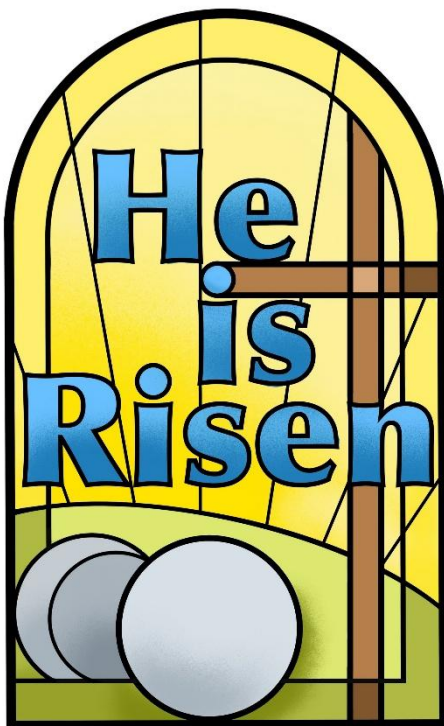


WINCHESTER NEWS

APRIL 2026



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

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Group: Winchester Road Methodist Church

Letter from our Minister

'As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised, he is not here."' (Mark 16: 5,6)

He has risen!

Hallelujah! It is a joy to greet you with those words, that Jesus is Risen! Easter is the pinnacle of the Christian year. The resurrection of Jesus as Christ is the reason that we can have a closer relationship with God, the reason that we can feel God's full acceptance and forgiveness upon our lives.

Having come through the trials, the violence, the deceit towards him, having carried his cross up the hill and been nailed onto it to die, Jesus is laid in a borrowed tomb and, on the third day he rose again. He did this for love of you and me. He did this because it was the only way of atonement for us. Jesus died so that we may live and have life in its fullest.

Sometimes we romanticise the death of Jesus. But I was reminded recently just how violent it would have been. The Circuit young adults group watched *'The Passion of Christ'* which some of you may remember when it first came out over 20 years ago. It was groundbreaking, controversial, and brought the harsh reality of the crucifixion into focus.

Bringing things to life, whether that be babies being born, or Jesus' death, is a messy and painful experience. But it is worth it. Jesus in his humility obeyed God's wish that we all be reconciled to God, even though that was going to be painful. Jesus knew that God had a plan, and that was his part to play. Jesus was willing because he knew that it was for a greater good, it was for us, for God's children, that we may be able to be welcomed into eternal life with God.

Love is not always easy, but in Christ we have been shown a way. We have been shown that humility and a willingness to seek out God's

desire, helps others. Jesus' resurrection that we celebrate this month, shows us that God is all powerful and ever loving. God holds true to the promises made and wants us to flourish in a relationship with the Risen Christ.

So, as the Easter eggs are given and received, let us think about the gift of new life that they represent. New birth, new life through Jesus' resurrection and a new and powerful relationship with God. As we look around at the colours filling gardens and fields, may we know that God wants our lives to be full of life and vitality, that God wants us to shine brightly and bring colour into each other's lives.

We can do that because we know that Jesus loves us so much, gave his life in order that we may flourish through a loving relationship with our Creator. For God's power to raise Christ and give us power over darkness and death, we give thanks. Hallelujah! He is Risen!

Happy Eastertide.

Rev 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=UTBwdWFBaG1qK0k3Yys2a0xiUEY1QT09>)

Both on: **Meeting ID: 834 548 4534 Passcode: 15803**



Church Flowers:

5th April: - Easter Sunday - in memory of Connie and Bill Booth (Lindy's parents)

19th April: - in celebration of Audrey Payling's Birthday.

Services

Sun. 5th April: Easter Sunday- 9am Communion

Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

-10.30 -Led by Janet Tweedale

Sun. 12th April: Led by Janet Tweedale

Sun.19th April: Led by Audria White

Sun. 26th April: Communion Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

Followed by the Annual Church Meeting

Sun. 3rd May: Led by Peter Dawe

Sun. 10th May: Church Anniversary Led by Rev.Gail Adcock

What's On

Circuit Groups for Youth (13-18) and Young Adults (18 – 35)

For information contact Zak Njeru – 0745802244

Friday Coffee Mornings 10 – 12 am Tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hub. (Term time only). These coffee mornings raise money for various charities. Last term £159.84 was raised for the RNLI.



Saturday Lunches

These raise money for the church and other groups. £679.27 was raised on 14th March for the Bazaar Contingency Fund, which enables the purchase of items needed for the bazaar.

The next will be on:

25th April for 2nd Guides towards their centenary celebrations later this year

Future dates: 13th June for JMA

18th July for church funds.

2nd Highams Park Guides Celebrate their Centenary

This September, the 2nd Highams Park Guide Unit will be 100 years old. To celebrate, we will be holding a service of thanksgiving at Winchester Road Methodist Church at 2pm on Sunday 20th September 2026. We would love to welcome members of all the uniformed organisations, both past and present, that meet at the Church Halls to join us. And in true Winchester Road tradition we will be serving tea, coffee and cakes afterwards if you would like to stay and catch up with old friends.

To ensure we have sufficient to cater for all guests, we would be grateful if you would **RSVP by 1st September** to 2ndhighamparkguides@gmail.com

We hope to see many of you there.

Crest

Crest, Waltham Forest's 'Ageing Well Team', are continuing to provide vital services to older people in the borough, and have recently expanded to a third venue in Higham's Park (a wonderful space based within Winchester Road Methodist Church). Our free activities are for people aged sixty plus who are experiencing mental health issues or experiencing the early stages of dementia. Through our weekly groups, we support participants' physical and mental wellbeing whilst providing cognitive stimulation and, reducing social isolation. Activities include games, arts and crafts, singing and gentle exercise. If you would like to join or have any questions, please do reach out to our referral team: referrals@crestwf.org.uk or by calling 07350 359 397

Dates, times and venues:

Mondays 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
82 Winchester Rd
E4 9JPZ

Thursdays 10.30 – 3.30
4 Greenleaf Road
E17 6QQ

There is a green hill far away.....

In 1848 Mrs Cecile Frances Alexander published a collection of her hymns entitled 'Hymns for Little Children'. Twenty years later it was added to the official Anglican hymnbook, Ancient and Modern. She was the author of All things bright and beautiful and the tune which we all associate with it was written by William Horsley. The French composer Charles Gounod also wrote a setting based on Mrs Alexander's text which he described as '*the most perfect hymn in the English Language*'. He was one of the founders of the Royal Philharmonic Society and a close friend of Felix Mendelssohn and his family. I have to confess that I find her children's hymns more to my liking than the modern ones.

During my teenage years I spent the long Easter Weekend at Sidholme, once the Methodist Guild Holiday Guest House in Sidmouth in Devon. Over the weekend we walked over the coast path to Ladram Bay and on the Bank Holiday guests were bussed to the nearby pebbly resort of Beer. Easter Sunday evening was spent joining in singing hymns and listening to solo songs as many of the guests were members of their Methodist Church choirs.

One Easter weekend the Guest house managed to persuade the local cinema to show the newly released Easter Cinemascope film '**The Robe**' which was based on a fictional novel by Lloyd C Douglas which told of the involvement of a Roman Centurion Marcellus (Richard Burton) who was put in charge of the crucifixion of Jesus and the two thieves by Pontius Pilate. Marcellus wins Jesus's robe in a dice game with the soldiers after the crucifixion. Ownership of the robe brings Marcellus delusions and nightmares so when his servant Demetrius (Victor Mature) escapes from his master taking the robe with him Marcellus is determined to recapture him and destroy the robe and its curse. During his search he comes to realise that it is guilt concerning the execution rather than a curse that is causing his illness. Returning to Palestine from Rome, Marcellus discovers that he has developed a Christian belief and is cured of his ailments. (Note the plot is more complex than the summary above)

After the evening meal there was usually time to chat or enjoy an entertainment, with guests singing, performing sketches, instrumental entertainment and always usually a choir and soloist was created to sing the Easter anthem '**All in the April Evening**'. (which was popular at the time). The words were written by an Irish Novelist and Poet Kathleen Tynan who was inspired by words from John's gospel describing a meeting between John the Baptist and Jesus '*the next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said. There is **the lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!*' (John 1 v 29) This would have been readily understood by Jews and scholars familiar with the Jewish sacrificial system and the innocence of lambs. Kathleen ends her poem with these words.

*"But for the lamb, the lamb of God, up on the hill top green
Only a cross, a cross of shame, Two stark crosses between
All in the April evening, April airs were abroad.
I saw the sheep with the lambs, and thought on the Lamb of God"*

The words were set to music later by Sir Hugh Robertson who was the founder and conductor of the noted Glasgow Orpheus Choir which toured the country becoming well known through its records. The choir no longer exists; it was disbanded after his death.

Three hymns which are top of my list of Easter hymns were written by three of our finest hymn writers.

Isaac Watts:- '*When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died.*' (StF 287).

Charles Wesley:- '*Christ the Lord is risen today; Alleluia!*' (StF 298)

Samuel Medley:- '*I know that my redeemer lives, What joy the blest assurance gives.*' (StF 303)

Winchester Road, like many churches, decorates a simple wooden cross with symbols from the gospel story which are removed on Easter Sunday morning and replaced by flowers.

Children connect the Easter Season with chocolate eggs, and many parents with young children, weather permitting, organise Easter Egg Hunts. Our local supermarket had shelves crammed with eggs of all sizes and small fluffy yellow chicks to meet the demand. These are the symbols of Spring which begins on March 20th the date of the Vernal Equinox. Eggs which had been given up for Lent return to the diet at the end of Lent at Eastertide. A tradition of dying them red, or decorating them, spread from Persia into the realm of the Orthodox churches of eastern and central Europe during the thirteenth century, the colour being chosen to represent the blood of Jesus shed for us. A prayer associated with eggs dates from this period.

'Lord, let the grace of your blessing come upon these eggs, that they be healthful food for your faithful who eat them in thanksgiving for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever.'

I read somewhere that in the Middle Ages children used to go from door to door to beg for eggs or other gifts. The twentieth century saw chocolate eggs replacing hen's eggs. Winchester Road Methodist Church gives small wrapped chocolate eggs to the children attending Joseph Clarke School each Easter. Between 1885 and 1917 the Russian Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II commissioned the imperial Jewellers to make jewelled eggs for them to give as gifts at Easter which are worth many thousands of pounds today.

Allen Steel: - April 2026

*'Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to you in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming
Christ in all I do and say.'*

Amen



World Day of Prayer 2026

The World Day of Prayer is an annual service, held around the world on the first Friday in March. It is a service written by Christian women in a different country each year, highlighting stories of women in that country. This year the service, entitled “I Will Give You Rest, Come” was written by an ecumenical group of women in Nigeria. As people took part in the service, they joined a wave of prayer circling the globe, starting in Samoa and ending, 146 countries later, in American Samoa, all praying with, and for, the country and people of Nigeria.

For many years, Mary Burgoine, with others from churches in Highams Park has planned and facilitated this service. There were doubts, at one point, this year that it would take place, but a group of people from, Winchester, Cavendish Baptist, and All Saints got together to plan it.



Grace Aguiyi took a lead in the service, decorating the table and surrounding area with fabrics fruits and spices from Nigeria and singing the opening song in the language of Igbo. A total of 33+ people attended the service and enjoyed coffee and tea with a range of Nigerian snacks. The collection, which helps to fund projects in Britain and around the world, raised £323.

Next years' service, has been prepared by the WDP International Committee, entitled “United in Prayer for Justice and Peace” Following services will be prepared by women in Costa Rica (2028), Italy (2029) Nepal (2030) and Jamaica (2031)

We were also able to share, with those present, Mary's many years of support for Nigerian Healthcare, by collecting 5p coins. Each map completed represents £100 and, so far, Mary has completed 65 maps!



To All
Thank you so much for my retirement
gathering with tea, cake and balloons
+ very kind and generous gift
from everyone at the church and
Room Hiners, much appreciated.
I really enjoyed my time at the
church
but you have to retire when the
time is right ☺
Thanking you once again
Love Tommy x

As you know our caretaker, Tom, retired at the end of January. Having had a much-deserved holiday, he is now looking forward to his retirement.

We are hoping to appoint a new caretaker as soon as possible, following interviews at the beginning of April.

Harmony E4, who rehearse at Winchester, celebrated their 10th Anniversary on 7th March with a concert. All donations were for the church.

News from Highams Park Planning Group

Highams Park Signal Box- Highams Park Community CIC has entered into a 50-year lease with Network Rail for the Signal Box. We are very grateful to have been given this opportunity by Network Rail and our goals for taking on the Signal Box are twofold: firstly, to preserve the building as an iconic feature of Highams Park town centre; and secondly, to provide a small affordable hub for community activities. We have posted some more details on this page. <https://highampark.london/events/update-on-highams-park-signal-box/>

Boathouse site at Highams Park Lake. As many of you will have seen, the old boathouse has now been demolished and the site made safe. The City of London Authority has asked us to let people know that it is their intention that the site be made available for community use.

To find out more go

to: <https://highampark.london/community/news/update-on-old-boathouse-site-at-highams-park-lake/>

Our Young Church



Our Young Church (Cookie Club 3-14) meet every Sunday during the morning service. The oldest group, (Biscuit Club), meet by arrangement. We start in church at 10.30.

In our sessions we have biscuits, share news, and look at bible stories. We then enjoy activities including playing games, doing crafts, cooking, and singing.

During Lent our Young Church Families started each service with the Liturgy. Items relating to the weeks leading up to Easter were placed on the cross. On Easter Sunday these will be removed and the cross transformed with flowers by the congregation. They also prepared and distributed bunches of daffodils on Mothering Sunday and gave out Palm Crosses to the congregation on Palm Sunday.



***Almighty God,
we thank you for the earth-
shaking, world-changing
news that Jesus rose from
the dead.
Help us to discover,
celebrate and share the joy
of Easter together.
Amen.***



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, Hazel Mathews and Carol & Dumisami Moyo

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE MAY NEWSLETTER

by **Monday 20th April - jdent7@gmail.com or 07751603883**

Printed copies of the newsletter, in black and white, are available in church. **Should you wish to make a donation towards the printing costs please put your donation, in an envelope, in one of the boxes in the church.**

This newsletter is available to download as a PDF from our website. It can also be emailed to you in full colour. Contact Jan Dent, as above.