

WINCHESTER NEWS

MARCH 2024



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

Minister: Rev Stephanie Njeru
Email: Stephanie.njeru@methodist.org.uk
Tel: Church 020 8531 8663
Mobile: 07458 050833 / Landline: 020 8279 2380

www.winchesterroadchurch.org.uk



@winroadmeth



Group: Winchester Road Methodist Church

Services

Sun. 3rd March: Uniformed Organisations Anniversary (Parade / AAW)
led by Tim Swindell

Sun. 10th March: Mothering Sunday: led by Cynthia Bonds

Sun. 17th March: AAW (including a baptism) led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

Sun. 24th March: Palm Sunday -Led by Rev. Armstrong (Communion)

Thurs. 28th March: Maundy Thursday 7.30 – Foot washing service in Hodgson Hall. Please arrive by 7.15 led by Rev Stephanie Njeru

Fri. 29th March: Good Friday 11am – 4pm – There will be a labyrinth in the Memorial Hall for personal contemplation. It will take about 45 minutes. Please arrive at a time convenient to you.

Sun. 31st March: Easter Sunday- 9am communion – Followed by light refreshments.

- **10.30** led by Janet Tweedale (AAW)

(We will collect small, wrapped eggs for children at Joseph Clarke School.)

N.B Don't forget the clocks go forward!

Future Dates

Sun. 28th April: Church Anniversary (Communion) -Followed by ACM

Sun. 19th May: Pentecost – Circuit service 6pm at Shernhall Methodist

Sat. 25th May: Circuit trip to Epworth, Lincolnshire (Birthplace of John & Charles Wesley) – Speak to stewards if you wish to go.

Please note Church Council agreed that we should trial having an Alternative Worship Service on the 3rd Sunday each month during 2024. Some, but not all, of these services will be All Age Worship.

Letter from our minister

Dear Friends,

I can't quite believe we are in March already. The spring flowers are in full flow, showing us new life, hope and expectation. The days are getting longer, and we are lucky to be able to witness nature's joys around us.

In my childhood we always went on a walk on the sea front every Sunday after lunch. It didn't matter about the weather, if we had a cold and were feeling groggy, if we wanted to walk or not. It was always going to happen; it was a family tradition. We would go to church in the morning, set the timer on the oven so the roast didn't burn, ate and then went for a walk.

During those years my siblings and I took turns in moaning, groaning and trying to make excuses. But now, I look back and see that the walks were important, but not so much as the conversation was. I am grateful for the time that my parents actively engaged with me.

Taking an interest in somebody, taking time to listen, guide, joke with, and have fun, are probably the most important things we can do. It helps us stop focusing on our own priorities, and it helps the other person know they are important and worth spending time with. Relationships broaden our outlook and add depth to our faith.

So, as we look around us this spring, and think of memories that make us smile, may we be grateful for the colour that God has brought into our lives. The colourful people we know, or have known, the colours of nature, and the excitement of new life.

As we journey through Lent towards Easter, let us give God thanks for the new life that God has promised all of us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the vitality that our faith brings to our lives and the lives of those around us. With blessings *Stephanie*

Rev Stephanie Njeru has pastoral oversight of Leyton Trinity, Lighthouse and Winchester Road Methodist Churches Forest Circuit (35/33)

Normal rest day Friday

Weekly Zoom Prayer Meeting - Mondays 12:30pm

Weekly Zoom Bible Study - Wednesdays 7:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8345484534?pwd=UTBwdWFBaG1qK0k3Yys2a0xjUEY1QT09>

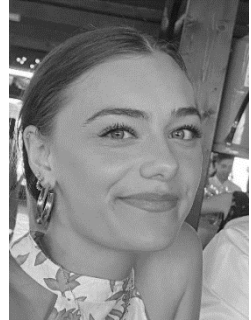
Both on: **Meeting ID: 834 548 4534 Passcode: 158039**

Landline: 0203 051 2874 United Kingdom

Our Church Family

Alec Maidment sadly passed away, age 91, on 14th Feb. Eileen and Alec were active members at Winchester Road and will be remembered for their work with young people.

Hope Dawe: Janet and Peter's granddaughter, age 21, has been cast as Sandy in the Grease National Tour 2024. She begins rehearsals in March and the tour starts in April and lasts until November all over England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Some may remember Hope coming to church as a youngster of 8 or 9!



Church Flowers:

3rd March: In celebration of Mary and Alan Burgoine's Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

10th March: Mothering Sunday - In memory of Mrs Childs (Shirley's Mum)

24th March: In memory of Phylis Foster (Chris Foster's Mum)

31st March: In memory of Rose & Bert French (Mary's Parents)



Could You.....?

**Serve as a Church Steward; Become a Pastoral Visitor;
Read in the Service; Be a Door Steward; Help in Young church.**

If you think you may be able to take on one of these roles, please speak to Rev. Stephanie Njeru or one of the stewards.

What's On !

Friday Coffee Mornings 10 – 12 am

Come along for tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hub. (term time only)



Quiz Night : - Saturday 16th March 7pm

to raise funds for Chigwell Row Campsite at Winchester Road Methodist Church 82 Winchester Road, E4 9JP £10 per person, including a ploughman's supper.

Bring your own soft drinks (no alcohol please) To book your place email: gmduncan@mac.com 0776 458 6173

Saturday Lunches and cake sales:

	16th March
10.00-4.00	23rd March
	8th June
	20th July

Please save the dates and speak to Janice Pettit if you can help.



Saturday 13th April – Table Top Sale 10.00 -12.00

Please speak to Hazel Mathews if you are able to help or would like to book a stall.

Easter Concerts

Saturday 9th March - 7.30 – London Forest Choir present Elijah at Chingford Parish Church.

Tickets £15 (in advance) £18 (on the door) Under 16's £5

Contact: www.londonforestchoir.org

Saturday 16th March – 7.30 – ‘Felicitas’ present ‘Darkness into Light’ at St. Mary’s Church S. Woodford E18 2PA

Tickets £12.50 (in advance) £15 (on the door) students under 25 free

www.ticketsource.co.uk /www.felicitas.co.uk

Saturday 23rd March -7.30- South West Essex Choir present Verdi’s Requiem at Chingford Parish Church

Contact: www.southwestessexchoir.org.uk

Friday 22nd March – 7.30 -Waltham Forest Music Society present a recital by Jill Kemp on recorder, accompanied by Aleksander Szram at All Saints Church E4 9QZ

Tickets £15 (£10 members)

Friday 5th April – 7.30 – Dame Felicity Lott will talk about her life and career as an internationally-renowned soprano whose engagements have taken her to many of the world’s most famous opera houses and concert venues.

**Waltham Forest Festival of Theatre 22nd-23rd March
Forest Community Centre Guildford Road E17 4EA**

Five one-act plays plus expert adjudication.

Friday at 7.30 plays by Woodhouse Players and CADOS

Saturday 7.00 2 plays by Youth Theatres and one by Wadham Players
£9 per session.

Lenten Days 2024

This year the month of March coincides with the period of **Lent** observed by the Christian Church. Lent, Google tells me, is a period of 40 days (not counting Sundays), which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday — the day before Easter Sunday. This year Lent began on 14th of February ushering in a solemn time in the Church's year commemorating the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting in the desert and being tempted by the Devil.

The purpose of Lent is to prepare us for Easter through prayer, repentance and giving to charity. The day before Lent begins is known as *Shrove Tuesday* when some churches hold a service at which people confess their sins ready for Lent. Also, during Lent, many Christians follow periods of fasting, or giving up eating meat on a Friday, while others give up luxury food (such as cake or chocolate) or particular pleasures, like restaurant meals. On Shrove Tuesday, in some countries, it is the custom to hold a feast or a festival to eat up certain foods from the cupboard that will not be eaten during Lent. In France this day is called '*mardi gras*', which is translated as 'Fat Tuesday'. In Britain it has become 'Pancake Day' named after the traditional food. In preparation for Lent the simple palm crosses which were distributed to the congregation last year on Palm Sunday are burnt and the ash kept to be used to mark the foreheads of those attending the special service the following day, which became known as *Ash Wednesday*.

The fourth Sunday in Lent is always celebrated as *Mothering Sunday* when we remember our mothers and the church which we regard as our mother church, the church where we were baptised or attended as children.

The experts tell me that the word Lent is a shortened form of the old English word '*lencten*' meaning '*spring season*'.and they suggest that may also have a link to the lengthening of days which occurs in Spring. My diary tells me that March 20th is the vernal equinox, one of the two days in the year when the sun is vertically above the equator and day and night are of equal length and officially the **Spring Season** begins. It also informs me that on March 31st British Summer Time starts !

During March there are three days which can be called 'National days.' March 1st is recognised as the Feast Day of **St David** recalling the achievements of a Welsh monk and to recognise the importance of Wales. During his lifetime he was credited with several healing miracles and with the foundation of monasteries, including the one at St David where he died and was buried. He is described as a gentle man who lived a simple life eating only bread, vegetables and herbs and only drinking water. One legend says that David advised the soldiers in a Welsh army to wear a leek in their helmets so that they could be easily recognised in the melee of battle. This led to leeks becoming a national symbol, though later it was replaced by the daffodil.

There is little information about our second saint **St. Patrick** the Patron saint of Ireland. It is believed that he was born in Britain during the Roman occupation. At the age of 16 he was captured from his home by pirates and taken to Ireland where he was forced to become a slave, but he managed to escape and return home, and following his conversion to Christianity he travelled to a French monastery where he trained to become a priest. Returning to Ireland where he spent the rest of his adult life converting and baptising the Irish. He was also credited with using the three leaved shamrock to teach people about the doctrine of the Trinity.



This month is also the time when we remember the 'founder' of the Methodist Church **John Wesley** on the anniversary of his death on 2nd March 1791.

In a corner of the Museum in City Road London there is a large picture painted in 1842 by

Marshall Claxton, fifty years after the event, purporting to show the death of John Wesley. The room in the adjacent house where he died is small and could never have held all the people shown in the picture. Claxton included in the painting the people who visited Wesley during the last week of his life. A key enables visitors to identify the people shown in the painting. On the afternoon before he died he surprised those present by singing two verses of Issac Watts' hymn (StF 79)

"I'll praise my Maker while I have breath and when my voice is lost in death, praise shall employ my nobler powers; my days of praised shall ne'er be past, while life and thought and being last, or immortality endures".

Later that evening he uttered his last words, which one author claims is a motto for Methodism "**The best of all God is with us**" and he died peacefully the next morning. With thousands expected to attend his funeral, it was held at 5 am, in order to limit the numbers. Today people come from all over the world, but especially from Brazil, Korea and the USA, to pay their respects to the founder of the Methodist Church.

During Lent a simple wooden cross stands in the sanctuary where, at the beginning of worship each Sunday morning, symbols representing the events of Holy week are placed on the cross. This year they will be **bread and wine, a towel and basin, a money bag, the crown of thorns and a purple robe, the nails, and a palm branch**. On Easter Sunday morning the items are taken off the cross and the congregation will be invited to reflect on the **beatitudes**, the promises Jesus made, and finally to transform the cross by decorating the cross with flowers. A moving and joyful moment.

Allen Steel, March 2024

Palm Sunday visit It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, five-year-old Bobby was kept home from church with his grannie. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds and Bobby asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father explained. Bobby was aghast. "I don't believe it! The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"

Our Young Church

Biscuit Club (11+)

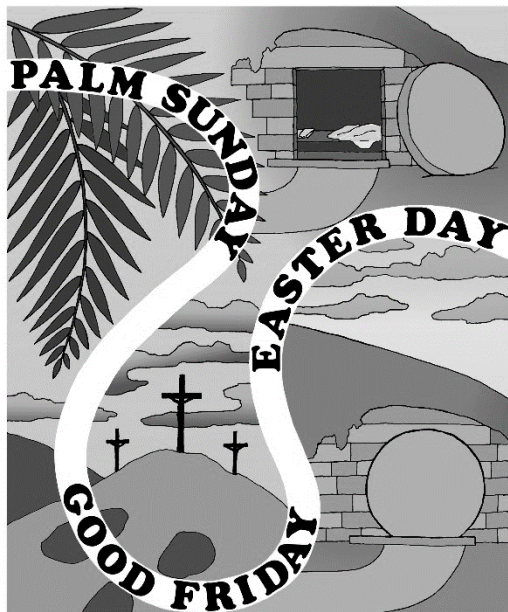
On the 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month we go out for a session to chat, discuss issues, enjoy a variety of activities and biscuits.

Cookie Club (3-11)

Meet each Sunday starting in church before going out for our own sessions. We enjoy, stories, games, singing, craft, discussion and of course biscuits!

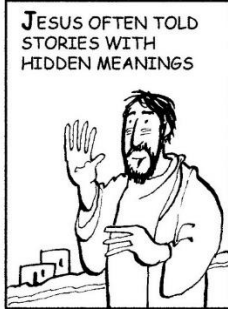
Creche (under 3)

There are toys and books, in the church, near the Hub, for families to sit and let the children play.

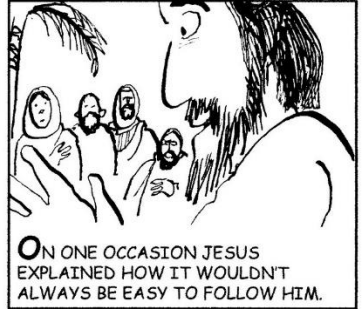


Come and join us as we prepare for Easter especially: on March 10th when we will make bunches of daffodils to give out for Mothering Sunday; on 24th when the children give out Palm Crosses to the congregation and on Easter Sunday when we transform the cross with flowers.

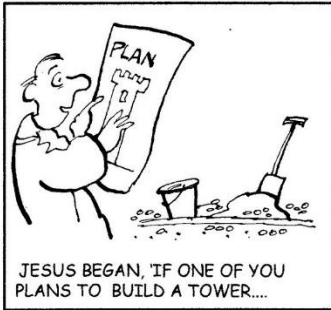
The tale of the Tower Builder



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

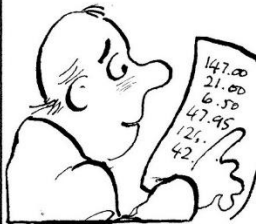


ON ONE OCCASION JESUS EXPLAINED HOW IT WOULDN'T ALWAYS BE EASY TO FOLLOW HIM.



JESUS BEGAN, IF ONE OF YOU PLANS TO BUILD A TOWER....

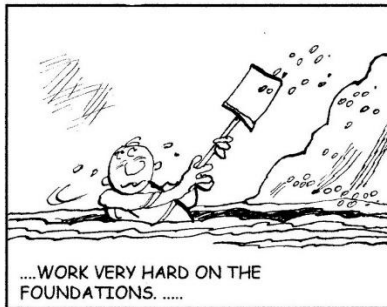
...YOU'LL FIRST NEED TO WORK HOW MUCH IT WILL COST.



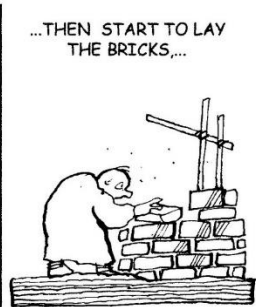
IF YOU DON'T DO THE SUMS....



...YOU MIGHT MAKE A START,



....WORK VERY HARD ON THE FOUNDATIONS.



...THEN START TO LAY THE BRICKS,....



...BUT SUDDENLY RUN OUT OF MONEY!!



THEN PEOPLE WILL LAUGH AT YOU!



WE NEED TO REALISE THAT ALTHOUGH FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, IT'S ALSO A GREAT CHALLENGE.



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: Pat Ovenden, Janet Dawe, Hazel Mathews

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER

By Monday 25th March - jdent7@gmail.com or **07751603883**

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