesses, baby loss, marriage breakdown – along with the highs of career success and other happiness. She talks freely about her Christian faith and where God is in all of the ups and downs of her life.

A funny honest book which I could recommend to anyone of faith or none.

Pam Harrison

The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan (a readable modern-day version by Alan Vermilye}

For one reason or another, I never got round to reading the original Pilgrim's Progress. I had always been aware of it since my school days but never really knew the detail of the story.

This revision by Alan Vermilye was written because, although he tried to read it, he felt it a struggle coming to understand 16th century language and felt if he struggled with it, others probably did too. So, a year and a half later he published this book.

I enjoyed reading about Christian and his journey to the Celestial City as well as all the challenges he had along the way. He had company on his journey more than once sometimes encouraging and useful and sometimes the opposite. He was tempted along the way all the time and took wrong turnings more than once. He slipped up, made mistakes and made some very poor judgements. However, he was forgiven and looked after so he could be put on the right path. Eventually finding his way to the end of his journey.

This is a very readable version and I can recommend it to anyone who doesn't know the story and always considered reading it. A lot of his challenges and issues are relevant to our lives today.

Pam Harrison

A knock at the door by Rob Parsons

I did not know of this book until I read an article about it in The Daily Mail. I knew of the author, Rob Parsons, having seen him many times at the Christian conference, Spring Harvest, and as the founder of Care for The Family, but I had no idea about this amazing true story!

It is the story of a homeless man with learning disabilities who turns up at the home of Rob and his wife Dianne just before Christmas 1975, carrying his possessions in a black bin bag and also a frozen chicken! Rob vaguely remembered him from his Sunday School days, many years before.

This man was Ronnie Lockwood. He became a dustman, and ended up living as part of the Parsons family for 45 years, until his death.

It is a very moving story; it had me laughing and crying in equal measure, as it touches on raw aspects of life and death, marriage difficulties, family relationships, and also shines a light on the appalling plight of children in care, which eventually led to Rob leaving his career as a top lawyer, and founding Care for the Family with his wife Dianne.

It is an astonishing story of kindness, self-learning, pain and unbelievable hope, and the sheer power of love to change a life. An extraordinary and truly inspirational story, highly recommended.

Maggie Sollors

Is it well with your soul? Discovering peace in the eye of the storm by Care for the Family

The title refers to Horatio Spafford's hymn as mentioned in Hilary's item. (A hymn now known to many of us as 'Wendy's song.') In the introduction to the book we learn of more tragedy to hit the Spaffords and the positive, long-lasting outcomes that followed.

This is a short but powerful book of 11 chapters, each by a different person, focusing on varying ways of being anchored e.g. Lou Fellingham – Anchored in Worship; Steve Legg – Anchored in Hope; Dianne Parsons – Anchored in Gratitude; Robin Vincent – Anchored in Faith.

This little book offers wise advice and practical ideas to help the reader draw closer to God and discover in the good and bad times of life how it can be 'well with your soul'. Highly recommended.

Liz Windaybank

The Greatest Story Ever Told – an Eyewitness Account by Bear Grylls

Yes, this is the story of the life of Jesus, the story that has been handed down for generations. This is the true story about a man from Galilee who lived some two thousand years ago and is told through the eyes of the people who knew him best: his mother, a sceptic, a fisherman, a friend and a woman from Magdala and so we get their very personal thoughts and feelings.

Names have been altered but you can recognise the main characters and the book follows the Bible in recounting the events that we know but it is written from a personal point of view that is moving. What did Mary think as the baby was born, when Jesus was missing and found in the temple, what drew so many people to Jesus as he moved about teaching and healing? Towards the end the anguish of the crucifixion and then Jesus's final appearance.

'As we all stood there, holding each other, and watched our friend – the Master, the Lord, the Messiah – slowly disappear among the cloud until he was gone.....It was as if he had transcended from the sky right into our hearts.....he had told us his light was not a secret to be kept.....he had given us our calling.... It was time.....to begin.'

Do read this book, it gives an insight to our Bible.

Hazel Greasby

Magazine editors: - Willem Sandberg and Liz Windaybank

Cuppa and Company

Join us on the first Wednesday of the month
2.00-4.00pm in the Church hall

This is a drop-in event where you will have the opportunity to sit and chat with others in a relaxed and friendly environment with refreshments provided. This is open to everyone and we look forward to seeing you soon. Starts 3rd September!

Starts 17th September!

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Today's world can often seem bruised and bewildering. So why not join us to look informally and gently at what the Bible has to say to help make sense of it all?

The Fellowship takes place in the church and starts with a cuppa.
Open to everyone!

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

2:00-3:30pm

AT HAMPTON METHODIST CHURCH