

WINCHESTER NEWS

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2025



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

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@winroadmeth



Group: Winchester Road Methodist Church

Services

Sun. 19th Jan: 10.30 Led by Heather Hall

Sun. 26th Jan: 10.30 Led by Peter Dawe

Sun. 2nd Feb: 10.30 Led by Dallion Roye

Sun. 9th Feb: 10.30 Communion Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

Sun. 16th Feb: 10.30 Led by Cynthia Bonds

Sun. 23rd Feb: 10.30 Led by Michael Hall

Please note some services may be changed as Rev Stephanie Njeru remains on leave until early February.

Church Flowers:

19th Jan: - in loving memory of Lottie (Jan Dent's Mum)

Feb. 2nd: - in loving memory of Joan & Jack Pegg (Barbara's parents)

Feb.9th: - in loving memory of Jean & Roy Viggers

Feb.16th: - in loving memory of Dorothy Barr

Feb. 23rd. in loving memory of Mr & Mrs Brooks (Sylvia's Parents)



Lord Jesus, all around the world
your followers are facing difficult times.
Please protect them from harm
and help them build their faith in you.
Amen

Our Church Family



Our thoughts and prayers are with Stephanie, Zak and Elisha as Stephanie continues to recover from illness.

Congratulations to Allen and Chris on the birth of their Great Granddaughter, Eva April Cole who was born on 29th November.

Penny and Phill Borkett enclosed a letter in their Christmas Card to the church. Below is some of the main information. The full letter is displayed in the church by the Hub entrance.

Having been in Sheffield for 20 years (8 years in their current home), they were beginning to enjoy their retirement. They attend Totley Rise Methodist Church and have been fully involved with Phill preaching and Penny as Worship leader.

In August their minister moved on. The Church Families and Children Worker retired and there were a number of vacancies across the circuit. Phill is now working half a week as minister at Totley Rise and Penny has taken over the co-ordination of the children and families work (junior church, granny and toddler group and a warm spaces coffee morning). Penny also continues to support Baby Basics across the area. Penny notes that 'things have changed with regards to children's work' but adds that a recent story with emoji's went down well!

Still semi-retired they have been able to spend time with Mary, Dave and the grandchildren: Evie 14, Hannah, Tom and Bethany 12 and Oliver 7.

Penny and Phill send their best wishes, recognising the need for Peace and Goodwill in our troubled world, but recognising the hope that came to birth on Christmas Day

Christmas at Winchester

As always Christmas is a busy time at Church.

At the end of November, we held our annual bazaar. It was cold and wet on the day and the E4 choir had to sing inside. Initially there were few people through the door, but numbers gradually increased until the place was full of people, buying cakes, visiting the many stalls enjoying refreshments, or visiting Father Christmas. Amazingly we exceeded last year's total and made a record £15,000+ with a final figure still to be confirmed. Thanks to all those helping and to the visitors on the day.

In Stephanie's absence, people stepped in to lead the various Christmas services. Particular thanks must go to:

Janet Dawe, who prepared 70 bags with kits for the congregation, young and old, to make Christingles and Kevin Swaine who led the service.

Rev. Cherie Rogers, (Baptist Minister), who led the 'Chocolate Nativity' service on Christmas Eve, which she and Stephanie had planned. The adapted Christmas Story included references to many well-known sweets and chocolate bars, and everyone was able to take home a chocolate or two at the end!

Maureen Duncan, who planned, and led, the Carol Service and worship on Christmas morning. The church was full for both, and the younger people present at the carol service enjoyed a story, about the innkeeper's disturbed night, read by Sarah and Erin.



On Christmas morning, we welcomed many of the guests for Christmas Inn. Maureen led a lively service, including singing 'Happy Birthday' to Jesus ending with the noise of many party poppers. (see letter on the next page).

Christmas Inn

Despite the doubts earlier in the year, we were once again able to offer a meal for those who may have otherwise been on their own on Christmas Day. Apart from providing a meal, fellowship and Christmas treats, transport had to be provided for most of the guests as there is no public transport on Christmas Day.

'This year we had 70+ guests down to attend but at least 8 were ill on the day. However, we sent a meal home to 2 of these plus 1 who had already asked for one. Over Christmas Day we had about 40 helpers, some for a few hours, some for the whole day, including cooks and drivers. All the guests were away by about 5.45, some of the helpers were there somewhat later! It was an occasion much appreciated by all those who attended. Below is a message from one attendee.' Mary Rose French

I just wanted to send a note to thank you, and your wonderful team of volunteers, for a wonderful day spent at the Methodist Church on Christmas day. It was heartwarming to meet with such diverse attendees, some of which I recognised from other events, and the earlier church service was a revelation - never before have I sung Happy Birthday to Jesus, and with a party popper!

I thoroughly enjoyed the lunch; afternoon tea and snacks and the addition of a take home 'lucky bag' was particularly thoughtful. I've really appreciated your effort and planning in organising such a large group, you're a modern-day hero and are to be commended. Kind regards, Irena

Thanks must go to the many people who helped to make it a successful occasion, but in particular to Mary French who co-ordinated all the paperwork sent out to guests and helpers.

The picture on the back cover shows the spread that was given to the guests.

What's On !

World Day of Prayer 'I made You Wonderful' **Friday 7th March: - 10.30-11.30**(followed by refreshments) **Cavendish Road Baptist Church**

The World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical, Christian laywomen's initiative. Originally 'The Women's World Day of Prayer', it is now open to all, regardless of gender. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action" and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March. Starting in the Southern Hemisphere, the service continues over 24 hours, ending in Samoa.



The movement aims to bring together people of various races, cultures and traditions in a yearly, common day of prayer as well as in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year.

Through the World Day of Prayer, people are encouraged to become aware of the other countries and cultures and no longer live in isolation. They are also encouraged take up the burdens of other people, to sympathize with the problems of other countries and cultures and pray with, and for, them. The World Day of Prayer aims to demonstrate that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence in the world.

Every year, the service focuses on a different country and a specific theme. World Day of Prayer National/Regional Committees of that country prepare the order of worship on these themes to be used on the next World Day of Prayer.

On the first Friday of March, in services all over the world, that country becomes the focus of prayer and understanding. Through preparation and participation in the worship service, people worldwide learn how their sisters of other countries, languages and cultures understand the biblical passages in their context. They learn of the concerns and needs of those women and to empathize and feel solidarity with them.

This year the service has been written by women in the Cook Islands.

Next Year (2026) it is being written by women in Nigeria, which will be of particular interest for those at Winchester.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

18th – 25th January

I am not aware of any specific events locally, but if you get the chance to share in worship and prayer at other churches, this week would be a good time to do so. We pray that all denominations will come together to pray for Peace and Justice in this world.



Friday Coffee Mornings 10 – 12 am

Tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hub. (Term time only)
These coffee mornings raise money for various charities.



Saturday Lunches

These will start again in January when the Dancing School have Exams or are rehearsing for their show.

The first will be on **Saturday 18th January**

Janice and Maureen would be pleased to hear from anyone who can help by making cakes, or, even more important, helping on the Day.

Future Café's will be on: 1st February

22nd March

17th May

21st June

19th July



The London Methodist Lunch Club

The lunch Club meets on the second Friday each month, October to May. It is held at Lancaster Hall Hotel, which is a short walk from Paddington or Lancaster Gate stations. On **Friday 14th February Mmasape Zihle will be the speaker**. Mmasape was mentored by Rev. Hilary Cheng when she was training and was regularly involved in services and other activities at Winchester. For further information speak to Janet Dawe, Carole Merriman, Mary Burgoine or Lindy and Peter Richardson.

Christmastide

By the time you read this article we will be into the New Year, 2025. One of the gifts we always receive for Christmas is a calendar for the year with pictures of our family, chiefly our grandchildren. We use it to mark birthdays and key events during the year including the fourth Sunday in the month when we are on post-Sunday Service Coffee duty. It's also useful to see the dates of Easter, Whitsunday, Bank Holidays and Mothering Sunday printed on the calendar. At one time such days as Epiphany, Candelmas, Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day and Trinity were widely celebrated. and periods such as Advent (leading to Christmas) and Lent (leading to Easter) were recognised.

Many people find the dating of these celebratory days or weeks of the Christian calendar confusing. In the commercial world, Christmas begins at some point in the autumn. Restaurants urge us to book our Christmas meal in September, shops tell us to buy Christmas gifts as soon as the pumpkin festival of Halloween has passed. This year I noticed that there were two Black Fridays when 'generous' discounted bargains were advertised.

The Bible account in the gospels does not mention either the year or date but from the reference to the reign of King Herod it would place the event between 4BC and 6BC. Other scholars claim that counting back from the supposed date for the beginning of Jesus ministry which began when he was 30 years old would support this date. (Luke Chapter 3 v 23 *When Jesus began his work, he was about thirty years old*). With regard to the month of December the evidence is poor. Agricultural experts say that shepherds would not be encamped in the fields in this northern winter season. Some claim that the early church merely took over the celebration of a pagan ancient Roman custom, the Saturnalia, a time of gift giving and partying held in late December. A meeting of Roman Catholic clergy (The Council of Tours in 567) decided to recognise the period between the supposed date of Jesus' birth, fixed earlier, and the visitation by the Wise Men as the Twelve days of Christmas, which was known in England as **Christmastide**. It lasted from December 25th until midnight on January 5th. Google on my computer says that *'some archaeologists have claimed, on little evidence, that our Neolithic ancestors*

held feasts of beef and pork around this time and might have sung songs and played music on flutes made from bones’.

In Tudor times Christmastide was a time when work on the land stopped and people became merry to cheer themselves up during the cold dark winter days. These were the twelve Days of Christmas celebrated during Medieval and Tudor times daily by the Roman Catholic Church. Homes were decorated with mistletoe, holly and ivy, carols were sung and people went singing from house to house, called wassailing , to the orchards to bless fruit trees and to the fields to seek good harvest. (as I have written before I do not subscribe to the idea of ‘Merrie England’), life was hard for most people.

One Carol we associate with Christmastide, dating from around 1700, begins *‘On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me a partridge in a pear tree.* It is claimed that the song was a simple way of teaching children about the Roman Catholic Church between 1558 and 1829 when Catholic worship was banned. The evidence for this interpretation is interesting but doubtful. In the song the **True Love** who gives the gifts represents God, our Father. The Partridge represents **Jesus**. The Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments, the three French Hens are the virtues of Faith Hope and Charity, the four calling birds are the Gospels and their authors. the Five Gold Rings are the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament), the six geese a-laying are the first six days of creation, the seven swans a swimming are the seven sacraments, the eight maids a-milking are the eight Beatitudes Jesus spoke on the mount recorded in Matthew 5 verses 1-12, the nine Ladies dancing are the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the Ten Lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments, the eleven pipers piping are the eleven faithful apostles (omitting Judas who betrayed Jesus), the twelve drummers are the key points of the Apostles Creed. Taking the gift giving at its face value my computer tells me that the recipient received 264 gifts including 12partridges, 22 Turtle Doves and 30 French hens!



It is claimed that William Shakespeare wrote his famous romantic comedy, Twelfth Night, for performance at the end of Christmastide, though the first recorded performance (according to Google) being in the legal Middle Temple Hall London in February 1602 at the Feast of Candlemas. He included traditional seasonal elements which the audience expected, such as cross dressing, Viola the heroine, disguised herself as a man which leads to mistaken identity episodes. Romantic relationships were explored and the comedy arose from a trick played on the foolish and pompous steward of the house named Malvolio.

So, Christmastide is over, the lights and decorations have been packed up, the artificial tree stored away, or the real tree has shed its needles, and we now look forward to a peaceful and happy 2025!

Allen Steel, January 2025



I can't deny it any longer,

I'm not getting any younger,

The time has come, I must admit,

That I am knocking on a bit.

These legs that used to rock and roll

Can now just manage a gentle stroll.

Lots of puffing, deaf in both ears,

But I'm not complaining -

At least I'm still here!

Slightly altered by Sylvia Dixon.

And, I did Rock and Roll at the Tech on a Saturday night! Sylvia

The Brook Special Primary School

Many thanks for the generous donations of art resources, kids' underwear and healthy snacks that so many of you have already given me for my school. I am so grateful as the school is in enormous deficit due to underfunding (not mismanagement) and we are struggling to deliver some basics. As many of you know, my school, the Brook Special Primary School, is located on the notorious Broadwater Farm in Tottenham. The school is an oasis in a concrete jungle, and it is a real privilege to work there. My kids and their families are amazing and are not victims, but their life experiences are very challenging, and poverty is rife. I know how many demands are being made on us all, so please do not feel obliged to donate anything. However, if you have any of the things below, that are surplus to requirements I would be delighted to receive them

Art supplies – paper, card, felt pens, glue sticks, poster paint

Snacks – packets of plain biscuits, rice cakes, bread sticks

Sensory – cornflour, bubble mixture

Kids underwear

And, if you want to come and visit - our door is always open, and you would be most welcome.

Maureen

Booking is now open for the **2025 London District Safeguarding Conference. 15th March 10am-3pm** at Westminster Central Hall. The theme this year is 'Unbounded Love'. The Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Carolyn Godfrey will be in attendance as our keynote speaker, and we have a range of workshops for you to attend in the afternoon. Full details are available on the Methodist District website.

Andsomething for us all to consider!

Are we a welcoming church?

We have been pleased to welcome many new people at Winchester recently as well as those from other churches. Hazel found this in a magazine of the Methodist churches in Foxton, Orwell and Royston where her sister lives.

“You’ll be surprised how much of a hurdle it is to get to a new church in the first place.”

- Does your website have the correct postcode and any information about parking.
- Is the front door obvious? A door that you can’t find, and then, when you do find it it is closed, is perhaps the most unwelcoming start to a church service. (and one I experienced on holiday, when the board gave times of services but not been updated to say that the 1st service of the month would be in the afternoon. I sat outside for half an hour as a couple of people arrived and went round the back. I eventually ventured round to find out!)
- Do you have some one designated to welcome people? A smile goes a long way, but a verbal greeting and introduction goes even further. At the very least tell me your name and ask me mine. You don’t have to remember it!
- Ask if I am happy to find a seat by myself or maybe show me to a one.
- If there is an opportunity during the service to speak to a new person next to you, start with a brief ‘We haven’t met before, I’m ____.’ It opens up some dialogue.
- Is your communion process obvious? It is awful, if, when receiving the elements it is overshadowed by the worries of logistics.
- At the end of the service, don’t just say ‘There’s tea and coffee in the hall’ to a visitor and leave it at that. Try saying ‘I’m going to get a cup of tea; would you like to come too?’ that eases the worry of standing alone with a full cup of tea to get through!

- Introduce me to at least two other people. Not so many that I am overwhelmed with names, but enough, that if you are not there next week, I might recognise another face, and they might notice me. We might even find something in common, such as working in the same place or living on the same street!
- Invite me to something that's on during the week, whether it's a coffee morning or bible study. Offer to meet me there, if you're going, or tell a friend who is going to look out for me."

Editor's Note..... Just a word of caution! When I moved to the area, having been attending a church where I had too many 'hats! I went to several churches and was eager to leave as soon as the service ended without speaking to anyone. I didn't want to feel obliged to come next week or to feel I had to volunteer for a role.

I ended up going to another church in the circuit for several years where I knew some people. I finally came to Winchester nearly 30 years ago and have made many friends and also found some 'hats'!

Dear Lord,



February can be a trying month, but there are special associations too and we thank you for the hope they bring.

In February we remember how Jesus was taken, as a baby, to the Temple. Simeon took Him in his arms and by the power of the Holy Spirit, recognised Him as the Saviour you had sent as a light, to bring revelation to the whole world. And how this world needs your light and revelation in this new year, 2025.

Lord – as we notice more light in the lengthening days of this month, as we see the promise of the Spring in the bobbing heads of the beautiful snowdrops – help us most of all to recognise Jesus as our Light and to trust in Him as our Lord and Saviour.

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of each new day. In Jesus' name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Young Church

We have been pleased to welcome some new families recently. We continue to provide activities for the under 3's in the church, by the Hub, so that parents can stay in for the service. Please do not worry if your child moves around or makes some noise.

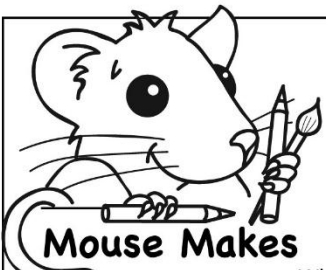
Those over 3 go out for sessions in Room 2 and the Hub.

Currently, the older group (11+) only meet on 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month, but provision has been extended to provide weekly for the older members in Cookie Club (3-11).

We were pleased that so many of our families were able to take part in the Advent Liturgy at the beginning of each service. The young people, aged from 4 upwards, confidently read and/or lit the weekly candles.

The service starts at 10.30 and we now start with a children's action song of the month. It is a video which children and those 'young at heart' can learn and join in with during the month. There are also instruments and ribbons for the children to use. The children and young people then go out to their groups. So, it is good to arrive early!!!!





After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem looking for the child born to be king of the Jews. They had seen his star and had come to worship him. King Herod was troubled so met with the wise men to tell them to let him know when they found him.



J E W S
M A R Y
W S O N
O T N A




When they saw the star rest over where Jesus was they rejoiced and gave him three special gifts. God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod so they went home by another way.

How many other words can you make from:
EPIPHANY

C H I L D K H M Y R R H
F R A N K I N C E N C E
J O Y A N G E L R H
G A E G Y P T P

EPIPHANY is the Greek word for **MANIFEST** which means 'to show'. God shows us who He is through His son Jesus Christ

Herod wanted to destroy Jesus, but God told Joseph to flee to Egypt to be safe. *Where did Jesus finally grow up?*


READ
the story of the wise men in *Matthew 2:1-23*

H L A N D T W O A
R E S T A R K I L L C
C R Y W Z J O S E P H
B O Y S A D R E A M R
M D W O R S H I P L I
E Z S H E P H E R D S
N G I F T S V I S I T
B E T H L E H E M
E J E S U S U

E G O D
B O R N
F L E E
L D G E



WISE • MEN • EAST • STAR
REST • BETHLEHEM
VISIT • JESUS • GIFTS
GOLD • FRANKINCENSE • MYRRH
WORSHIP • SON • CHILD
BORN • KING • JEWS • CHRIST
SHEPHERD • JOY • GOD
HEROD • KILL • BOYS • TWO • CRY
ANGEL • DREAM • JOSEPH • MARY
FLEE • EGYPT • LAND • NAZARETH



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: Janet Dawe
Stewards: Pat Ovenden and Hazel Mathews

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE MARCH NEWSLETTER

by Monday 17th February - jdent7@gmail.com or **07751603883**

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