

WINCHESTER NEWS

JULY & AUGUST 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

Dear friends,

I hope you are well.

As we approach the end of the Methodist year, I reflect upon what has happened in the past year. At church we have had Baptisms, a wedding and funerals.

It has been a busy year. Christmas Inn on Christmas Day was appreciated by all who came and Sunday Care Lunches on the first Sunday of the month (excluding January and August) continue to be popular and attended by 50-60 guests. We raised more funds at the Bazaar than ever. Church activities have been as busy as ever, cake stalls, JMA, scouts and guides, coffee mornings, and we held a wonderful summer holiday club.

As a church family we reach out to the wider community in many different ways through our voluntary work, our building space and our faith journey. We pray, we laugh, we cry, we offer love and kindness.

The world we live in is not an easy place to be sometimes, and people need generosity of spirit to enable them to flourish, but sometimes just to survive. As I write this, we are expecting a change in Government, we have wars in the world that do not seem to have justification. We are coming face to face with the effects of global warming again this week. We have people struggling financially, physically or with mental health. But, within all that, God promises to meet us where we are, to carry us through the hard times, and to give us peace and deepest joy so that we may live in the fullness of life.

Even though, at times, we may struggle, there are things we can be grateful for. Exam season is over for our young people. Sporting events are trying to be a vision of unity, standing up to discrimination and racism being projected by Governments and social media. People like you and I are living witnesses to others around, that there is someone who cares for them, someone willing to encourage and listen.

And so, as schools break up and family routines change, as young people face change of school or going to university. As we try to care for ourselves and loved ones in the heat; whether we know our future or face uncertainty ourselves, may you know that God thinks you are more important than anything else. God created us, made us in God's image, and has counted the hairs on our heads. May you know God's love and presence in your life in these coming weeks and months.
Blessings 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**

Our Church Family

Audrey Payling:- very sadly, Audrey was taken ill on Monday 15th June and died peacefully a few hours later at Whipps Cross hospital. Her daughters Sarah and Liz were with her. She attended Winchester Road for nearly 90 years and had been at church the previous day. Her funeral will be at Winchester Road on 14th July. Details to follow.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her family at this time.

Our Young People

As the school year draws to a close, we remember all those who have been taking exams and will be waiting for results later in the summer. Three of our Young Church will be moving on to Secondary school in September.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all our young people, and their families as they face new challenges.

Services

Sun. 5th July-10.30: led by Audria White

Sun. 12th July- 10.30: led by Janet Tweedale

Sun. 19th July - 10.30: Local arrangement

Sun. 26th July -10.30: All Age Worship: led by Re. Stephanie Njeru

Sun. 2nd August -10.30: Led by Cynthia Bonds

Sun. 9th Aug -10.30: Communion Led by Rev. Sue Creighton

Sun. 16th Aug -10.30: Led by Rev. Mike Long

Sun. 23rd Aug -10.30: Led by Peter Dawe

Sun. 30th Aug -10.30: Local Arrangement



Church Flowers:

July 5th in memory of Joyce Roden

July 12th in memory of Joan and Ron Taylor

July 19th in memory of Doris Weston

July 26th in memory of Dave & Jo Poste

August 2nd in memory of Mr & Mrs Brooks (Sylvia's Parents)

August 30th - in memory of Kath & Eric Warner and Stan & Margaret Pettitt

What's On

Friday Coffee Mornings 10 – 12 am Tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hub. (Term time only). These coffee mornings raise money for various charities. Money raised this term will be for YMCA and Christian Aid.



Saturday Lunches

These raise money for the church and other groups.

In June £1103.44 was raised for JMA

The next will be on: **18th July** for church funds, and towards the cost of postage for the shoeboxes.
Please speak to Janice or Maureen if you can help.

Yard Sale

On 14th June there was a yard sale across Highams Park. Many people set up stalls in their front gardens, including Pat and David, who raised £370 towards the pre costs for the Bazaar in November.



Church Bazaar – 28th November

Save the date. More details to follow.

Eat or Heat: Our local foodbank is based at Chingford Congregational Church. We are open on Mondays to receive donations and deliveries and on Tuesdays to distribute food to clients. We are still serving up to 40 clients (100+ individuals). We would be grateful for any donations of goods (See list in the Hub) or cash. We would also welcome help to set up tables etc on Tuesday between 8.30 and 9.30 am. Please speak to Pat Ovenden, Mary Rose or Jan Dent if you can help.

Rev. Stephanie Njeru would also appreciate support for her other two churches. Leyton Trinity Foodbank need both donations and volunteers. Lighthouse Methodist are running a 'Pre-loved clothes project for toddlers to school age. Please speak to Stephanie if you can help with either of these projects.

Summer Holidays

*“Summer Suns are glowing, Over land and sea,
Happy light is flowing, Bountiful and free.”*

The Methodist Sunday School Hymn Book includes this Summer Hymn by the Victorian Hymn Writer William Walsham How and I expect that many of the older generation of you remember it. I belong to that generation who take Summer Holidays for granted and at school started counting the days to the end of term. Up to Victorian times the only breaks that workers enjoyed free of having to work were the key Christian Religious Holy days which I wrote about last month in Winchester's magazine, which were Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun. This month I will attempt a brief summary of the development of leisure holidays.

The Bible tells us little about the childhood of Jesus, the most familiar childhood episode can be found in Luke's Gospel Chapter 2. The Good News Bible tells us that *‘Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. When Jesus was twelve years old they went to the festival as usual. When the festival was over, they started back home, but the boy stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this, they thought he was with the group. Returning to the city and after searching for three days they found him in the temple talking with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions.’* Luke 2 v 41-51.

In the Christian era Centres of Christian Pilgrimage developed, chiefly during the Middle Ages, notably walking on Pilgrimage to the great Cathedrals Canterbury, Durham (Burial place of Saint Cuthbert) and York and the Norfolk village dedicated to our Lady of Walsingham (the Mother of Jesus). Between 1387 and 1400 Geoffrey Chaucer penned a collection of 24 short stories in Middle English entitled **The Canterbury Tales** which need to be translated for general reading today. Chaucer wrote through the character of each of his pilgrims who were travelling together from the Tabard Inn in Southwark London on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. The stories passed the time, they included the Knight's Tale, The Miller's Tale, The Monk's Tale, The Wife of Bath's Tale, The Squire's

Tale, The Merchant's Tale.....On dipping into the tales we come across a group of fictional people on a Canterbury Pilgrimage, some of whom were pious while others just wanted a good time.

By the 18th century the wealthy aristocratic classes had the leisure and the money to go on a '**grand tour**' visiting the historic sights of Europe chiefly around Athens, Italy (Rome) and Paris. Today the treasures, paintings, statues, jewels etc which they collected as souvenirs, are on show in the great houses owned by the National Trust.

Google tells us that 'the popular idea is that school children came to have a long summer holiday from school (six weeks for most pupils in the UK) so that they could help work in the fields over the summer. But the current school system was developed over the course of the 19th century, when English farms were increasingly mechanised and having children helping with the harvest would only have been only for a short time. Besides which, a brief glance at the farming calendar tells you that a holiday that ends at the start of September is not going to be much use for bringing in the autumn harvest. So, whatever the origin of six weeks off school at the height of summer, it is not for the sake of farmers.

The Victorian era saw the emergence of seaside resorts like Brighton and Blackpool, Southend, Great Yarmouth and Scarborough, when sea bathing became popular and railway transport available. The twentieth century saw the growth of these resorts which went along with employees being entitled to one or two weeks annual holiday with accommodation being provided in Chalets like those at Butlins or in boarding houses. Though for the poorest a day trip to the coast was the only holiday. In the north of England several towns marked the summer holiday with 'wakes weeks' when every factory closed. Glancing at the popular newspapers today it becomes obvious that budget airlines now make it possible for families to fly to far off locations, with sunny weather; France, Spain and Portugal, Greece and Turkey.

I will conclude with a reminder of the holiday entertainment, the concert Party, which many of our older congregation will remember from their holidays. An excerpt from the story of Albert and the Lion as told by Stanley Holloway.

*There's a famous seaside place called Blackpool
That's noted for fresh air and fun
And Mr. and Mrs. Ramsbottom
Went there with young Albert, their son
A fine little lad were young Albert
All dressed in his best, quite a swell
He'd a stick with an 'orse's 'ead 'andle;
The finest that Woolworth's could sell
They didn't think much to the ocean
The waves they were piddlin' and small
There were no wrecks and nobody drowned
'Fact, nothin' to laugh at at all*

Allen Steel July and August 2026



Father, we are all so busy. We rush here and there, trying to meet deadlines, trying to fit more and more into our already full days. So often we seem to run out of energy and time. Sometimes we wonder what it's all about.

Help us, Lord to recognise that we have time. You have given us every day of our lives. Help us to choose wisely how we use our life time. Help us to spend time with you first; to learn your ways; to encounter the living Jesus in the Bible and in prayer. And everything else will fall into place. In Jesus' name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

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Our Young Church

We welcome all children and young people to join us on Sunday mornings, starting in church at 10.30 before going to their groups.



Our Young Church (Cookie Club 3-14) currently meet every Sunday during the morning service. We start in church at 10.30 with a video song before going to our groups. The oldest group, (Biscuit Club), meet by arrangement.

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.

**In September we will have two groups every Sunday.
One for those 3-10 and a second for 11+**

There are toys in church for those under 3.



**Bookings are now open
for our Holiday Club in
July.**

Church Council Meeting Tuesday 16th June 2026

- **Going Forward Communion:** As agreed by a majority vote at the AGM, 'Going Forward Communion' will take place once per quarter (i.e. every third month). Other communion will be taken seated.
- **Crèche in Church:** It had been agreed unanimously that a questionnaire/survey would be offered to the congregation to ascertain views on whether the project to provide a quiet/cosy corner, should proceed.
- **Raising money for Shoe Boxes:** It was noted that we did not have to pay for each shoe box but could make a donation to cover all. The next coffee morning would help to raise funds.
- It was agreed that there would be a review of the charities we support before the next church council.
- **Covenant Service:** For many years the Covenant Service had been held in January. However, the Methodist Connexional Year runs from September 1st. After discussion it was agreed that this year it would be held in September and then reviewed.
- **Young Church:** It had been agreed to split Cookie Club into two groups from September; a younger group, aged 3-10, and an older group aged 11+..There would potentially be up to 8 in the younger group and up to 7 in the older group. Additional leaders and support will be required.
- **Care Highams Park** More cooks would be needed next year for Sunday Lunches. It was noted that the new Co-ordinator of Christmas Inn would report to church council once a year.
- **Stewards' Report:** It was noted that there were currently only three stewards. Stephanie would approach people to see if they were willing to serve as Stewards.
- **Pastoral Report** There are 66 members and 45 associates. Two more Pastoral Leaders were needed.
- **Resources / Property**
- The new Premises Warden, Ramon Marais, was settling in well.
- **Priorities:** these were discussed and prioritised in tandem with the Finance Report.

- 1) Repair the faulty gas stop-cock in the kitchen
- 2) Replace the Billiard Room floor which contains asbestos.
- 3) Upgrade the Wi-Fi
- 4) Toilets to be refurbished
- 5) Young Church/Family Worker
- 6) Convert Crèche area in church to Quiet Area (Cosy Corner), subject to the results of the questionnaire/survey.
- 7) Room 5 floor to be sanded and sealed in August, also the Memorial Hall floor to be given a light sand and resealed at the same time. In future the caretaker will be able to buff and maintain these floors.
- 8) Purchase new Gopak tables.
- 9) Improve storage of items in the vestry, shared with the Ukranian Church.
- 10) Contact a volunteer who may be willing to upkeep the garden.

Resources: Finance

- Offertories received were still covering our Circuit assessment payments, but only just. Church funds were still at risk with a number of projects that we need/would like, to be done as well as normal monthly, quarterly and annual expenses. This was discussed in detail with a list of priorities made (see above).

Further information will be included in the September Newsletter

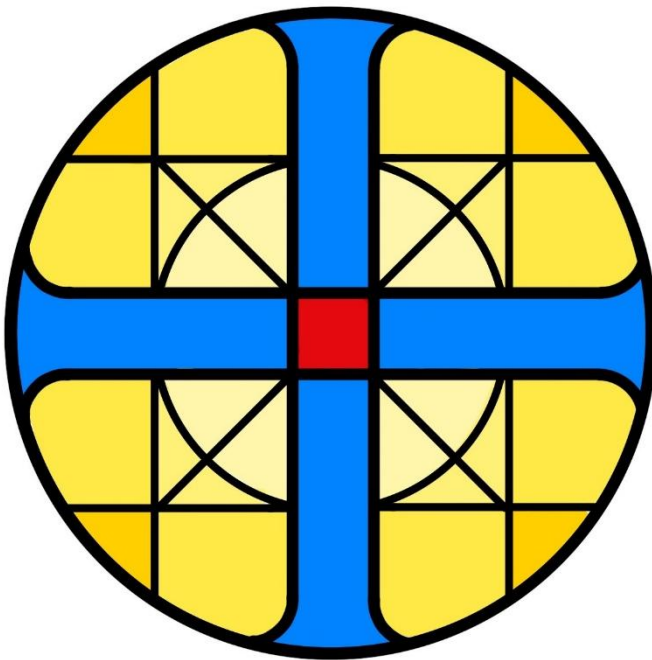
N.B: In order to continue to maintain an active church at Winchester Road we urgently need people to volunteer for some essential roles.

Church Stewards- responsible for the smooth running of services, managing church properties and overseeing financial collections.

Pastoral Leaders- Each Pastoral leader has a group of members and associates under their care.

Young Church- In order to serve and grow our Young Church we need both leaders and people to support.

If you feel you could help with any of these roles, please speak to Rev. Stephanie Njeru or one of the stewards



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:

Hazel Mathews and Carol & Dumisani Moyo

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton

There will not be a newsletter in August

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

by Monday 24th August - ident7@gmail.com or 07751603883