

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing info@stmaryshaveskent.co.uk

WORSHIP AND WELLBEING

It is the time of Lent. A time of reflection and self-examination, of waiting and penitence. A time of self-denial, of giving things up. Maybe it can be time for us to give up our time and take something up. Maybe time given to prayer and spending some time with God.

I was told a story recently by someone who knew a woman who was suffering from anxiety. She had been suffering for years and as a result was on medication to help. She was part of a church and one day she was in church while Morning Prayer was taking place and was invited to join. She found it a place and time of peace and it became a part of her pattern, a way that she started the day.

Time came for her review at the GP and the GP noticed a change. He recognised that she was no longer anxious and that there could be a change in her medication. He asked what she had been doing and she talked about her day-to-day life. The GP was a Sikh and fully understood what a pattern of prayer could bring to a person's life.

In our fast-paced life, stepping out from the clamour and noise can provide a space for healing stillness.

I personally find starting the day in the quiet of Morning Prayer, from the Common Worship Prayer book's regular, rhythmic pattern, sets me up for the rest of the day. It allows me to see each day afresh, reminded that 'the night has passed, and the day lies open before us'; God's gift of each new day and all the possibilities that that provides. We are to pray with one heart and mind brought together, as we still ourselves in preparation for the day ahead.

But we are also to 'rejoice in the gift of this new day', with 'hearts on fire with love for you [God].' What a way to start the day, fired up ready to commit to the new day renewed and refreshed.

As part of Morning Prayer, a Psalm is read, a special poem revealing many different facets of our life and what God can be to us

within it. This is followed by a reading from the Old Testament and then one from the New Testament, where scripture is brought together, to guide us in our actions, issues, with one another and with God. It is an opportunity to read short parts of the Bible, that can stay with us throughout the day.

And with this in heart and mind, we then pray for the day and all it may bring, for the world, our families and friends and all whom we love, and many others, including the Church and the parish of Hayes. Prayer is brought to a close by the special prayer for the day followed by the Lord's Prayer, the prayer given to us by Jesus which meets all our needs and has our wellbeing at its heart.

If you would like to join us in St Mary's church at 9.15am (Monday to Friday) you would be very welcome, just let me know rector@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk / 0203 940 1897. There are plenty of Common Worship Prayer books and you will be guided all the way. You can also join via zoom, joining details available at the church office info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk / 0208 462 1373 or access at home on the Daily Prayer App or online <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>.

There is also an opportunity to join together in the **Churches Together in Hayes Lent Course**, an opportunity to look at the journey of Holy Week, from Palm Sunday and Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, to His death on the cross and all that means for Christians across the world, through the eyes of women of the Bible. It will begin on Wednesday 1st of March and will continue every week until the 29th of March, 7-8.30pm at St Mary's Church. All are welcome.

Rev'd Amanda

A WARM WELCOME

We are pleased to announce that the **'Warm Space'** at St Mary's Church Hayes is now open every Wednesday between 12.30 – 3.30pm.

We are offering a welcome space for people to come and enjoy warmth and friendship. Everyone is welcome to come for a short or long time – whatever they wish.

Free coffee, tea, squash, cakes and biscuits are available. We will also be offering a free soup and roll lunch.

There is a designated work space and wi-fi for those who would like to use it as well as daily newspapers, magazines, books, board games, jigsaws, puzzle sheets and quizzes.

Donations of the following to help with this initiative would be very gratefully received:

- New or recent magazines
- Newspapers of the day
- Card games or board games
- Foldable jigsaw storer
- Home-made or tinned soup
- Cakes
- Biscuits

Alternatively, you may be interested in volunteering to help with some of these sessions, as little or as much as you like, whether that's helping to set up beforehand or clear up afterwards, serving or making refreshments, greeting and chatting with visitors. It could be on a regular or occasional basis. If you're potentially interested in helping, please contact:

Stuart 07917 024481 or Mary 07732 047661

TOOLS WITH A MISSION

Maybe some of you have heard of T.W.A.M., a charity which collects unwanted tools which are refurbished and sent out to African countries to enable recipients to earn a living. Volunteers will collect even old and rusted carpentry and building tools, gardening and power tools. For the women, there is a need for sewing machines, haberdashery including zips, reels of cotton and buttons. Nearly everything can be found a home, and full information is available at www.twam.uk.

There is a local volunteer, Peter, who is happy to collect any items you may be able to donate (tel. 020 8467 5120). I will put up a couple of leaflets in the porch with more information, or give me a call.



Janet Sladden (8289 1797)

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

After such a cold spell it has been really good to welcome the sunshine and bright blue skies. I have had a really hectic month with my son



spending three weeks in England.

We met for coffee and lunch this month when we were able to celebrate Peter's eighty-eighth birthday, and to wish him a happy, healthy year ahead.

Our next meeting, **Monday, 20th March**, I am planning to meet up in the Church meetings room. We will start at 10.30am, hopefully with communion to celebrate being together again. I will contact members to let them know the programme as I am waiting for confirmation. It will be so good to meet in church again after so long.

Thank you to Carol Crouch for knitting scarves and hats for the Seafarers. I know that they are always gratefully received.



I know that the church is hoping to start up the 'Pen Pal' initiative with Hayes Primary School again. They are still short of people to write to, so I am asking if any members would be willing to join in as it is such a worth-while project. I know that when it was initiated before it was very successful. If you would like to join in please contact me or Brenda in the church office.

Social togetherness is more important now than it ever was. Traditional festival days and related celebrative events in the calendar bring people together and strengthen communities. **Mothering Sunday** (this year on 19th March 2023) has come a long way from its origins but remains a means of fostering closeness.

Back in the 16th century, on Mothering Sunday, people used to return to the church where they were baptised, or the local parish church. This was known as their 'mother church'. The essence of this practice was that people remained in touch with the community they had grown up in. The actual service took place on the fourth Sunday of Lent and symbolised the coming together of families.

As time moved on, the make-up of communities entered a stage of transition. Mothering Sunday was adapted to fit the evolving nature of local people and places. Many families became dispersed due to upheavals within society. Related to this, the practices associated with the day changed too.

As practices gradually changed, it became a day when servants of large households and country estates were allowed to return home to visit their families. The traditions associated with the day were changing too. The day itself became less focused on the religious roots and more about specific relations within families.

During the 1950s, figures in business spotted commercial opportunities on offer. Thus, the commodification of the day both secured its endurance and altered its significance in the minds of the population.

By the early 20th century the practice of returning to one's 'mother church' had become so neglected in the UK and Ireland that there were calls to revive it from social activists of the time. Consequently, decisions were made throughout the country to incorporate wider practices from across the Christian faiths and bring back a festival.

The Modern Mothering Sunday.

In modern times, there has been increased commercialisation and secular uptake. Mothering Sunday has become very much a recognition of the role of a mother in contemporary society. Gifts are sold, flowers are bought and cards are sent.

Mothers of all kinds wake up across the country knowing that this is their day. A day to be treated to lavish days out and receive gifts from loved ones. Despite the commercial forces driving the recognition, it is an important day for families coming together.

Those people lucky enough to find themselves in the role of a mother to another person can spend their time on Mothering Sunday

feeling cherished. Stronger bonds within families lead to stronger bonds within communities. In potentially fractious times, this is more vital than ever.

Give a Gift of Perseverance this Mothering Sunday

This Mothering Sunday, our love, prayers and strength as a community mean so much to women and their families around the world and here at home. Your Gift of Perseverance this Mothering Sunday can give desperately needed support to women, families and communities in Burundi and everywhere we work, while at the same time helping you celebrate someone you admire and who inspires you. By choosing one of these gifts, you could make the difference between a young person missing out on school or creating their new life at university. You could give a mother much-needed relief from hardship and poverty, and help her on a new path to grow and flourish with confidence.

This Mothering Sunday, for £8.00 you can enable more women to improve their families' wellbeing. *Jeanne in Buhiga Diocese, Burundi, has learned the skills to run and grow her own business. Starting with literacy, training and a loan, she and her family now have a house, cows, food, clothes and schooling for their children. She gives contributions back to her church and answers all the questions of her inspired and inquisitive neighbours.* "I used to rent a plot for growing cabbages, but then the business grew so that I was able to buy my own plot. Then I bought land and have now built our home. We can advise our children now, and we share what we have done."

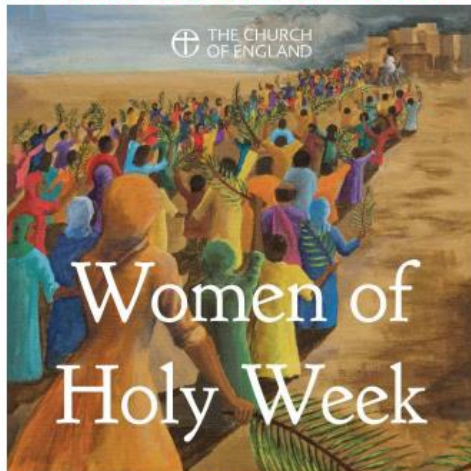
You can dedicate your Mothering Sunday gift to a loved one who has passed or send it to someone this year. Order your gifts today! There are a range of life-changing gifts in the catalogues on our Mothers' Union notice board. Please take one.

On April 22nd there is the Rochester Diocese Mothers' Union AGM at St Paulinus Church Hall. If you would like to go, please contact me so that I can arrange a lift.

I look forward to meeting you on 20th March. If any other members of the congregation would like to join us you would be most welcome.

Avril Ashford

Churches Together in Hayes Lent Course 2023



By Paula Gooder

All are welcome to join us as we explore the story of Easter through the eyes of different women in the bible...

Venue: St. Mary's Church, Hayes Street

Time: 7 – 8.30 pm

Dates: Wednesdays 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th March

All are welcome, if possible, please do let us know if you are coming. Sign up in the porch or email Brenda info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY MARCH 2023

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom* and Tuesdays to Saturdays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).

Wednesday 1st	10.30am-12.00 noon	Coffee morning for the bereaved and those who live alone**
	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	2.45pm	Men's Fellowship in OCS
	7.00-8.30pm	CTH Lent Course
Friday 3rd		Funeral: Ronald Stone

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 5th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Wednesday 8th	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	7.00-8.30pm	CTH Lent Course

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 12th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
Wednesday 15th	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	7.00-8.30pm	CTH Lent Course

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT / MOTHERING SUNDAY

Sunday 19th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Monday 20th	10.30am	Mothers' Union**

Wednesday 22nd	10.00am-11.45am	Community Coffee Morning**
	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	7.00-8.30pm	CTH Lent Course

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 26th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
	5.00-6.00pm	Illuminate**
Wednesday 29th	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	7.00-8.30pm	CTH Lent Course

*Zoom link available from church office ** denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00 noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



Devastating earthquakes have recently killed thousands of people in Turkey and Syria. Hundreds of buildings have been destroyed. Survivors are facing freezing conditions and need urgent aid. As we go to press, more than **24,000 people** have been killed, and **17 million** have been affected. They urgently need shelter, food and medical aid, or they will also die.

Please, if you can help, go to <https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal> and join the worldwide response to the suffering people of Turkey and Syria.

A WARM WELCOME SPACE



**Come and enjoy warmth
and friendship...**

FREE:

- **Tea and Coffee**
- **Soup and rolls**
- **Cakes and biscuits**
- **Work spaces and Wi-Fi**
- **Board games and jigsaws,**
- **Newspapers, books & magazines**

**Every Wednesday 12.30am ~ 3.30pm
St Mary's Church, Hayes St,
Haves. BR2 7LH**

Everyone is very welcome!

HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

March heralds Spring and British Summer Time returns on March 26th! So, it's exactly right that our programme of outings for the coming months takes us increasingly further afield to just about every point of the compass from Hayes, delightful though this area is now bursting forth with flowers. If you are a retired or semi-retired man of any faith or none, why not join us on the next coach outing? Membership costs just £20 (current annual subscription) and full details of all our membership activities are available on our website at www.hayesmensfellowship.org; for each outing, members enjoy a priority booking period (for them and their wives or partners) after which we would be delighted for friends and guests to book places too.

You have already missed our January outing which is always our HMF Annual Lunch at the New Inn's banqueting suite called Regan's. This was briefly previewed here last month. Here now to further whet your appetite is a fuller report. We were delighted to welcome a total of 60 people to the lunch, a pleasing 18% increase on 2022. We built on our new policy in 2022 of inviting wives and partners, by also inviting the widows of some of the recently deceased members – altogether, ladies made up about a third of the diners. Given the time of year we were delighted and amazed in equal measure that we had only one cancellation.



In his introduction, Allan Evison, HMF Chairman, welcomed members to the excellent venue once more and thanked, especially, the ladies who had joined us. As in other years, the Fellowship had invited representatives from the Churches Together in Hayes and we were pleased to welcome Alison Smith of the Hayes Free Church, and Father Gregory of Our Lady of the Rosary Church. Our own HMF President, Rev'd Amanda Spence was unable to attend due to a funeral commitment but we had the pleasure of her husband Stuart's company for the meal. But it was nice that Rev'd Amanda was able to pop in late in the event to say hello.

All the diners seemed to enjoy the occasion and there were frequent compliments about the food, service and fellowship. The special menu we agreed, tweaked from last year's with additional veggie options, worked well and the portion sizes were again generous. After the three course meal, plus tea or coffee, diners went home well satisfied. A super event once again, in the lovely surroundings of Regan's. The lunch really is one of the highlights of the HMF year and our thanks go particularly to Allan Evison for negotiating the menu and David Abberly for coordinating all the various menu selections.



The January walk was along the banks of the Thames from Richmond to Barnes Bridge. The weather was just right for walking – dry and although cold, very little wind and the ground was fairly dry. From Richmond

station the nine walkers enjoyed a pleasant walk along the Thames towpath before stopping for a very good lunch at “The Ship” in Mortlake. Afterwards, it was a short walk to Barnes Bridge station for a total distance covered of 5.5 miles.

The talk at our February meeting was about salvage on the Thames and in open waters by Capt. Brian Biggs who had worked his way up from cook on a Thames steam tug to the rank of Captain.

In the early 1950s, Brian left school on a Friday, had a 10-minute interview on the Saturday and started working on a tug on the Monday. Pretty rapid! His job? A cook, looking after the nine crew on a Sun Company tug on the River Thames. His duties included providing bacon and eggs for breakfast and nine pints of tea every two hours during the 12 hour shifts. His Mum was amazed as he had not even washed a cup at home! He did have some basic naval training too so he knew how to deal with ropes and wires.

Sea trade on the Thames was changing rapidly during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s with increased containerisation and more diesel rather than steam vessels. Containerisation led to larger vessels, which would not fit in the old wharves in London so led to new facilities being developed further out at Tilbury, for example. The change to diesel tugs meant that they needed a crew of seven rather than nine. Brian steadily worked his way up the ranks.

But things were changing – progression had been more on the basis of time served but the government decided that it should be based on qualifications. So all the tug crews were required to undergo college training if they were to advance their careers. The initial training covered things that Brian was already familiar with. But the higher qualifications for Mate and Master introduced new topics like navigation and health respectively – for the latter, training was given to enable minor operations like appendectomies to be carried out – unsurprisingly there were no guinea pigs to practise on! As his career evolved, Brian moved more into training, for example helping his company’s trainees get the best results at college.

He then talked about a number of incidents that happened at various stages during his career on the tugs including:

- Towing a cargo ship off Beachy Head that had a fire in the crew accommodation that led to six fatalities. The ship had to be taken to Dover where it took the fire brigade 72 hours to get the fire under control;
- Towing North Sea drilling rigs from one test location to another and laying out their eight anchors spread wide apart and used for manoeuvring the rig;

- Towing barges with the enormous columns for the Dartford Bridge; and
- Training Omani tug boat crews to work with oil tankers at the Oil Terminal there. Oil was taken by pipeline from the oil fields a long way inland to storage in the mountains just behind the coast. The oil was then gravity fed through further pipes to buoys which tankers were moored at four miles offshore.

This was another lively talk that generated many questions and was much appreciated by the members present.

The February outing to Dover Castle was departing just as this article was being finalised and a fuller report will feature in April. But, to whet your appetite, we can report that 41 people set off promptly at 8.30am from Hayes on a rather misty Wednesday morning hoping that the sun would eventually burn through.

That brings you right up to date. More here next month.

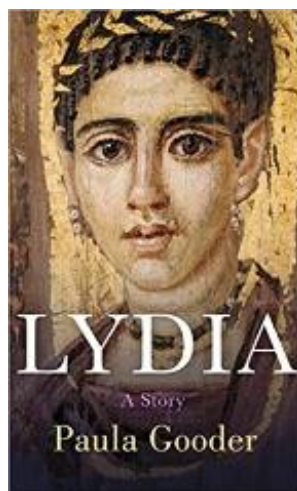
Allan Evison, HMF Chairman Graham Marsden, HMF Secretary
e-mail Contacts:

chairman@hayesmensfellowship.org

secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org

LYDIA – A STORY

There are many Bible characters we would love to know more about, or who appear for an intriguing instant in the pages of the Bible and then no more is heard about them. One such person is of course Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe. In Acts (chapter 16), Luke refers to her as the first to respond to Paul's preaching, and she then appears to be pivotal in those first days of the Philippian church, not least in providing Paul with a base for his mission operations there. But intriguingly she is mentioned no more, in either Acts or Paul's letters, and is noticeably absent in Paul's subsequent letter to the Philippians; she is not mentioned at all, although other members of the church are. So what happened to Lydia? Was her disappearance linked to the



girl whose exchanges with Paul led to his imprisonment? What was the importance of her trade as a dealer in purple cloth?

In a fascinating book which came out last year (2022) called *Lydia: A Story*, the author brings these questions to life in an imaginative and compelling tale woven around Lydia's faith and experience. The story may be fiction but it is firmly based on what we do know. The writer, Paula Gooder, is a noted New Testament scholar and uses her expertise and imagination to develop a possible storyline for who Lydia was, why she was in Philippi and of course what happened next. Incidentally Paula Gooder has also written '*Women of Holy Week*' which we are using for our Lent course at St Mary's throughout March.

The writer has also helpfully included a largish section at the end, with notes that shed light and expand the details in the story, across a number of topics; for example, clothing in the first century...and the importance of purple dyers.

For those who would like to know what it would have been like to live in Philippi in the first century, and to have been one of the first people who heard Paul's letter to the Philippians when it was first brought to them, I would thoroughly recommend this book. It is published by Hodder & Stoughton, but for those who want a quick peek, there is a copy to borrow in the church library at the back of the church.

David James

THE NOT SO HAPPY VALLEY

If you watch TV you will have seen many reminders of the concluding episode of the police drama 'Happy Valley'. It appears that many people have been awaiting this with such excitement that no early release of the ending was allowed. The previous series was fairly violent but starred the wonderful actor Sarah Lancashire so I started to watch the last episode in the hope that it would not be too shocking. I tuned in to see a wood chisel being used to stab someone in the stomach and, a little later, a violent fight between two men involving violent punching and a rock being used as a hammer to smash the skull of one of them multiple times until I imagine there was not much left of his skull and brain. It did not have the feeling of fantasy about it, just a graphic reality that made me feel sick. At this point I turned off. I've seen horrible things as a doctor but none has been 'entertaining' – always sad and difficult to process over several days or weeks.

I know that violence has been part of cinema and TV for many years with cowboy films, police dramas and James Bond movies etc, but somehow it has always been seen as fantasy rather than reality. The violence in Happy Valley was so graphic that it seemed like reality and made me feel sick.

So, here I am, writing about something that perhaps many people find okay to watch but I'm reminded that I'm a Christian, albeit not a very good one, and St. Paul said 'Whatever is true, whatever is honourable or lovely or gracious; if there is any excellence, or anything worthy of praise THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS'.

Things that are horrible, cruel and violent are never to be enjoyed. He didn't mean us to ignore the holocaust or any suffering afflicting humankind because we need to feel the pain of others in distress and pray for them and try to help them in any way we can. But if you watch original footage of the holocaust it is heartrendingly painful reality and not entertaining! That is the difference between the sad reality of our fallen world about which we should pray and the violence of 'Happy Valley' which is broadcast as 'entertainment'.

David Langford

HALLS FOR HIRE

The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email ocs.hayes@hotmail.com

**Items for the April magazine by 16th March please. Copy to the Editor. March magazines will be ready for distribution on 1st April. Editor: Clare Wickert, 3 Hayes Garden, Hayes.
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