

WINCHESTER NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2023



Winchester Road Methodist Church
Winchester Road, Highams Park London, E4 9JP

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@winroadmeth



Group: Winchester Road Methodist Church

Services

Sun. 3rd Sept: - Communion led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

Sun. 10th Sept: - Led by Gillian Farnfield

Sun. 17th Sept: - led by Glynis Barber

Sun. 24th Sept: - led by Peter Dawe

Sun.1st Oct: - Harvest Parade/All Age Worship
led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

And, looking ahead.....

Sun. 5th Nov: - JMA & Shoeboxes Parade/All Age Worship
led by David Hobbs

Sun. 19th Nov: - 3Generate Feedback led by Rev. John Lampard

Church Flowers:

September 3rd - flowers in memory of Ron Clarke

September 10th - flowers in memory of Francis Mansfield (Christine and Allen Steele)

September 24th - flowers in memory of John Dixon



Methodist Prayer Handbook - 'Hidden Treasures' 2023 – 2024

Margretta Bowstead has a few copies spare. Please speak to her if you would like a copy.

Letter from Revd. Stephanie Njeru

Warmest greetings for this new Methodist Church, and school, year.

September is full of excitement and anxiety, wondering what the year ahead will bring. It is when the weather, historically, changes and autumn starts to become apparent.

Things change as we grow older, we journey through liminal moments and rites of passage; starting school, changing schools, university, jobs, relationships with God, friends and family.

September is named as Creation Month, something we have started to celebrate within churches. It gives us time to think about changes which happen, some to us, some because of us, and some which are natural and purely in the hands of God.

Autumn leads to winter, winter leads to spring and the season of new life. Autumn may be a physical state starting to happen around us as we watch gardens and trees turn, it has its own beauty. Autumn may also be a psychological or spiritual state where we could either be apprehensive or enthusiastic at the possibility of things changing. Some of those changes leading to us giving up what we may like to keep. Some of those things will, in time, bring new life, blossoming once again.

At Winchester Road I am looking forward to discovering what our discipleship journey looks like together. Opportunities to do that will mean we will need to give up time. If we understand time (to rest from life's business) as a gift from God, then we will have time to listen, pray and read. We will have time to pro-actively encourage one another in our spiritual journeys.

This September, what are our fears, what are our joys, and who can we be an encouragement to as we notice others for whom life is changing?

With blessings and prayers

Rev Stephanie

Our Young Church

3 Generate:

7 young people and 3 adults will be attending the 3Generate weekend in Birmingham, 6th – 8th October.

We know they will enjoy the weekend and look forward to hearing all about it in November.

Starting in September we will be making a few changes to our Young Church sessions. For the past couple of years, the older group, Biscuit club, have been meeting on 2nd and 4th Sundays, which has meant that more of the group were available to come each time. We have decided to extend this to Cookie Club. We are hoping that this will encourage the youngsters to come on these Sundays and be able to join with others in their group. Both sessions will take place during the morning service. **Biscuit Club (11+)** and **Cookie Club (3-11)** will start in church on 2nd and 4th Sundays and then go out for their individual sessions. On the other Sundays there will be packs, by the Hub door, for those under 11 to use in Church. Dates are as follows:-

10th & 24th September: sessions for both groups.

1st October: Harvest All Age Worship

8th October: Cookie Club session at Church, Biscuit Club – 3Generate

22nd October: sessions for both groups

5th November: All Age Worship including Shoe Boxes and JMA.

12th November: sessions for both groups.

19th November: 3Generate feedback in church.

26th November: sessions for both groups

Creche (under 3) There are toys and books, in the church, near the Hub, for families to sit and let the children play. This means that parents can stay and enjoy the service, although the Well Room is available for use with additional toys.

Wesley's Chapel

There are several services on Sunday and during the week. See website for full details.

Worship via livestream

Join us at www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming

All live-streamed services remain viewable afterwards: find previous services at www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/previous-services

You can also share in most of our services by telephone. Call 020 3880 0873 just before they begin and, when instructed, enter the following 'Conference ID' number on your 'phone keypad: 135 491 69 followed by #.



On 24th August a prayer meeting was held in parliament Square, co-ordinated by Wesley's Chapel, recognising that after years of restoration, Big Ben has started to chime again. We believe this is a prophetic sign for the Church, the British Isles, and the nations. This marks a new season and signals a new move of God we so desperately need in these turbulent times!

Big Ben is recognised all over the world. It's one of the most prominent symbols of the United Kingdom and parliamentary democracy. But whilst we rely on its accuracy for time keeping

and easily recognise its famous melody, do we fully appreciate its spiritual significance for the nation?

Big Ben's melody is a set of variations on the four notes that make up the fifth and sixth bars of the song "I know that my Redeemer liveth" from Handel's Messiah. This is a work described as "a commentary on [Jesus Christ's] Nativity, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension" – it's the whole gospel!

It also has lyrics! There's a painted plaque hanging inside the clock tower:

“ALL THROUGH THIS HOUR
LORD BE MY GUIDE
THAT BY THY POWER
NO FOOT SHALL SLIDE”

(Try singing this to the chimes!)



North Chingford Methodist Church 1905-2023

The official opening service of the church took place in September 2005 led by Rev. C.H. Kelly, President of the Wesleyan Conference. The final service at North Chingford was held on 20th August 2023, led

by Rev. John Lampard and introduced by Rev. Hilary Cheng.

Members of Winchester, including Pat & David Ovenden who were married there 50 years ago, joined the members of North Chingford past and present. It was a sad occasion but also a chance to meet up with old friends. Below are some extracts from the service.

“These pews and worshippers, both here today, and in spirit with us, are reminders of the congregations who have gathered here for over 118 years for Sunday worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals and all other celebrations that have taken place.”

“We come together with so many good and treasured memories, but with a strong sense of sadness at saying farewell to this hallowed place. We come together with great hope for continuing our life of faith at other churches.”

“Lord God, whose Son was made the Cornerstone of a temple made of living stones. As we move from this place, may we so live our lives that they may shout out loud of your grace and love, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen”

“The stewards of North Chingford Methodist Church would like to thank all those from the Forest Circuit who attended our closing service on Sunday 20th August. We raised the roof with the singing and heard inspirational and encouraging words from Rev John Lampard. We held a retiring collection for Action For Children, a charity we have supported for many years at North Chingford, and the sum raised was approximately £350, so thank you again.”

What's On

Membership Classes: These will be online from 18th September. Please contact Stephanie if you would like to join.

Care Lunches: These take place on the first Sunday of each month. Please ring 07546713843 for more information. The next Lunch will be on Sunday 3rd September. If you are able to help please speak to Mary French.

***** Christmas Bazaar:- 25th November 10.00 – 3.00 *****

The Nationwide Christian Trust: - Run a variety of workshops and events at Mulberry House, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Essex. CM5 9NL
For more information speak to Barbara Chapman, email: mpitt@nctuk.org or ring 01277367124.

Picnic in the Park: Sunday 10th September 11:30 am until 4:30 pm
Location: The Highams Park, IG8 9RB. Organised by- The Friends of The Highams Park (FOTHP) and the Highams Park Planning Group (HPPG).
This year the event will include activities such as:
Chews Community Dog Show; Live music; Craft, drink and food stalls;
Welly Wanging and other entertainments.

For more details: <https://highampark.london/events/the-picnic-in-the-highams-park-sunday-10th-september/>

South Chingford Jumble Trail:

Sunday 24th Sept. 10.00 – 15.00

For information email: events@ageukwalthamforest.org.uk

News from Our Church Family

Lily Etherington: Achieved B, B, C in her A Levels and will be going to Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford in September to start a three-year course studying Children's Nursing.

Dean Gordon: passed his GCSE's and has enrolled at Highams Park 6th Form College to study Sociology, Drama, and Media Studies.

Rocco Brivati: passed his GCSE's and is going to the college of Haringey, Enfield and Northeast London, to study plumbing.



Heather Roche graduated from Brighton with a BSc Psychology and has a professional Placement next year at the University of Sussex.

Thomas Roche gained a BA (Hons) in Business Management from the University of Kent through his employment with Transport for London.



Jessica Moseley: Annmarie and Nick Moseley are delighted to announce the engagement of their daughter, Jessica, to Mr. Jack Ridley on 9th July. Jessica and Jack met at university and are busy saving for a flat together. Sophie and Laura are looking forward to being bridesmaids when the Big Day arrives in the future!



Joyce Roden: Joyce was pleased to receive a card from King Charles and Camilla on her 106th Birthday in July.

Happy Birthday Joyce.

Congratulations to **Pat & David**
Ovenden on their Golden Wedding Anniversary. 24th
September 1973 – 2023



Joan Dunseath: “I have been meaning to write to you for some time to say a huge thank you to Allen Steel for his extremely interesting articles. I became deputy organist at Winchester to Mr. John Leverton a couple of years before I left school, and continued playing at various churches throughout my life and always had to find suitable tunes for various hymns so that the congregation could join in. Congregations seem to hate new tunes! I loved his latest article (June) about watching the Queen’s coronation. My memories are so similar. I am a couple of years older than Allen and was working in London at the time and we had moved to Upper Walthamstow (near St Peter’s in the Forest) a few years earlier. Our family were invited next door, together with what felt like half the cul-de-sac, to watch on their television – it was so small, but what a wonderful view of everything, and we were dry! Please pass on my thanks to Allen for his well-researched and interesting articles, very much appreciated. With my very best wishes. *Joan*”

Andrew & Kirsty had a baby boy on Saturday 26th August weighing 8lb 5 oz. Congratulations to them and to Hazel Mathews as she welcomes her 5th grandchild!

All is safely gathered in

We are now entering the Autumn season, described by the poet Keats as the season of 'mellow fruitfulness'. Around the world farming communities celebrate their harvest, usually with feasting, eating and drinking involving the crops which they have grown and recognising the hard work of farmers. In Britain, churches hold a Harvest Festival Service often including the familiar eighteenth century German hymn (StF 130) in which Matthias Claudius sums up the link between man and God in the farming year.

*"We plough the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand.
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine and soft, refreshing rain."*

While we are celebrating a good harvest, people in East Africa are facing the threat of famine, due to the worst drought in 40 years caused by the climate crisis. In India a severe heatwave has caused a serious reduction in wheat production and the country is facing serious shortages.

It is claimed by many that Harvest celebrations can be traced back to pagan times and did not become a fixture in the church year here until the Victorian era. Amongst the churchmen credited with holding the first **Harvest service** was the eccentric poet Parson Robert Hawker, the vicar of Morwenstow, in Cornwall, who built a small hut out of driftwood overlooking the sea where he wrote letters and poems. Today the hut is the smallest property owned by the National Trust. The timing of the harvest season will depend on the crops grown locally and so there is no countrywide fixed date for the beginning or end of harvest. Harvesting wheat and grinding it into flour usually marks the beginning of the harvest season and tradition requires a loaf to be made from this first flour. A **Harvest Loaf**, like the one in the photograph, would be taken to the parish church to be blessed to represent the bread that would be used for communion throughout the year. This took place on August 1st Lammas Day (Loaf Mass Day).



The end of harvesting was marked by a **Harvest Service**, the different denominations tended to avoid clashing service dates so as to allow people who worked together to attend services with their co-workers. Tradition however suggests that it should be held on the Sunday nearest the '**Harvest Moon**' the 'day of the full moon closest to the Autumn Equinox which marks the first day of Autumn. Consulting my diary this would indicate October 1st this year. This date happens to be the chosen date for the **Winchester Road Harvest Thanksgiving Service**. The harvest moon was significant because its light enabled harvesting to continue late into the evening. Some communities waited until all the harvest was gathered in before celebrating inspiring Revd. Henry Alford in 1844 to write the most popular of the harvest hymns.

*"Come ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home !
All is safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin"*

(StF 123 lines 3 & 4 were altered to '*fruit and crops are gathered in safe before the storms begin*').

It became the custom for church congregations to decorate the church with flowers fruit and vegetables from their gardens supplemented by shop purchased food from around the world. Some traditions have been traced back to the Middle Ages though we must not allow notions of a fictional 'Merrie England' to cloud our view of the harsh life which agricultural labourers faced. Many Methodist Churches hold a **Harvest Supper**, sometimes with an entertainment or games.

Some Christian churches link the end of the harvest season, the celebration of **Michaelmas** on 29th of September. This commemorates one of the visions recorded in the Bible (Revelation of St. John chapter 12 v 7-9) which tells of a '*war that broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan), who fought back with his angels; but the dragon was defeated and he and his angels were not allowed to stay in heaven any longer. He was thrown down to earth, and all his angels with him.* Legends grew up that the ejected Devil injured himself landing in a thorny blackberry bush, which he cursed, and for that reason you should not pick blackberries after the day named for St. Michaels' Mass, a service which celebrates the Angel Michael. In some towns Michaelmas was celebrated with a fair, and feasting on geese which were fattened on the corn stubble to get the last calories from the land (e.g. Nottingham Goose Fair which is still held during the first week of

October). Another link is the **Michaelmas Daisy** flower, the abundant flower of farewell which marks the end of the harvest season and the departure of hired harvest workers. (See back cover)

Finally, I must mention the pagan custom of creating a straw work **Corn Dolly**, (see front cover) It was believed that the spirit of the wheat remained within the straw of the last harvest until it was ploughed back into the land in the spring ensuring a good harvest.

Allen Steel September 2023

COME YE THANKFUL PEOPLE, COME...

I was born in 1940 and grew up in the small village of Ulrome, which lies near the coast in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The population was around 180, I think, and most men were linked to farming in one way or another. Our farm was mixed, with hens, pigs, sheep, beef cattle and dairy cows plus cereals, kale, swedes and wurzels. My elder brother and I fed animals and orphan lambs and drove horses and tractors at a precariously young age. Health and safety? You must be joking!

There was a second and sometimes forgotten harvest. In October, the village school closed for two weeks so the children could help with picking potatoes. Women from the village joined in as well so it was quite a communal affair. It was a wartime requirement that farmers grew a reasonable acreage of potatoes to help feed the nation.

Harvest Festival was the one occasion in the year when the Methodist Chapel was filled and the hymn-singing was lusty, albeit a bit tuneless. My aunt did her best to guide things with the harmonium, but it was a losing battle. The tables in front of the pulpit were loaded with vegetables, fruit and flowers. Even to my young eyes, the competition to exhibit the biggest, brightest and best was pretty apparent.

Harvest in the 1940s and even into the 1950s was a labour-intensive business and highly dependent on good weather. Storms these days are bad enough but crops then could be absolutely flattened as straw lengths were much

longer than varieties grown today. Really badly laid crops could only be salvaged by mowing with a scythe, truly exhausting work. It was awesome to see my father swinging that scythe: children were warned to keep clear. Cereals – corn to us - meant wheat, barley and oats. Maize (our supermarket corn) was unknown then. The corn was cut by machine - originally a reaper which evolved into a self-binder. We always knew it as the *binder*. It cut the corn which travelled up a built-in elevator to a tying device which bound it into a sheaf with twine. A rotating arm then smartly chucked it out on to the ground, if *all went well!*

The binder was a temperamental beast with many parts liable to cause trouble and needing frequent adjustment. However, the single most vexatious bit was the cunning mechanism which knotted the twine round the sheaf. The



Harvest at Hall Farm 1935. Jack Watson driving, Frank Watson on binders. (Note right hand binder)

person on the binder had to be alert because, when gremlins struck, untied sheaves were ejected at a rate of knots. Guess who then had to tie them up by hand? Why, my brother and I, of course! The binder was pulled by three or four heavy horses but by the later 1940s they were superseded by a tractor. Just a few years later, combines were taking over and horses, and a complete way of life, were suddenly gone.

After the binder, the sheaves had to be picked up – one tucked under each arm – and placed smartly upright on the ground, making a triangle with ears uppermost. Adding another four pairs of sheaves made up a stook, a bit like a ridge tent: tiring work but it kept us fit. The stooks stayed in the field for two or three weeks to fully ripen and dry before being led away. We didn't do any harvesting on Sundays but on rare occasions I remember collecting

corn under a full moon. Yes, there really was a *Harvest Moon*. Only when the waggons had been loaded, the fields cleared and the sheaves stacked back at the farmstead could we say, ***all is safely gathered in.***

David Watson August 2023

(Pictures from David's cousin's book. Jack and Frank were David's uncles.

After 1960 combines took over so this was the last stack of sheaves.)



Last wheat stack at Hall Farm, 1960

Help and Support

Eat or Heat

(Based in Walthamstow with branches in Chingford and Wanstead.)

'Eat or Heat, Quaker House, 1A Jewel Road, E17 4QU /0800 772 0212.'

The Food Bank may be able to help you through a difficult patch by providing three days of free emergency food aid, per week, for a limited period.

Talk to someone who you know such as Doctor, Social Worker, Citizen's Advice etc. who can assess your needs and provide you with a referral to the Food Bank so that we can help.

The Hub- All Saints Church Highams Park E4 9QZ

(020 8531 5107 / highamspark food aid @gmail.com)

Café:- is open to all on Wednesdays between 11:30 and 2.30pm. Do feel free to pop in and say hello.

Food Aid:- is open on a Tuesday and Thursday morning between 11 and 1pm offering a safe and welcoming space to provide food for those who are struggling to make ends meet.

Christians Against Poverty:- provides free debt help. Monday-Thursday, 10 - 2pm Contact Jon Wright, Debt Centre Manager 07840 972 711 jonwright@capuk.org

Age UK Waltham Forest Waltham Forest Resource Hub (North)

58 Hall Lane, Chingford E4 8EU: Tel: 020 8558 5512/

email: info@ageukwalthamforest.org.uk / www.ageukwalthamforest.org.uk

Coffee Mornings: Wednesdays 10.00 – 1.00

Fridays, activity sessions 10.00 -1.00

Age UK offer a wide range of activities and support. For more information visit their website.

St Edmunds Church – Bereavement Group :-

The death of a loved one changes life forever. Our regular support group can help you as you learn to live with the changes, and challenges. Join others who know what you are dealing with over tea, biscuits and friendly chat. We meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month 14.00 to 15.00. See online for more details.

St Peter’s in the Forest – Woodford New Road

Rising Son Café :- Tuesdays 9.30 – 1pm for a warm drink, cake and a chat.

St Mary’s Church Walthamstow

Café open Monday – Friday 8am -4pm: Saturday 9am – 5 pm;
Sunday 10am -4pm.

Other Numbers for help and advice

Branches: (Offer support for Homeless Individuals.)

740 Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 3HR

Phone: 020 8520 6363 / Email: theoffice@wfcbranches.org.uk

Waltham Forest Community Hub: 020 8223 0707 / info@wfchub.org

Adult Social Care: 020 8496 3000

Citizen’s Advice: 0808 2787 838

Streetlink(homeless) 03005000914/www.streetlink.org.uk

Forest Night Shelter: 07739870411



OUR MISSION

We are a church at the heart of Highams Park which seeks to discern and follow God's direction. Our aim is to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour through the life of the church and outreach to the community. We promote worship and fellowship enabling us to grow towards God. We are an inclusive church where all are welcome.

OUR STEWARDS: Senior Steward: Carole Merriman
Stewards: Carol & Dumisani Moyo, Pat Ovenden, Janet Dawe, Samuel Ebden

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

If you would like to submit an article, joke, photo, poem, prayer or item of interest, please contact Jan Dent -

jdent7@gmail.com or 07751603883

Please submit items by: **Wednesday 20th September**

This newsletter is available to download as a PDF from our website.