



LINK MAGAZINE

For Goring and Steyning
Methodist Churches

August 2026



Letter from the Manse



Dear friends,

This is the last letter from *the manse* and I've been drawn back to the first letter, written way back in September 2022. I'm sure you all remember it well...! Queen Elizabeth II had recently died and we reflected on looking back and forward, and how the hard unseen gardening work in Autumn gives the opportunity for new life come the Spring.

As I look back on the last 4 years with Steyning and Goring-by-Sea Methodist Churches, I see the hard work that both congregations put into the life of the church. There are the initiatives that happen regularly, such as Monday Club and the Steyning Lunch Club, and the Friday Coffee Morning and Tuesday Fellowship at Goring. There are things that happen seasonally, such as Fairs and Festivals. Then, there is the hard work behind the scenes to keep our churches safe and welcoming, as well as seeking God as we plan and dream for future. To all volunteers who serve across the life and ministry of each church, I want to acknowledge your contributions as you serve God in your role(s). I know a great number of you have either continued in your roles or stepped up to roles in our time here. Thank you so much – it has been a joy to partner with you in making God's love known to our communities. I know you will continue support your new minister as you serve God together.

It has been a privilege to see new things grow in my time with you. At Goring, small groups have been set up where people grow in faith together. 'Space for Families' has been a way to connect with our wider community serving them by offering space, fun and refreshments during the school holidays. At Steyning, our monthly relaxed services around tables have enabled us to look deeper into the Bible, ask honest questions and reflectively grow in faith.

As I reflect once more on growth, I am reminded of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians where he writes, 'I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow' (1 Corinthians 3:6). Here Paul acknowledges his contribution to the church, as well as another church leader's contribution, Apollos. But most importantly, Paul points to the One on whom we depend, the One who makes things grow and bloom into fullness of life – God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We all bring our God-given gifts and talents to the life of the church, but it is God who moves, God who changes hearts, and God who brings growth.

As you move into a new season with a new minister, our prayer is that you will continue to offer your own individual God-given gifts to God within the life of the church, that we might see more growth: numerically, spiritually and missionally.

May God bless you abundantly,

Steven

West Sussex (Coast & Downs) Circuit
INVITES YOU TO



Revd Steven
Donnison

FAREWELL SERVICE

SUNDAY 2ND AUGUST

5pm with tea before
at 3.30pm

Goring Methodist Church

All-Age Worship Sunday 19th July.

The below was posted on Facebook to mark Steven's last Sunday service at Goring which was also a Thanksgiving Service for baby Myles.



Goring Methodist Church

4h · 🌐



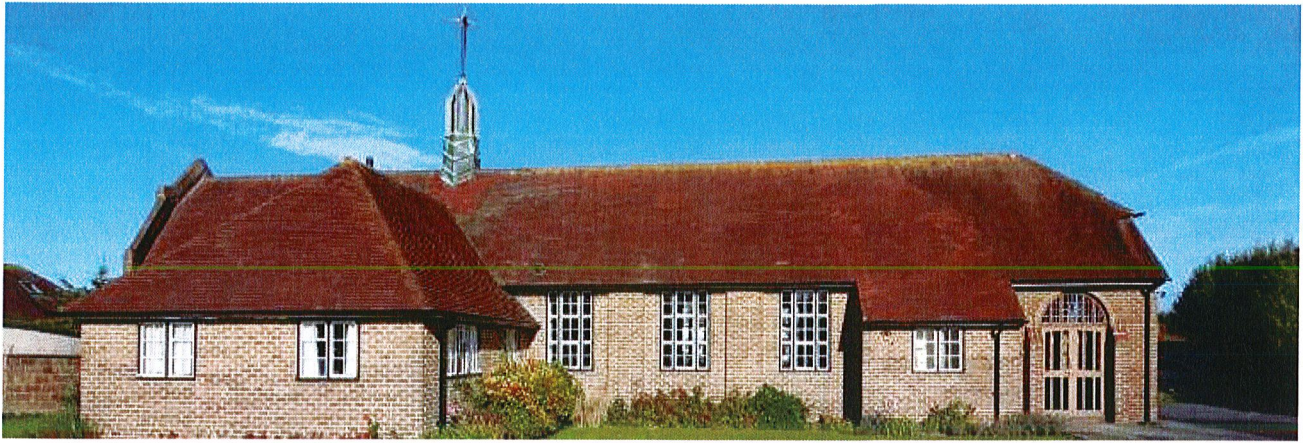
On Sunday we had our annual service of celebration for our young people and it was also a privilege to take part in the Thanksgiving Service for the tiniest of our members, Myles, along with his family and friends.



New Church Banner erected at Goring.



**Thanks to Pauline and her Friday
Coffee Morning helpers.**



Goring Services:

Sunday 2nd August 10am: Revd Billy Slatter

**5pm: Circuit Farewell Service for Steven, Alish &
Family**

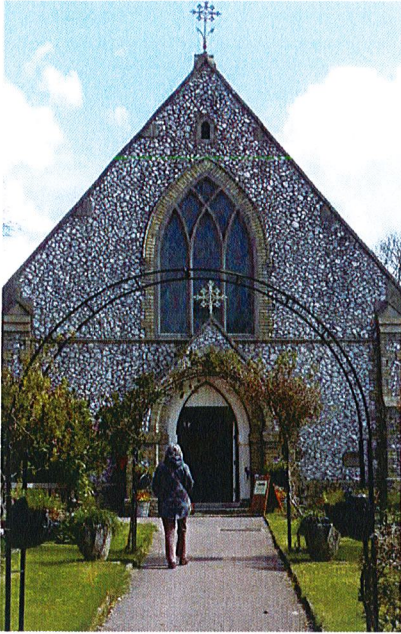
Sunday 9th August 10am: John Carr

Sunday 16th August 10am: Revd Owen Carney- All-Age Worship.

Sunday 23rd August 10am: Revd John Scrivens

Sunday 30th August 10am: Revd Billy Slatter – Holy Communion

September Services to be confirmed in new plan.



Steypning Services:

Sunday 2nd August 10.30am: Joy Barnes

Sunday 9th August 10.30am: Revd Tony Brazier – Holy Communion

Sunday 16th August 10.30am: Roy Firth

Sunday 23rd August 10.30am: Revd Tongayi Matamba – Relaxed Service

Sunday 30th August 10.30am: Revd Richard Tanner

September Services to be confirmed in new plan.



Action for Children

The Circuit Support Group Sponsored Walk is on Saturday 26th September starting at 10 a.m. from Goring (bottom of Aldsworth Avenue) on the greensward. The walk to East Preston and back is 5 miles and to Littlehampton is 5 miles (back 10 miles). It is mainly on the greensward and promenade with a short part on the path by the road as you approach Littlehampton. Drinks and snacks will be available at Goring and the café on the beach at East Preston should be open. There are cafés and restaurants at Littlehampton.

If you would like to take part please register with our Area Representative, sasha.clarke@actionforchildren.org.uk who will send you a sponsor form etc. Route details will be available at Goring. If you would like to have the route information beforehand please let us know and we will send it to you.

Geoffrey Trueman

At: Bury Drive, BN12 4XB

Goring Methodist Church

SPACE for Families!

Thursday
30th
July

11am - 3pm

Tuesday
11th
August

1pm - 4pm

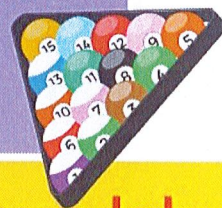
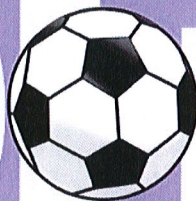
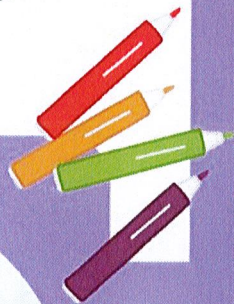
Thursday
20th
August

11am - 3pm

We've
got the Space,
You bring
the Family!

Refreshments
available

Free Event. Stay and play
Arrive and Leave whenever
Bring a picnic if you wish



Dear friends,

When I wrote on 6th June with my report on the spring 'Sustaining Hope' gathering, I carelessly described the camp at Crowborough as a 'new detention centre' in my email. It isn't (my mind must still have been on the powerful presentations we heard in April).

The camp in Crowborough, with which Deacon Vicky Welsh is involved, is a government migrant camp for men who have been transferred there from 'government hotels'.

If you are passing on my message in any way, please would you ensure that the corrected information is given.

With apologies and many thanks
Hazel

'Sustaining Hope' in 2026

'Sustaining Hope' gatherings take place on Saturday mornings twice a year. They are for anyone in our Methodist District who is involved, or interested, in supporting refugees, migrants and displaced people in our communities. The gatherings include time to network and pray together and there are two keynote presentations to broaden our awareness and help us be more effective.

The spring gathering was at Redhill Methodist Church on 25th April. The first presentation was by Rev Nigel Cowgill the Global Communities Officer of the Methodist Church in Great Britain. He works with people from 19 different language communities who have come to live in the UK, aiming to ensure that they can flourish within the Methodist Church. He reminded us that since the earliest years of Christianity, the church has been global and facing the challenges that this poses:

- Today, 7-10,000 (c.10%) members of the British Methodist church do not have English as their first language. We need to shed traditional ideas of *host* and *guest* and realize that everyone truly belongs equally 'at the table', even if eg. as a student, they are only part of us for a few years.
- Conversation with different global church communities is important, even though issues may be complex and challenging.
- If someone has experienced trauma, they need security in what is familiar to them, including food, language and celebrations, rather than being expected to become 'like us'. Subsequent generations may react differently from their parents to things both in the UK and in their ancestral country, but continue to be impacted by what happened to previous generations, especially if they are still confronted with racism and racist language, which perpetuates the trauma.
- Being a 'good neighbour' means being aware of how everything is interconnected: what is happening in someone's 'home' country affects how they see what is happening in the UK. Decisions made in Westminster constantly impact people across the world. It isn't enough just to give money to address issues of injustice - unjust *systems* need challenging - our focus needs to be on *justice*, not *charity*.

Nigel left us with the question: how can the church be a transformative force in today's interconnected world? He had certainly given us plenty of food for thought!

Our second keynote speaker, Mary Barrett, spoke about offering **Support, friendship, and advocacy** to immigration detainees. For 30 years she has with others been visiting people held in immigration detention at Gatwick airport. It began with a very small ecumenical Christian group, gathered together by a monk at Worth Abbey. Eventually they formed a charity, the 'Gatwick Detainees' Welfare Group' (GDWG), with Shirley Williams as their patron. Now they have 12 employees including a fundraiser. Their office in Crawley is staffed 24/7 and can receive phonecalls from people held in detention (they are allowed a mobile phone). GDWG matches one of its visitors to someone who has asked for a visit. They probably spend about an hour with them on each visit and the promise '*I'll come back next week*' has enormous impact on the detainee - it means relationship and trust can begin to be built.

Initially the setting was quite relaxed but regulations have been increasingly tightened. In 1996 the group began by visiting Tinsley House, where women, children and families were detained. Mary described how older children arriving in the UK can often be mistaken for adults and separated from their parents. Detention centres are now run by SERCO under government contract. Since 2009, members of GDWG have been visiting Brook House, on the perimeter of the airport, where adult men are detained, surrounded by high barbed-wire fences. Mary described it as "like a Category B prison": visits have to be booked in advance; you have to leave everything in a locker; to get to the visits room you have to go through seven locked doors; you can't sit next to the person you are visiting - even partners and children have to sit on the other side of the table; there can be no physical contact and you cannot give them anything.

Detainees include:

- prisoners who have served sentences of more than 12 months, which may be made up of several shorter periods for minor offences.
- people who have stayed in the UK after their visas have expired, maybe because of changes in their lives - eg. a former student now in a relationship with a UK resident. People are not notified when their visas are due to expire - they just get on with their lives.

- people picked up eg. from a lorry and who have applied for asylum.
- some may even, occasionally, have a British passport, but have been born outside the UK.
- many are struggling with mental illness, some severely so, but no appropriate care is available.

Mary described how many people are terrified of being sent back to their country of origin, for fear of what might happen to them there. She said the worst thing about detention is that it is indefinite. There is no legal process involved in sending them to the detention centre; they have not been given any 'sentence' and they have no idea how long they will be there. There is no judicial oversight. The maximum stay should be 28 days and then release, or 'good reason' given for detaining longer. In practice, detention may last many months - costing the Home Office c.£120 per day. The indefinite nature of detention takes a huge toll on people's mental health, and many are already traumatised from previous experiences. The Home Office is not supposed to detain someone who is a victim of torture, but the default position is to disbelieve what people say. No allowance is made for the impact of stress or confusion on someone's ability to accurately sequence what has happened, or to recall details in their story. Discrepancies that arise through repeated questioning are taken as 'proof' that the person is lying.

People from the charity only see a tiny proportion of those who are detained. They offer friendship, but are prohibited by law from giving legal advice. They do though refer people to GDWG's office, where information about legal advisors can be given.

Mary spoke of the new issues around UK residency. It used to be possible to apply for 'Leave to Remain' after 5 years; now it is 10. Each application or re-application costs £1,000s. Many applicants are on a low income, and have to carefully put money away for a long time before they can apply. At the same time, the threshold of minimum required earnings constantly increases.

Mary explained the development of (the now well-established) 'Refugee Tales'. 12 years ago there was very little awareness of immigration detention centres. GDWG is committed to not marching or demonstrating but aims to inform by talking to opinion-formers - in local communities and at party conferences. They work with former detainees, empowering them to be the ones who speak to delegates. In 2015 they decided to walk from Dover to Gatwick over 7 days, staying in church halls and community centres, and wherever they stopped en route, telling stories of people being held in detention. The concept was inspired by Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and by the ideas of pilgrimage, of walking ancient routes - and of refugees walking in search of safety. That first walk was so well received that there has since been a walk every year except during Covid.

More than 100 people now take part in each walk, which is always in the south-east. On the evenings of the walks there is music and sometimes dancing and two *Tales* of detainees are read. Originally these were compiled by professional writers but now over half are written by those with lived experience of detention. Catering is sourced in advance and people found to transport walkers' baggage between venues. It is a major operation and takes up much of Mary's year. **The next *Refugee Tales* pilgrimage is 8th-12th July, from Angmering to Portsmouth, staying at Arundel, Bognor, Chichester and Emsworth.** Non-walkers are welcome to pay to attend the evening events - the *Refugee Tales* website has all the necessary information. Several books of *Tales* have now been produced and are available on the website. Fund-raising enables *Refugee Tales* to fund 30 people to walk, who have experienced detention. In addition *Refugee Tales* organise a monthly 'Walk with us', giving former detainees the opportunity to be out in the countryside. Anyone is welcome to take part in these walks.

**** The autumn Gathering will be at Redhill Methodist Church on Saturday 3rd October, 1000-1330.**

The presentations will be given by

***Deacon Vicky Welsh on responding positively to the opening of the immigration detention camp in Crowborough**

***Rossana Leal, founder and director of the Refugee Buddy project in Hastings**

Look out for the poster from August onwards

Hazel Forecast

BIG



PICNIC

Monday 17th August 11-3pm

Denton Gardens...

...look out for the gazebo!

Bring your lunch, drinks & picnic blanket.

Free event, spread the word & tell your friends!!

**In the event of bad weather this will be
hosted at St George's Church,**

St George's Rd, BN11 2DS

**For further details contact Kathryn on
07594608590 or kathryn@stgw.org.uk**



OFFINGTON PARK

METHODIST CHURCH

YOUTH BIKE WORKSHOP

AGES
10-13



EVERY TUESDAY
6:00-8:00 PM



STARTING TUESDAY,
28 JULY 2026



LEARN HOW TO:



Repair a puncture



Adjust your gears



Check your brakes



Clean and maintain your chain



Check tyre pressure



Use bike tools safely



PLUS...



Go on group rides



Improve your riding skills



Learn basic bike maintenance



Meet new friends



Have fun!



NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED!

Just bring your bike and
your enthusiasm.

FREE TO JOIN!

Please note: Any replacement parts
needed for your bike must be
provided by you.



office@offingtonpark.org.uk



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The Planets in August & September 2026

Mercury is close to the Sun, so not well placed for viewing throughout this time.

Venus is a bright Evening Star at the beginning of August. It can be seen close to the crescent moon on 15th and 16th August. It then sinks gradually into twilight setting at the same time as the Sun by the end of September

Mars can be seen after midnight rising around 1.30am in August and 1am in September. It is in the constellation of Gemini (the twins).

Jupiter is reappearing from behind the sun (conjunction). It can be seen in the morning sky rising after 5am in late August and around 3am in September. It is in the constellation of Cancer (the crab).

Saturn can be seen in the evening sky, rising around 10pm in August and 8pm in September. It is in the constellation of Pisces (the fishes).

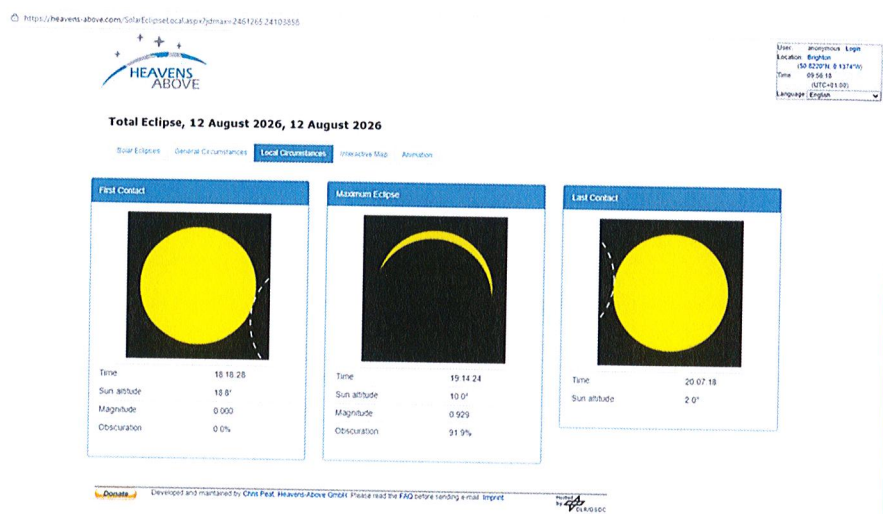
On August 12th there is a partial solar eclipse visible from the UK. Please be very careful, **DO NOT look directly at the Sun**, without the proper filter. Either eclipse glasses, some telescopes have specialist filters, or the Sun's image can be projected through pinholes to see the progress of the partial.

Here is an illustration showing times the partial eclipse will be visible from this area. The Sun will be getting quite low, so you will need a clear horizon to the west.

I have used the heavens above website <https://heavens-above.com/>

First contact is at 6.18pm, mid-partial eclipse at 7.14pm and last contact at 8.07pm.

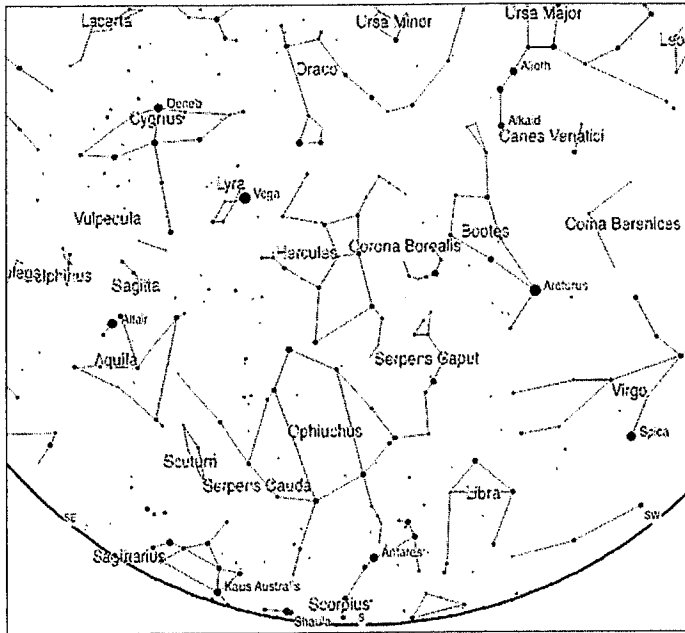
I have some eclipse glasses that I plan to hand out at Steven's farewell service. The illustration at mid-partial eclipse is a good representation of the maximum the Sun will be covered by the Moon visually through eclipse glasses.



The Perseid meteor shower peaks on the 12th/13th August. As this is at new moon the display will be easier to see this year. The autumn equinox is on 23rd September.

On 28th September there is a partial lunar eclipse. This takes place in the morning sky starting around 3.30am, with maximum partial around 5.14am, ending when the moon sets around 6.10am.

Look out for the Summer Triangle which is made up of 3 bright stars: Vega in Lyra, Altair in Aquila and Deneb in Cygnus. Passing between these is the Milky Way (the centre of our galaxy), which looks like a milky river of stars. During September look out for the square of Pegasus and, if the sky is clear enough, you will be able to see the Andromeda Galaxy as a faint elongated fuzzy oval.



New Moon is on the 12th August and 11th September and full Moon is on the 28th August and 26th September.

Here is an illustration of the night sky, looking south at 10pm on 1st September.

Linda Croft

— >> PRESENTED BY << —
**WORTHING ALLOTMENTS
AND GARDENS ASSOCIATION**

47TH Annual HORTICULTURAL SHOW

SATURDAY 8TH AUGUST 2026

1:00PM – 4:30PM

*Join us for a wonderful afternoon
celebrating flowers, vegetables, baking,
crafts and more, with around*

500 EXHIBITS
ON DISPLAY!



ENTRY £1.00



FREE ENTRY FOR WAGA MEMBERS



CHILDREN FREE



FREE PARKING



Fresh fruit and vegetables
available from the allotment



Featuring the popular
Men in Sheds group



Stalls selling seeds
and second-hand tools



BBQ available – only **£3.50**



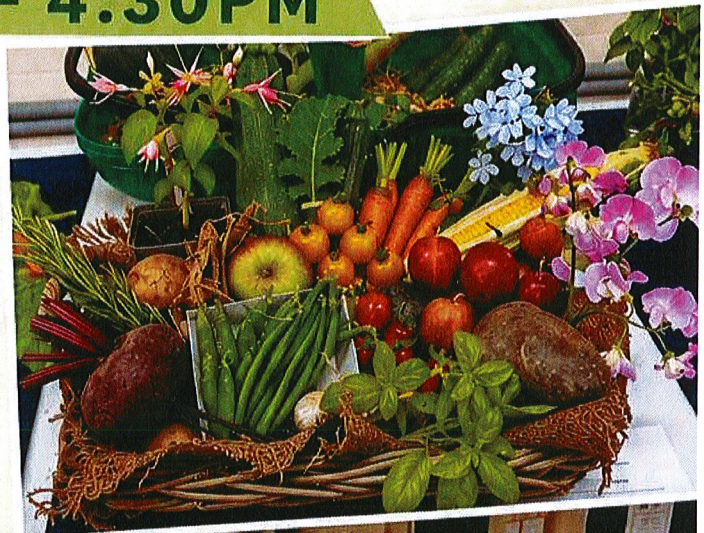
Café serving drinks &
homemade cake – just **£3.00**



Garden stalls
to browse and enjoy



Don't miss the famous raffle –
tickets only **£1.00** each



VENUE:

**Goring Methodist Church
Bury Drive, Worthing BN12 4XB**

Shoreham
by Sea

Methodist Church
Arts
& **CRAFTS**
FESTIVAL 2026



1st - 9th August



Showcasing the best
local Artists, Makers and Creatives whilst
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Candles and many other unique hand made items on sale

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Live Music and Performances on Saturdays
Refreshments served every day

Saturday 9:30 - 4pm • Sunday 12 - 4pm
Weekdays 10:30 - 1:30pm

WEST SUSSEX (COAST AND DOWNS) METHODIST CIRCUIT

Welcome Service

Preacher the Reverend Conrad Hicks

You are invited to join us to welcome

**Revd Liam
Sheridan**

&

**Mrs Julie
Swann**

Join us at Rustington Methodist Church

on **Saturday 5th September**

at 6 pm

Refreshments
after the service
in the Church Hall

