

# WINCHESTER NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2026



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

**Minister: Rev Stephanie Njeru**

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**Group: Winchester Road Methodist Church**

## *Letter from our Minister*

Dear friends,

A new start beckons many of us in September. Students having received exam grades will be thinking of their next steps, some already certain, some not so.

September is the month when schools welcome new pupils and teachers, Methodist ministers start in new circuits or appointments.

It's the month where, in previous years, the weather starts to turn cooler, dew on the grass, coats starting to be dusted off and come out of the cupboards. Nights draw in, russet apples appear in the supermarkets and, before long, we are into the changing season of Autumn.

How did we get to September already? Are the teachers refreshed and rejuvenated to start learning names all over again? What do we think our new minister will be like? All questions asked in years past.

This year, perhaps, we need to ask different questions. How can we help ease the drought? How can we support our farmers and our firefighters? Are our emergency service workers getting enough of a break, and how do we / can we enable that to happen?

It is a time of change, not just for individuals and families, but this summer has brought into stark reality the change in environmental pressures. The ways we have been doing things in the past are no longer acceptable. The climate change which was largely affecting other countries is now substantial in this country and is shocking in its ferocity.

Accountability is no longer an abstract concept, but a firm reality. Apathy is no longer acceptable. We all have our part to play, no longer are CFC, hairspray or coal power the main protagonists. But it is our lifestyle and our priorities.

Jesus said the main two commandments are these: *To love God with all your heart, soul, mind and body; and to love others as you love yourself.* By consciously and pro-actively doing this, we will become aware of the implications our words, actions and decisions have upon others, whether in this country or in another. Something that those in leadership need to carefully consider also.

God loves us all, and nothing can come in between us and God's love for us. It is that love which we need to embrace and reflect in our lives, which will ultimately help us to protect and care for each other and the environment around us.

May you know God's love in your life and seek to reflect that love towards the children of God you know personally, and those you don't.

With blessings and prayers

Rev Stephanie

## Services

**Sun. 6<sup>th</sup> Sept: 10.30** Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru.  
This service will include a Baptism.

**Sun. 13<sup>th</sup> Sept: 10.30** Led by Carole Merriman and Peter Richardson

**Sun. 20<sup>th</sup> Sept: - Covenant Service & Communion**  
Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

**Sun. 27<sup>th</sup> Sept:** led by Tony Miller (Whitechapel Mission)

**Sun. 4<sup>th</sup> Oct: - 10.30 Harvest (All Age Worship)** Led by Rev. Phil Borkett

**Sun. 11<sup>th</sup> Oct:- Communion & Dedication of Shoe boxes**  
Led by Rev. Stephanie Njeru

## A New Church Year

August is the month when many Methodist Ministers say farewell to a congregation they have served for several years and prepare to take up the challenge of a new appointment. Manses are spruced up to welcome a new minister and his/her family.

Not every denomination enjoys this planned seamless takeover. In the Sunday Times dated 16th August there was an interesting article which took a look at the future of the Anglican Church. In 1960 Anglican Clergy served 12,343 churches but today the number of benefices has reduced to 6,535. On joining the Lincolnshire diocese, the Revd. Andrew Vaughan was responsible for two churches, but in 2017 he took charge of four churches. The Parish Priest of Singleton in Sussex is responsible for four churches in what is now called '*The Valley Parish*' and is also employed as the manager of a charity shop in the nearby town of Chichester. The article went on to mention Priests in Lincolnshire who have charge of seven churches. The average Anglican Sunday morning congregation is now 32 compared with 49 in 2004. I would have expected the Ordination of women as priests in 1994 and later to the higher ranks of Anglican clergy to have eased the problem, but it has not.

The Methodist Church ordained its first group of 17 Women Ministers in 1974, and celebrated their appointment 50 years later. I have not been able to find numerical estimates of the influx of women ministers affecting pastoral oversight. At Winchester Road we have in Stephanie Njeru one of the two female ministers appointed to our circuit.

I challenge older members of the congregation to name the churches which formed the Walthamstow, Leyton and Chingford (Forest Circuit) when they became members of this circuit. In my case it could total 16, and sadly only 10 of them are still worshipping today. South Chingford Church was selected for closure, but the members have managed to carry on worshipping (shown on the Quarterly Plan as LA-Local Arrangement), aided by Rev. Armstrong Fummey (Supernumerary). Rev Fummey retired fully in July this year.

Looking at the information supplied by the Circuit Office there are 16 Local Preachers, trained and empowered to take services, but ten of them are shown as not available, often because of health or age. Anyone who believes that they might possess the ability to take on this role should speak to Stephanie. The central Stationing Committee is believed to have the notional figure of 150 per worshippers as the qualification for a ministerial appointment, but I cannot confirm this fact.

One factor which has influenced Church attendance this year has been the weather. The weather experts claim this is the hottest Summer since records began and people have remained indoors where it is cool. *The Meteorological Office defines a **heatwave** as three consecutive days when daily maximum temperatures meet or exceed a specific temperature threshold, 28 degrees Centigrade in London.* The Press, which likes to dwell on the extravagant, warned us that the temperature in southern England could be as warm as the Caribbean and as hot as the Indian capital Delhi with maxima around 55c. Attendance at Sunday Services fell to the low thirties but now that we have experienced seven heatwaves and the temperature has fallen back there should be more worshippers on Sunday morning.

Allen Steel, September 2026

**Church Flowers:**

**Sept 6th - in loving memory of Ron Clarke**

**Sept. 13th - in loving memory of Frances Mansfield  
(Christine & Allen's Daughter)**

**Sept 20th - in celebration of Maureen and Graham Duncan's Ruby Wedding Anniversary.**

**Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> in loving memory of John Dixon**



## *Our Church Family*



Congratulations to Jonathan Pease and Miranda Davies who were married on 25<sup>th</sup> July at St. Martin's Church, Gospel Oak.

Congratulations to Mary Watson who was married, on 1<sup>st</sup> August, to Shanaka Foneska at Upton Court near Reading in Berkshire. There were guests from the USA, France, Finland and Switzerland with the UK making up the rest. For their honeymoon, Mary, Shanaka and his dog Toto, walked the SW Coast Path from Land's End to Plymouth. That's 150 miles with tent and backpacks - and dog food! David Watson walked his daughter down the aisle.



**Dean.** Dean has worked at Methodist Church House for 9 months and attended the Methodist Conference with Rachel Lampard.

He is starting a Global Production Apprenticeship with Bloomberg in September.

**Toby** is going to Sussex University in September to study Maths.

**Martha** is going to Leeds University to study Geography

The Lampard/Walker house will be strangely quiet!

**Happy Birthday to Leo** who celebrated his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in August.



**Angelina** graduated in 2025 with a degree in SEND education and inclusive Practice. Having now completed her Teacher Training Apprenticeship she will have her own class in September

**Georgio** completed a four year apprenticeship which included technical college and site experience, Georgio has earned his ECS gold card confirming his status as a fully qualified electrician.



**Rocco.** Rocco continues with his training and plays football for West Essex. He also coaches his brother Franco's football team.



Two members of Cookie Club will be starting Secondary School in September.

Most of our Young Church members will be returning to a new class and change of teacher when they return to school.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all our young people as they look forward to a new stage of their life with the challenges that may bring.

**Audrey Payling:** We would like to thank the Winchester family for the love and support we received following Audrey's death. Our particular thanks go to all those who helped us make her funeral such a special day. Mum would have been overwhelmed by the number of people at her service and by the donations received in her memory. Winchester Road Methodist Church was a very special place for her.

Liz and Sarah

### **Georgina (Ena) Belinda Goodger.**

Georgina Hunt was born in 1875 and died in 1968, aged 92. She married Sydney Thomas Goodger and they moved to Winchester Road in 1911. She had five children and the family were active members at Winchester Methodist Church. At one time Sydney Hunt Goodger was the church organist.

In an age when women's academic skills were often belittled, Ena gained first place in the Hackney School's Entrance Exam (today's 11+). She enjoyed writing poetry. Her style was typical of the Victorian Age. Several of her poems appeared in print. Many were found by the family in her papers.

Grant Edwards, her grandson, who also attended Winchester Church, has put together a selection of these poems which are available in the Vestry.

One of her poems is on the next page.



*God, we pray for the life blood of our churches that is the children and young people, that they may know you deeper, to experience your love for them through your church and its people.*

*Jesus, we pray for those, who find themselves in the privileged position of working with the children and young people. Bless them Lord, bless their ministry and bless their passion*

## **Clapton Park Tabernacle**

Minister-Rev. J.K Ellwood (1906-1923 or possibly 1933) He later became the son-in-law of Edna Goodger and moved to Highams Park in 1934

*There is a church, just off a busy mart,  
Teeming with life, and all that makes life great,  
Where faith and works together, hand in hand,  
Like comrades, lead us to heaven's very gate.*

*For oft within the shadows of its walls,  
There steals a sense of kinship with the Christ,  
That mystic union 'tween our souls and His  
Than which no other bond hath e'er sufficed.*

*And there, where pulpit and the pew are one,  
The sad and lonely feel the friendly touch,  
Of ministerial aid; whilst softly comes,  
The Master's benediction, "Inasmuch"*

*And lives are blessed, and hearts made strong to bear,  
The burden and the heat of working days.  
Yea. Common tasks are lifted and attuned,  
To highest service, and to loftiest praise.*

*Press forward, then, in all thy holy zeal,  
Faint not, nor slacken, knowing no defeat,  
Til radiant, with the lustre not of earth,  
Thy work shall stand symmetrical, complete.*

Ena Goodger

## Holiday Club 2026

### A Wonderful Three Days of Fun, Faith and Community

This year's Holiday Club, themed “**Heroes of the Bible**”, was a great success, bringing together 25 children, families, and volunteers from across our church community. Over three busy days, the church was filled with energy, creativity, and plenty of laughter as children explored stories of forgiveness, courage, kindness, and faith through a wide range of activities.



Each day focused on a different biblical hero. We began in the church with an activity, led by Gemma, helping the children connect with the story. And of course, our theme song “**Giants of Faith**” became the soundtrack of the week — still being hummed in many households.

- **Joseph:** We made ‘dream’ mobiles, colourful keyrings and gingerbread (complete with colourful dream coat). In the afternoon we had a drama session, and we used our colourful parachute in the game session.



- **David and Goliath:** On Thursday we had to take aim at cardboard Goliaths at the start of the day, then we made our own catapults (with mini pom pom ammunition) and also made, and baked, rock buns (see what Janice did there!). In the afternoon there was a code breaking challenge session based on different heroes of the bible. Once the challenges were complete, we had one more code to crack to access gold bars (chocolate ones). We finished the day with a sock fight!
- **Jesus:** We decided Jesus was the ultimate hero and learned about the feeding of the 5,000 and other miracles. We made bread rolls (which were delicious to eat in the break whilst they were still warm) and fish biscuits, we also made our own, storm in a bottle, which calms down after shaking – thank you all for your donations of bottles! In the afternoon we walked on water (cornflour), played with giant bubbles and then took part in ‘Jesus’ Miracle Olympics’ in the hall before home time.

The success of the Holiday Club was made possible by the dedication of our volunteers. From planning and preparation to leading activities, welcoming families, and keeping everything running smoothly, their commitment was invaluable. We are deeply grateful to everyone who gave their time, energy, and creativity.

Parents shared warm words of appreciation, noting how much their children enjoyed the sessions and how excited they were to return each day. Many commented on the welcoming atmosphere and the wide range of activities that we managed to fit in each day.

A heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who contributed, attended, prayed, or supported the Holiday Club in any way. Sarah

And many thanks to Sarah Hayward for all her hard work in arranging the Holiday Club.

# What's On !



## **Friday Coffee Mornings 10 – 12 am**

Tea, coffee and biscuits in the Hub. (Term time only). These will start on Friday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>.

These coffee mornings raise money for various charities and the church. The charity for this term will be Olive's school in Kenya.

## **London Methodist Lunch Club**

The London Methodist Lunch Club meets on the second Friday of each month from October to May.

It is held at the Lancaster Hall Hotel, 35 Craven Terrace London W2 3EL which is a short walk from Lancaster Gate Station and Paddington Station.

We have a three-course lunch followed by a speaker. Our next year's programme begins on **Friday October 9th**.

If you are interested in joining us, please speak to Peter and Lindy Richardson, Carole Merriman or Janet Dawe who are all members.

## **Visit to Hinde Street Methodist Church**

The London Methodist Lunch Club have arranged a visit to Hinde Street Methodist Church (19 Hinde Street, London W1U 2QJ) on **Friday September 11th** from 1 -3.30pm. Tea and coffee will be available beforehand in the downstairs hall (bring your own lunch). The visit will include an organ recital (Four Seasons) by Alexander Wilton at 1.30. This will be followed by a talk by Alan Brooks about West End Methodism: The Story of Hinde Street. At 3.15 there will be an 8 minute walk to the grave of Charles Wesley led by Peter Richardson and Alan Brooks. The afternoon will close with singing "Love Divine All Loves Excelling". Goodwill donations to cover costs will be warmly received. If you are interested talk to Peter and Lindy Richardson, Carole Merriman or Janet Dawe.

**OUR FEAR, OUR HOPE** Prof. Anthony Reddie will be looking at preparing for death through cultural, theological and pastoral perspectives on the 3<sup>d</sup> October at Shernhall Methodist Church from 10.00 am to 1pm



Grand Christmas Bazaar at Winchester

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November.**

We have the dates for 2027 next year when we are holding our Winchester Cafe fundraisers. We are very grateful for the regular helpers but we NEED MORE HELP - even if it is only an hour.

We need people to make cakes and set up on the Friday.

On Saturday we need people to: - wash up; make drinks; serve cakes; take orders; deliver lunches; clear plates; and tidy up at the end.

The Saturday dates are:

16th January

30th January \*

13th March

12th June

10th July \*

17th July \* those with an asterisk are dates where help is particularly needed.



### **Eat or Heat**

Our local branch was set up in 2013 by churches in the area.

During the summer numbers have been low but are expected to rise again in September. We often serve over 35 clients, amounting to 100+ individuals. Clients receive toiletries and cleaning products, tinned and packet goods, bread, butter, cheese, eggs, fresh fruit and vegetables. On average for a single person, it costs £35 per week and for a family of four £80. Donations can be put in the box in the Hub or money given to Mary Rose, Pat or Jan.

### **Wednesday Bible Studies**

Join us online



every Wednesday at 7:30 PM

for our Bible Study sessions.

It's a wonderful opportunity to explore God's Word, deepen your faith, and share in uplifting conversation and fellowship.

Whether you're a regular or it's your first time, you're very welcome. Come along and be part of the journey. **Zoom Link:**

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

Meeting ID: 834 548 4534 Passcode: 158039

Landline: 0203 051 2874 United Kingdom

### **Weekly Online Prayer - Will restart in September**



Join us every Monday at 12:30 PM for our online prayer meeting—a gentle pause in the day to reconnect with God and one another.

It's a short, peaceful time of reflection, prayer, and encouragement to begin the week with hope and faith. Whether you come with a prayer on your heart or simply want to listen in, everyone is welcome. **Zoom**

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

Meeting ID: 834 548 4534 Passcode: 158039

Landline: 0203 051 2874 United Kingdom



### **Faith Matters young adults' group (18-35yrs) -**

Meeting on the 4th Sunday of every month.

Message Zak for details.

07458 00224

**Come and Join Us**  
**Where? Winchester Methodist Church**  
**When? Every Sunday at 10.30**

We start in church at 10.30 with an action song before going out to our groups. In September we will have two groups meeting every Sunday:

**Biscuit Club for those 11+  
10**

**Cookie club for those 3-10**

**What do we do?**

Share biscuits and Cookies!



Listen to bible stories



Make things

Play games

Cook



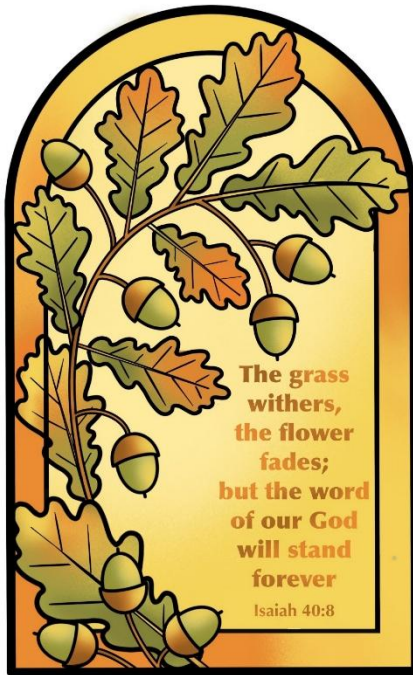
Share our ideas



**And lots more!**

For those under 3 there are toys at the front of the church where parents can sit with their children.





### **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 & Dumisami Moyo

**OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM: - led by Jean Norton**

### **CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER**

by Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September -[ident7@gmail.com](mailto:ident7@gmail.com) or 07751603883

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