

# OUTLOOK

## The Magazine of Bethesda Methodist Church, Cheltenham

February 2026

No. 160



Postbox, Ilmington

“the letters were sent by posts.”

Esther 3:13



# Bethesda Methodist Church

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Dear friends

The picture above is a piece of weaving created by the artist, Karen Burrige, from our Away Day back in June. Karen has given this piece to us to share between St Mark's & Bethesda, and the stewards from both churches met recently to discuss how to display

this and how to share this.

We agreed we would photograph the weaving, so whilst it isn't displayed we will still have access to this art, taking in turns to display the actual piece, and then it will travel to the other church when we hold joint services during festival times.

Below, Karen has explained the inspiration, techniques and some technical information. I hope you will all have the opportunity very soon to see up close this wonderful creation; a symbol of Christian unity in our town.

Yours in Christ,

**Rachel**

*Best of all is, God is with us.*

*I was asked to design and make a piece of work to express the closer working of two Methodist churches*

*in Cheltenham, St Mark's and Bethesda, to begin work at an away day the two churches were having and if possible to involve those attending in some way.*

### ***The inspiration***

*I wanted this weaving to express the working together of two disparate, but not incompatible parts. The give and take that is necessary in working together. The interplay of differing strengths and weaknesses.*

*The possible eventual merger.*

*Through it all I wanted to express the love and light of God flowing between the two congregations.*

*I decided to use a technique invented by weaver Theo Morman, which uses an auxiliary warp, on which an additional element of weaving can be added and which appears to float slightly above the main piece. This technique was used to represent the light and love of God.*

### ***Weaving technique***

*I chose blue and green to represent the two congregations and, using a clasped weave throughout, allowed the two colours to ebb and flow across the whole width of the weaving. The silver and gold threads representing the love and light of God similarly flowed across the whole piece, sometimes moving with the colours, sometimes across them,*

*as the love of God flows where it is most needed. At the away day I invited those attending to choose a length of wool, slightly wider than the width of the piece from a large selection I had brought, to represent themselves. These very disparate threads were placed at intervals in the main weaving, across the whole width and left hanging at each end, indicating life beyond the church family and the importance of every individual across the whole process*

### ***Technical information***

*The piece was woven on a 24" rigid heddle loom, with two heddles and a single pick-up stick. The yarn used is a mixture of my homespun and commercial yarn. The commercial yarn was all bought second-hand from charity shops and a local second-hand market in Stroud.*

***Karen Burridge***

### **A Blessing**

God of love, carry us with You in these difficult times.

Sustain us, and guide that we may love and protect others as you love and protect us.

**AMEN**

# INTERVIEW

## Jan Pearson answers questions on her life and links with Methodism



**Where were you born?**

I was born in Peterborough and left there to go to College in Matlock and never went back to Peterborough to live. After Matlock I lived in busy Birmingham for about 10 years before going to live in even busier North London for years. John and I finally came to Cheltenham 18 months ago.

**What was your first contact with Methodism?**

I definitely remember being an atheist as a teenager. At College I

took considerable time and effort to discover the truth about the meaning of life, the universe and all that, and I did not make it 42 (Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams), but instead I became a Christian.

That started my Church going. At College it was a Church of England in the morning and an Assembly of God Pentecostal in the evening. I was a Baptist in Birmingham, and it was not until the last house move in London that John and I became Methodists as the Church happened to be less than a 5 min walk from our house. Local has always been important. Here we were both very happy and both became local preachers. The criterion for choosing a church in Cheltenham was that it had to be less than a 20min walk away. You are just over a 7 min walk away.

**How do you see Bethesda developing over the next few years?**

I don't know. But I do know what we both found attractive about this church apart from the distance. We visited many churches which satisfied our distance criterion, some with great choirs, excellent sermons, beautiful buildings but none could beat you, the congregation. We could sit anywhere with a hot drink, and a

biscuit or fancy cake and people would talk to us and include us in their conversation. It did not need a person with a badge and a title on to tell us we were welcome. You, the congregation told us that by your actions. Thank you.

### **Have you any pastimes or hobbies?**

Yes, and they have changed over time. I enjoyed Pilates but have not yet found a class in Cheltenham. But I have found the church curry club, the U3A walking football at the YMCA, and table tennis at the retirement home where we live. I also enjoy holidays. One that has kept going despite the moves is the meet up with seven Christian friends from Matlock College who I shared digs with for 2 years.

Originally it was just meeting up for one day at one of our houses every 2 years. As the years passed numbers swelled as husbands then children came on the scene. Now we meet up every year in a country cottage for a week. But our numbers have decreased, children have all flown the nest and one of our group has gone to meet her Maker. This May we shall be meeting in Devon, and we shall come together as if we had never been apart.

### **What things challenge your faith?**

Too many to list, but I suppose the old chestnut, the problem of pain and suffering is something I've never found a satisfactory answer to. However, until I moved to Cheltenham, I was a Samaritan listening volunteer for many years. That experience taught me many things and one thing it taught me was that it would be useless changing faith, becoming an atheist or maybe an agnostic, they haven't got any satisfactory answers to the challenges that come our way either. I suppose I remind myself of what St Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth (Cor 13:12) "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known." That's my hope; one day I shall know.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **NATURE**

Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own; and from morning to night, as from the cradle to the grave, is but a succession of change so gentle and easy that we can scarcely mark their progress.

**Charles Dickens**

# ANOTHER FAILED MOT



Everybody who drives knows the requirement to get a car MOT once a year. Hopefully, you are better at looking after cars than I am... often, the only care my car gets in its annual cycle is the essential work needed for it to pass inspection. Naturally, this means that most years there is work to be done; perhaps it could be avoided with regular servicing and repairs when things break, rather than just letting them rattle on. My car did fail it's MOT in January... and yes, all the issues were things I could have anticipated well in advance.

I'm sure you didn't pick up Outlook to read about Sean's MOT adventures. So, why am I talking about MOTs? We all know that January is a time when many of us reflect on the year just gone and the year ahead. Many of us make New

Year's resolutions - New Year, new me. I often find that January is a good time to do an MOT on myself to spend time reflecting on how I'm doing. Are things going well? Where is there room for improvement?

For me, the biggest question of all at this time of year is what my following Jesus will look like in the months ahead. It's easy to get sucked into the New Year, new me culture, when, in fact, discipleship and following Jesus are the long haul. It's a slow, persistent pursuit of more of Jesus in our lives. So I encourage you at the beginning of this year. If you haven't done so already, take 30 minutes to reflect on your own relationship with Jesus and discipleship journey. How are you doing? And where can you seek out more of the presence of God in your life this year?

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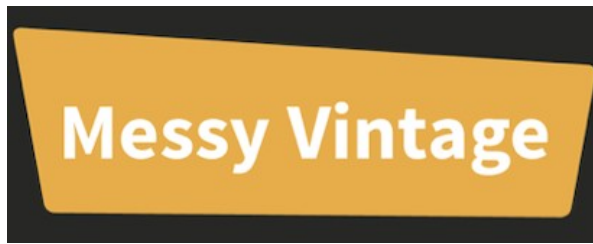
**Sean Marsh**

Young People and Families  
Worker, Bethesda Methodist  
Church.

Youth Enabler, Gloucestershire  
Methodist Circuit.

Mobile: 07704493983

# MESSY VINTAGE



You may have heard of Messy Church; you may have joined in a session of messy church at St Marks; but what, you may ask, is Messy Vintage?

Messy Vintage is a way to engage older people in worship when they may be finding the traditional service structure difficult to follow or enjoy or access. I have been involved in Messy Vintage through my work with CaBiC, in three different care homes; each one is different according to the numbers and abilities of the residents and their activity coordinators.

CaBiC stands for Cheltenham and Bishops Cleeve Anna Chaplaincy. Many of you may have helped with the CaBiC Christmas and Easter gifts by knitting angels, stars or Easter baskets. The aim of CaBiC is, briefly, to provide spiritual opportunities for older people. Messy Vintage is one means to achieve this aim.

The basic Messy Vintage service runs like this – a bible passage or story, a prayer and a hymn/song plus a simple craft activity that connects with the theme. There may be several songs and these are generally ones that older people may recall rather than introducing new ones.

The story will be fairly short to keep people's attention. The prayer may include the Lord's prayer because people can often join in. The service is Christian based although CaBiC is not intended only for people of the Christian faith. The craft activity offers opportunities to chat with people, including about their faith if they wish.

Anna Friends are needed to help with the messy vintage sessions so we can offer these to more homes and reach more people. Two people who could help for an hour on a Monday, once a month, are particularly needed. Is this something you could do? Maybe on another weekday? It's a different outreach but much appreciated by those taking part. Come and See.

[christinehwisdom@gmail.com](mailto:christinehwisdom@gmail.com)

# NET ZERO - FIVE WAYS TO BE BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT THIS YEAR

New Year's resolutions are a tradition encouraging people to focus on themselves. What if, in 2026, we all focus on doing the best we can for the environment?

Small changes add up, when we all participate, and many of these shifts can also save you money while reducing your carbon footprint.

## 1) Rethink your food choices

Food production accounts for a significant portion of global emissions. You don't need to go fully vegetarian, but try incorporating more plant-based meals into your week. Even swapping one or two meat-heavy meals for plant-based alternatives can make a difference. To go a step further (because why not?), buy seasonal, locally-grown produce. This will reduce transportation emissions and support your local economy.

## 2) Reduce energy consumption at home

Simple habits like switching to LED bulbs, unplugging devices when not in use and adjusting your thermostat by just a couple of degrees can

significantly cut your energy use – but don't forget to get the blanket out! To go a step further invest a bit more, consider a smart thermostat or improve your home's insulation to maximise efficiency year-round

## 3) Rethink your transportation

Could you walk, cycle, or take public transport for some of your regular journeys? Even carpooling when possible reduces emissions per person. If you drive, maintaining proper tyre pressure and reducing idling time improves fuel efficiency. For those considering a new vehicle, exploring electric or hybrid options is worthwhile and will make a massive difference.

## 4) Embrace mindful consumption

Before buying something new, ask yourself if you really need it. Could you borrow, rent, or buy second-hand instead? Fast fashion and single-use items create enormous waste. Choosing quality items that last longer, repairing what you have and supporting companies with genuine sustainability commitments all help reduce your environmental impact. January is a good time to peruse in second-hand shops and find gems in unwanted Christmas gifts.

## 5) Reduce water waste

Shorter showers, fixing leaky taps

and turning off the water while brushing your teeth are simple changes that conserve water. If you have outdoor space, consider collecting rainwater for plants. Full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher are more efficient than multiple partial loads.

Each step might be small, but put together, they make a massive difference for each of us and the planet.

*The Methodist News - 08/01/2026*

## A Service of Thanksgiving to mark the 80th Anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the UN



On 10 January 1946, representatives from across a war-torn world walked into Methodist Central Hall Westminster and took their seats for the first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. It was not a grand moment for the sake of spectacle. It was an act of responsibility - the first attempt to build a framework for cooperation

strong enough to prevent the return of global conflict. Eighty years later, that moment still matters.

This service of thanksgiving on 17th January will mark that beginning. It will honour the people who believed dialogue was stronger than division, and diplomacy stronger than vengeance.

We are pleased to confirm that Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh will attend the Service of Thanksgiving at Methodist Central Hall. During the service, Her Royal Highness will take part in an act of remembrance with local schoolchildren, honouring those who have lost their lives in the pursuit of peace.

The Secretary General of the United Nations **António Guterres**, will also be taking part in the service alongside representatives of the UK government. The service will bring together government ministers, diplomats, civic leaders, faith representatives, students, and members of the public to reflect on what began in this building: the idea that nations could work together with purpose, accountability, and patience.

*The Methodist News - 15/01/26*

# THE BETHESDA BACKPACKERS

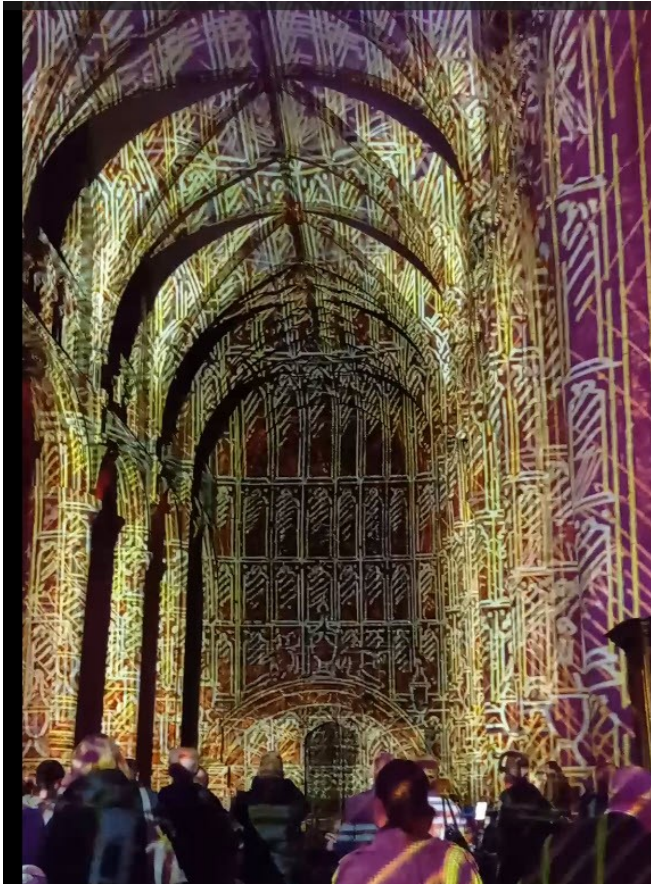


The Bethesda Backpackers held their traditional Red Hat Walk on 30th December. From the photograph, taken by Chris Bailey at Spring Bottom, Charlton Kings, you will see that it was well attended.

## Nativity Service, Bethesda



# LOOKING BACK



*Photos taken at Gloucester Cathedral by Donna Thompson*

## Looking Forward

February's best known day is probably Valentines Day on 14th February, but there are some other days related to love, romance and relationships during the month.

- 8th Promise Day
- 11th Propose Day
- 12th Hug Day
- 13th Kiss Day
- 15th Single Awareness Day
- 18th Flirting Day
- 21st Breakup Day





# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

as at 25th January, 2026



Welcome to this new year; in spite of the chilling wind there are snowdrops and daffodils coming in to bloom and many of our members, encouraged by Elaine, are counting birds in their garden for the Big Garden Birdwatch. I watched one pigeon for over half an hour having a banquet on my honeysuckle.

There is sad news to impart - several of our family and friends have died recently; Nancy Goss, Ray Gage, Christine Pringle and Peter Asquith as well as Lisa Harrison. We send our love, thoughts and prayers to their families and friends, thinking especially of Val, Sophie and Isla; John Goss; Sue Harvey and Naomi Cooke. It is hoped that some members will be able to travel to Sheffield for Lisa's funeral in early February.

We have had members in hospital for various treatments and we are always pleased to know they are making good progress. Ann P is enjoying respite care in a local care

home having had several hospital visits lately. It was good to be able to welcome Pam back to church after her time in hospital. We pray for all our members, as well as Ann and Pam, who need ongoing medical care that they continue to thrive.

Flora had her fifteenth birthday in the middle of January and Katelyn will celebrate her eighteenth birthday in early February. Katelyn is currently studying at Cirencester College and thoroughly enjoying her placement in a local Reception Class.

Rachel Young reports from Tresco that the recent storm, Storm Geretti, was the worst the Isles of Scilly had experienced in living memory. Rachel is safe and there were no human casualties. However on Tresco over 100 trees were uprooted along the Abbey Drive and in the famous sub-tropical garden a tree fell destroying the beautiful Shell House.

As always, we remember all those friends who are unable to join us in person for whatever reason, who are in need of our prayers and support.

Our church family is founded on faith, joined in love and sustained by God.

Christine Wisdom

Ros Terry

## FROM THE TREASURER



Every calendar year the weekly donations from Sunday coffee and Saturday Coffee Shop are split between two charities. For 2025 the amount raised was the amazing sum of £1,905 which is split equally between Shelter Box, supporting people who have lost their homes in war torn countries, and Welcome Directory, which is a guide for released prisoners to find a spiritual home.

On a similar theme a retiring collection following the last Bethesda@Six raised £1,000 for Sue Ryder. A huge thank you to everyone.

Not such good news is that for a variety of reasons our income from

regular giving has reduced by over £13,000 per annum which is significant and means that we will not be able to cover our annual costs. We do have reserves to cover this for a period, but I ask you to hold this in your thoughts and prayers.

Brian Gibb

## From Richmond, Virginia

I'm still active in the church and still webmastering their website. A friend, Donna, got the job as our Church admin last year and we've been able to work together well to upgrade our digital footprint and communications there. I spent several weeks taking member photos for a new church members' directory and Donna has allied the photos with contact info into a new database and now has produced an attractive print photo directory and a separate contact directory that will be easier to keep up-to-date. She said the other day what a caring church St. Luke is, and I agreed. It's a pleasure to be associated with it and I know that if I needed help, there are folks there willing and able to give it.

*The above is a short edited extract from Evelyn Henson's Christmas letter. Evelyn was a very active member at Bethesda before going to live in America.*

# WE ARE ALL ONE



I never quite believed the old illustration about the butterfly flapping its wings in Brazil, thus starting a process which eventually leads to a tornado in

Texas. My mind couldn't stretch enough to encompass the magnitude and nature of the idea. And yet I try to live my life according to another idea, that of God, whose magnitude and nature has been stretching my mind for a very long time.

I first encountered the challenge of non-separability in an article in the 'face to faith' bit of the [Guardian on December 4th 2004 by Mike Purton](#), which made sense to me, though quantum physics / mechanics were way outside my scope. I have kept the article, and have often read it again over the years. Mike Purton, a writer, musician, music producer and one time BBC television producer, talks about what physicists call entanglement - the state of two or

interacted with each other will always be connected, whatever the subsequent distance between them. He prefers the term 'non-separability' - a significant difference. If all matter emerged from the Big Bang, at a fundamental level the particles it consists of can never be separated. Purton goes on to suggest that what physicists now believe - and it was the hot topic in physics in the 1980s and had been suspected by scientists and philosophers for a long time - is possibly the biggest revelation of that century for theologians too. 'It seems to be too immense a concept, too remote from our everyday lives - until we view it from the spiritual perspective.'

It makes sense, doesn't it? I have never quite accepted that God, who is manifestly active in so many of the lives of people I know can be 'the same yesterday, today and forever' unless being 'the same' implies that dynamism which is energy and expansion and development and activity and movement. It is inconceivable to think of 'the same' as implying 'static'.

If we are all created by God, 'in God's image' as we say, then we are all particles of the God-stuff (is there anything else?) and can never be separated from God or from other

beings. We are interdependent, and what we do as individuals has an effect on other beings, as they have on us, whether we are aware of it or not. The Brazilian butterfly had no idea what she was starting!

The implications for loving our neighbour *as ourselves* are endless.

At that sort of depth we *are* our neighbour, and we need to find and recognise the God-particle within each of us; including our limited selves.

And what are the implications for our treatment of our home, the Earth?

Our relationship with other animals? Trees? How does it affect our political judgement, the work we do, the way we spend our time and our money, as well as how we treat people, how we pray for people including those who want to harm us? What does it say to us about our education system and our prison system, our attitude to paying tax, our loyalties to family, to peer group, to football team, to tradition, to nation? If we are essentially all one, dare we exclude anyone?

Teilhard de Chardin in *The Future of Man* (1959) quoted a version of Christ's message as 'Love one another, recognising in the heart of each of you the same God who is being born.' Purton claims that in Christ's own time a God of love would have been an alien concept. Judgement Day could come at any moment and would see people eternally damned if they did not worship the wrathful God. But Jesus spoke of - and was the embodiment of - *love*, and said 'Be one, even as my Father and I are one.' (cf John 17:21)

If we are indeed all one, all part of a single spirit, as I am increasingly believing as I approach the end of my earthly life, there is no separation between me and my neighbour, and it follows that loving my neighbour (as myself) becomes the only possible way to be completely alive.

I did say quantum mechanics / physics were beyond my mental capacity - but in the depths of my being I sense truth here somewhere'

Josie Smith

*Theology Everywhere*

*The Methodist Church in Britain*

# DONNA NOOK LINCOLNSHIRE

In December Katie Hare visited Donna Nook in Lincolnshire to see the grey seal pups.

Katie writes, “It was a lovely experience. You could get to about two feet away from the pups, behind a double fence, and they weren’t bothered in the slightest.”



## Thought for the month

During a great storm, a doctor in a rural area was called to go several miles into the country to visit a sick child. It was late in the day and the weather was bad, with snow falling so quickly that he could hardly see the road. He was worried he might not get to his destination.

He reached a remote house and the owner telephoned to the next house along the road, asking them to ensure that a light was on outside the house. When the doctor reached that house, the owner did the same and eventually the doctor arrived at the house where he was needed.

Is not this a picture of the Christian life? By the way we live, we can each let our light of faith shine so that others can find Jesus who is the Light of the World.

*John Farrow*

## The Three Bears

It was a sunny morning in the big forest and the bear family was just waking up. Baby bear went downstairs and sat in the small chair at the table. He looked into his small

bowl. It was empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he wailed.

Daddy bear arrived at the table and sat in his big chair. He looked into his big bowl. It was also empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he roared.

Mummy bear put her head through the serving hatch from the kitchen and yelled, "For Pete's sake, how many times do we have to go through this? It was mummy bear who got up first. It was mummy bear who woke everyone else in the house up. It was mummy bear who unloaded the dishwasher from last night and put everything away. It was mummy bear who went out into the cold morning air to fetch the newspaper. It was mummy bear who put the cat out, cleaned the litter box and filled the cat's water and food dish. And now that you've decided to come downstairs and grace me with your presence.....listen up, because I'm only going to say this one more time.....I haven't made the porridge yet!"



# Children's

## Page



### A New Year Breakfast

I want to tell you about a New Year's breakfast which I had when I was a little girl. A slice of dry bread and an apple. This is how it happened.

As we came down to breakfast, we found father alone in the dining-room.

"Happy New Year, Dad! Where is mum?" we cried.

"A little boy came begging and said they were starving at home, so your mother went to see and--ah, here she is."

As dad spoke, in came mum, looking very cold, rather sad, and very much excited.

"Children, don't begin eating till you hear what I have to say," she cried.

"Not far from here is a poor woman with a little new-born baby. Six children are huddled into one bed to keep from freezing, for they have no fire. There is nothing to eat, and the oldest boy came here to tell me they were starving this bitter cold day. My girls, will you give them your breakfast, as a New Year's gift?"

We sat silent a minute, and looked at the nice, hot porridge, creamy milk, and good bread and butter.

"I'm so glad you come before we began," said Ann, cheerfully, and my other two sisters agreed.

"Put on your warm clothes and help me," said mum. We soon set out. Between us we had wood, coal, a teapot, hot porridge, milk, cold meat and potatoes.

What a poor, bare, miserable place it was. "It is the good angels", cried the poor woman when she saw us.

We fell to work. Dad made a splendid fire in the fireplace and covered the broken window. Mum set the shivering children round the fire, and wrapped the poor woman in warm things.

What fun it was! Dad fed the smallest child; mum dressed the poor little new-born baby, Betsey gave the mother gruel and tea. The rest of us helped feed the seven children. It was a happy breakfast, though we didn't get any of it; and we came away promising to return. When we got home we contented ourselves with a bit of bread and an apple on New Year's day.

*Adapted from a short story by  
Louisa May Alcott*

# MEET JENI BETHESDA'S ORANGUTAN



Jeni lives in Borneo where she was rescued by the Borneo Orangutan Survival Organisation (BOS) in August 2020, in shock and with leg wounds, having been forcibly separated from her mother at 10 months and weighing just under 5k.

Orangutans have a long weaning period with their mothers who only have young every 7-9 years. Like us they have 20 baby teeth and 32 adult teeth - in fact their DNA is 97% the same as ours! I gave out a leaflet I made with more information about Jeni and photos of her at school with her friends which is in the folder on the Children's table in church. Jeni has particular skills at nest building which she happily shares with her two close friends.

Jeni has graduated from the nursery to Jungle School where she goes every day to make tree nests in which she will eventually sleep and generally learns survival skills. Later, it is hoped, she will be able to be released back into the wild in a forest island setting not under threat from clearance for the palm oil industry and away from poachers looking for meat, body parts for medicine and pets!

So far BOS has returned 520 orangutans to the wild within the 1.1m acres in their care.

BOS updates us regularly on Jeni's progress, for which I currently make a donation of £10 which I hope we can support as a church through some fundraising which each month will cover one week of teaching wild survival skills.

There is a small version of Jeni in the church which I hope the children will take home for a week or so and share some photos of their life with her in Cheltenham! Her adoption certificate is on the Eco Church notice board.

Do have a look at the BOS website which has links to some delightful videos of orangutans in their care -

[borneoorangutansurvival.org](http://borneoorangutansurvival.org)

Elaine

# COMPASSION ON THE FARM - HILLSIDE STORY



You know how it is? - the best things in life always happen by chance! And so it was that I recently found a fascinating flyer, for what is probably the UK's finest and foremost Animal Sanctuary of its kind, Hillside, at Frettenham, near Norwich, nestling in the envelope with my "Radio Times". And it's 30 years old this year.

From it I gleaned that it incorporates Hillside Shire-horse Sanctuary at West Runton, near Cromer. The Animal Sanctuary, founded in 1995, is now home to some 4,000 rescued horses, ponies, donkeys, cows, sheep, pigs, deer and birds, e.g. 5 Latino Rheas, thanks to its many loyal supporters and volunteers.

The Hillside Animal Investigation Team goes undercover in the factory farming industry to prosecute the perpetrators of animal abuse, crime and neglect and to publicize their suffering on TV.

In 2013 they were instrumental in closing down the UK's largest and

most notorious slaughterhouse for horses.

Hillside Dog Rescue first investigated puppy farms in 2009/10, finding some appalling and dreadful conditions for dogs and their offspring. They now encourage dog lovers to rehome a rescued dog instead of purchasing a puppy from a breeder. 'Rescues' are also a cheaper option. Apparently Rescue dogs make more loving pets. It must also give you a warm 'fuzzy' feeling to help them.

On call 24/7, for wildlife rescues, e.g. road-injured deer, Hillside always tries to save the animal's life, wherever possible, thanks to their vets. Most Wildlife hospitals tend not to be open throughout the night and not to offer this service. Many foxes and swans have recovered at the Sanctuary, as well as countless deer etc., with creatures returned to nature whenever possible. Wild Norfolk is stunning.

The Hillside flyer included a couple of pages of gifts, from which I selected a super Highland Cow key-fob, complete with fringe! - and some excellent-value animal notelets. They also promised me an "History of Hillside since 1995" booklet, all proving to be delightful. They also sent me a cardboard self-assembly moneybox for change, details of a standing order and of the

‘Westside Story’ of their Shire-horse Open days (where you can meet heavy horses, llamas, game birds and goats) at West Runton, with free entry. This site has an animal-friendly café, a children’s play area and a gift shop. You can adopt a ‘rescue animal’, which I’m sure would be a kind and charming idea. All their animals live on 8 sanctuary farm locations dotted around Norfolk.

When my gift pack arrived, it also contained the tale of Balinda . This beautiful and gentle pony was born blind, constantly requiring special attention and very sympathetic handling. Saved from danger and harm by a concerned Welsh lad, she still had her foal with her. 11years on, Balinda, her son Carlos and her adopted daughter Alison are still living happily together at Hillside, a shining example of the total care ethic of this truly remarkable ‘Heavy Horse Haven/Heaven.’

Hillside is a unique Rest Home, where touching, unlikely animal friendships are forged, in a lovely atmosphere of calm and contentment, a world away from their often traumatic and abusive former lives.

Farmer Jay, who asked Hillside to take in/on his 70 cows, as he could no longer bear to take them to be

slaughtered, knew that they recognize each other and have very good memories. They can be sad, happy, bored and excited, also having facial expressions and they even cry.

Cows are conscious of what goes on around them - they have personalities and an inner life.

They deserve our best love and care.

With 3 of the best known British supermarkets and a famous poultry producer from this country and one from USA implicated in cruel and sadistic meat production, I shall now take more notice of the ethics behind the meat I buy.

Here are the all-important details:  
Hillside Animal Sanctuary, Hill Top Farm, Hall Lane, Frettenham  
NORWICH, NR12 7LT Tel:  
01603 736200 [www-hillside.org.uk](http://www-hillside.org.uk)  
email: [contact@hillside.org.uk](mailto:contact@hillside.org.uk)

Donation helpline (9am - 9pm 7days) - # as above. Please make cheques out to Hillside Animal Sanctuary Ltd. Annual Friend - Min. £10.00. Or by monthly or yearly standing order - choose your amount. Adoption Scheme available.

Or please spare a pound for a ‘Pound Pony’. Or donate just £5.00 for hay. My maternal grandparents lived in a house called “Hillside” at Kirkstall, Leeds, so it’s fitting and I’m proud to support the Charity with the same name. Please might you do likewise?

**John D. Wilcock**



# OUTLOOK

The April 2026 issue of 'Outlook' should appear on 5th April 2026. Contributions are invited by not later than 22nd March 2026 by email: [bernard\\_stradling\\_1980@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard_stradling_1980@btinternet.com) or in any format by hand or by post. 'Outlook' can also be found on the Bethesda website: [bethesda-church.org.uk](http://bethesda-church.org.uk) Please note that articles reflect the views of the writer and not necessarily those of Bethesda Methodist Church. The cover photograph was taken several years ago in Ilmington, Warwickshire.

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# Bethesda Methodist Church

In 2025 Bethesda adopted a new Logo. Heather Sparkes writes:  
"This was developed by a graphic designer called Daisy Cambridge. She had developed several design options and colourways and a small team at Bethesda have worked with her to reach this final design. The work for this and the new welcome pack was made possible by the generous legacy of Dilys Harrison."

## Have you heard the one about ... ?

An Irish man was given the job of painting white lines down the middle of a road. On his first day he painted eight miles, on his second day three miles and on his third day he painted just one mile.

The boss was not pleased.

He asks "Why is it that you are painting less each day?"

"Because each day I get further away from the can of paint."

One night a lady came home from her weekly prayer meeting, found she was being robbed and she shouted, "Acts 2:38 : Repent and be baptised and your sins will be forgiven!"

The robber quickly gave up and the lady rang for the police. While handcuffing the criminal, a policeman said, "Gee mate you gave up pretty easily. How come you gave up so quickly?"

The robber said, "She said she had an axe and two 38's!"

My grandfather told me that he saw The Titanic and that from the beginning he warned all the people that the ship would sink, but no one listened to him. He was a brave man. He did not give up. He warned them again and again until they kicked him out of the cinema.



A church member told her friend, "*I'm on a new faith-based diet.*"

Her friend asked, "*What's that?*"

She replied, "*I eat whatever I want and pray over it... then I pray over the scales the next morning.*"

## *Prayers of Intercession*

Knowing that God protects and holds each of us in love let us pray for those in our communities, country and around the world who are in danger at this time:

Loving God, we pray for the young and vulnerable who are sleeping rough in our communities and cities around the world.

Loving God, we pray for all children whose mental, physical and emotional health is endangered by abuse or neglect.

Lord, may they feel Your protection and love through those who work to support them.

Loving God we pray for those across the world who face fear, war and terror, drought and famine that are part of their everyday life.

[Lord, may they feel Your protection and love through those who work to support them.](#)

Loving God, we pray for ourselves, for the determination to walk in Your shadow to feel Your love and protection that we might share with others in their great need: for the vulnerable, sick, confused and for those who are bereaved.

Lord, we offer these prayers in the name of Your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**AMEN**

*With acknowledgements to ACE*



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