

# The Methodist Church

## Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 53

June 2025

### Superintendent Minister's Letter



Dear friends,

*'For everything its season, and for every activity under heaven its time: A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and at time to uproot; .... A time to weep and a time to laugh .... a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing'* Ecclesiastes 3: 1–5 (Edited)

The wise sage who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, tells us, in the verses cited above, that there is a time for everything in God's kingdom. A time for us to start new endeavours in life, and a time to recognize that those endeavours have come to an end. There is a natural flow to the progress of life as we reach certain milestones and prepare for the next challenge that lies ahead.

For me, as your Superintendent Minister, I am getting close to one such milestone. It may only seem like yesterday to many of you and to me also, but seven years ago, in September 2018, I began this phase of my ministry with you as your circuit Superintendent. Now, seven years later, I am coming towards the end of that ministry and am preparing to move on to our neighbouring circuit of Croydon, where I will begin my Ministry in September as their new Superintendent Minister.

I look back on seven years of a largely joyful and fulfilling ministry in your midst in which I feel that I have been embraced by so many. Seven years in which I have made many friends, shared with you in countless acts of worship, fellowship, circuit and Local Preachers' meetings. Seven years of being alongside so many of you during significant moments in your lives including weddings, funerals, and baptism, particularly in the two churches of Lewisham and Eltham Park where I have had Pastoral charge.

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Lewisham   Sunfields   Upper Norwood   Wesley Hall**

There have been times when we have looked at difficult issues such as the 'God in Love Unites us' agenda, and latterly the circuit re-organisation. We also lost the best part of two years of face-to-face ministry as we navigated the Covid Epidemic together and learned how to meet and even share worship through platforms such as Zoom and YouTube!

Soon will come that time for us to refrain from embracing. It will be with great sadness that Carol and I say our last goodbyes at our leaving service in late July. However, we will do so knowing that we won't be far away in Croydon and we hope to keep up many of the meaningful friendships that we have made.

This will be the third consecutive appointment in which I will have served seven years. Seven is a Biblical number, remember God made the world in seven days according to Genesis. Seven is understood as a number that signifies completeness and there is a sense in which I feel ready to complete my ministry with you and move on to new pastures.

As I go, I want to promise that I will keep you all in my prayers, happy in the knowledge that our circuit remains in good hands and that God's purposes will continue to be fulfilled.

Kind regards,

*Richard*

Reverend Richard Grocott  
(Superintendent Minister)



### **Leaving Service for Revd Dr Jongi Zihle**

As we draw closer to the end of Jongi's time as District Chair at the end of August, the District would like to thank him for his work and service to the London District and the wider church.

There will be a Leaving Service on Sunday 06 July 2025 at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission, EC1Y 1AU.

The service will start at 4pm and will be followed by refreshments. All are welcome. Churches are asked to [complete the attendance form](#) with the number of possible attendees by Sunday 15 June, this will provide us with approximate numbers.

Please speak to your church steward if you are thinking of attending. Thank you.

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Friends,

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May the Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit had the joy of confirming 8 young people at Hither Green Methodist Church as part of a Circuit service. The young people had undertaken a series of confirmation classes, led by Rev. Craig, preparing them for the occasion in November 2024.

It was a wonderful service which was created by the young people using the theme of 'lost and found', reflecting on the stories of Jonah, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and Zaccheus (all people we discussed in their confirmation classes). The young people also chose the music for the service, and we were ably led in uplifting contemporary worship by a band consisting of Louise Gaffney, Rev. Richard Grocott and Beccie North. As part of their confirmation the young people experienced the laying on of hands in prayer and an anointing with oil.

Please continue to hold in your prayers Angelica (Eltham Park), Bryant (Hither Green), Felicia (Hither Green), Hope (Hither Green), Isabelle (Hither Green), Janelle (Sunfields), Joy (Hither Green) and Mekhi (Sunfields). Pray that they might, like Jonah, know that God's mercy is bigger than their mistakes; that like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they are brave when it counts; and like Zaccheus, their hearts are always open to transformation. May they be found when they feel lost, faithful when the world is shaky, and transformed more and more into the people God made them to be.

A special thank you to all who were involved in preparing the service and especially to those who attended the service and showed their support and love to these special young people.

*Craig*



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**Bible Month is an annual campaign that celebrates Scripture by inviting the whole Methodist Connexion to feast on one particular book of the Bible together**

Churches and circuits are encouraged to taste and see the goodness of an individual text; enjoying some of its unique flavours, considering its origins, appreciating its place alongside the rest of Scripture, and savouring the unique contribution it might make to our faithful living and learning today.

## **In June 2025, we'll be feasting on the Gospel of John**

**The Gospel of John invites you to journey through  
the superabundant life Jesus offers**

John's Gospel opens by presenting Jesus as the Word of God – the source of life and light for all people (John 1:1-18). In Jesus, we encounter God's boundless, gracious love, which brings us into a relationship with him as his children. Through Jesus, the fullness of grace and truth is offered to everyone willing to receive it.

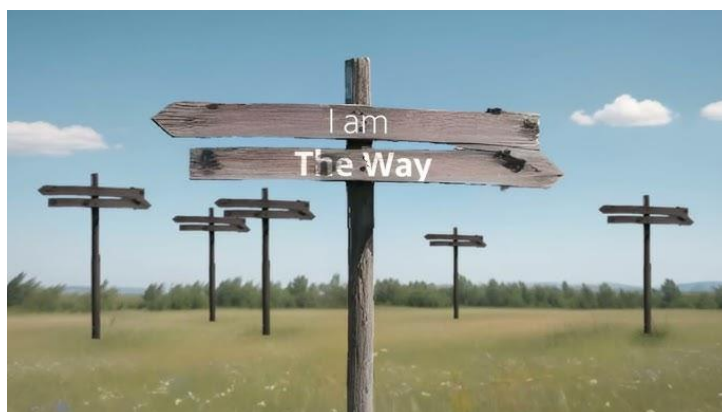
During the first four weeks of June 2025, we will be discovering together:

**Week 1:** Embracing God and all reality, John chapter 1

**Week 2:** Signs, conversations and controversy, John chapters 2-12

**Week 3:** Jesus' discipleship course, John chapters 13-17

**Week 4:** 'the hour' and the resurrection and our drama, John chapters 18-21



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# SENsory Worship

**Second Sunday of each month (not August)**

**starting**

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025**



singing



music

**10.30am – 11.30am**



inclusive



Bible



percussion



prayer



sensory



craft



Makaton

**ALL INVITED...**

**YES, YOU TOO!**



refreshments

**A safe, friendly space for loud or quiet, confident or shy people  
of all ages to worship God together - in an inclusive environment  
using all the senses!**

*(under 12's must be accompanied by an adult)*

Questions?

Jenny's email: [sensoryworship@gmail.com](mailto:sensoryworship@gmail.com)



The Methodist Church



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# **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2025:**

## **Action for Children Sunday**



Action for Children is the children's charity of the Methodist Church. It was founded in 1869 by Methodist minister Revd Thomas Bowman Stephenson in response to the poverty and danger faced by vulnerable and destitute children and young people living rough on the streets of London.

Today, Action for Children, (formerly, NCH - National Children's Homes) has grown to become a leading children's charity running over 500 projects and working with more children and young people affected by poverty, disability and abuse than any other UK charity.

Action for Children Sunday is held on the **second Sunday of July**. It is the anniversary of the opening of the first children's home and a chance to celebrate the work of Action for Children and its partnership with the Church at services and activities throughout the country.

### **The Action for Children Covenant**

*Every child has the right to live, to be safe and to be loved. Every young person has the right to be housed, to have enough money to live in dignity and to have enough support for the future. Every young person has the right to justice, to realise their potential and to be given the space to become independent. In an often cruel and imperfect world, we uphold the work of Action for Children with children and young people in danger, in need and at risk. We support the growth of this work and the pursuit of all these rights for the young, the discounted and the vulnerable. We make this covenant with Action for Children for the sake of all God's children.*

*Amen*

If you would like to make a donation, go to:

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-us/make-a-donation/appeals/donate>

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# Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit



## Weekly Thursday Morning zoom Bible Study Finding 'The Way' together

Thursday mornings 10.00am to 11.00am facilitated by Margaret Boreham

The zoom opens at 9.45am with the study beginning at 10am. Conversations are based on a Bible passage and there will be questions to make us think and rethink. There is an opportunity and time to share thoughts and questions. Closing remarks are at 11am for those who want just an hour, but stay open after 11am for anyone keen to chat or continue the conversations sparked by the Bible Study.

Margaret on [mboreham5@gmail.com](mailto:mboreham5@gmail.com), 07483 86 86 12      Recurring zoom link:  
<https://zoom.us/j/98461065032?pwd=NTJFUmJlWHVubjZwaWVCNzd0MlEvdz09>



UPDATE from March 2025 newsletter: 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party' organised by the Circuit Mission Committee and held at Burnt Ash on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February raised a magnificent **£483.06** towards Mission in Britain.

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**Circuit Easter Offering Service**  
**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at Lewisham Methodist Church**  
**“Education for All Hope for All”**

Each year the Easter offering service is organised by Methodist Women In Britain and money raised goes to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, working with over 100 Partner Churches and Organisations around the World.

The worship service was very inspiring and meaningful, we heard how the World Mission Fund supports God's Mission in different parts of the World. The theme this year was “Education for All Hope for All”, and the service focussed on the right of every person to receive an education. This year's stories were from Countries or Women Missionaries way back who worked very hard believing that by educating both boys and girls basic schooling could bring transformation to people's lives, bring healing in communities and cultural friendships.

We were pleased to welcome our Guest Preacher who this year was the District Chair Rev. Dr. Jonathan Dean. He encouraged us to consider how we as individual churches in the Circuit can contribute to work in the family and education. Rev. Dean spoke about his family background as a Methodist. Youth are our future; he still has a friend from his early years in school and mentioned one of the school teachers who was his mentor.

Rev. Richard Grocott was pleased to present the JMA Shield to Eltham Park Methodist Church who had the highest percentage collection for last year. It was received by Jackie Ingram.

A huge thank you to Lewisham Methodist Church for hosting us and providing refreshments before the service, to Martin Cleave the Organist, the Ministers and readers from each Church for their readings and prayers. We are very pleased to say that the total collected this year from all Churches in the Circuit is £2,344.75, thanks to everyone for their donations including the drawstring bags during Lent.

*Sibongile Mnguni*

Secretary for Circuit Missions

Easter Offering donations received:

Anerley Methodist Church	£293.50
Burnt Ash Methodist Church	£260.80
Eltham Park Methodist Church	£317.00
Forest Hill Methodist Church	£250.00
Hither Green Methodist Church	£230.95
Lewisham Methodist Church	£286.00
Sunfields Methodist Church	£336.50
Upper Norwood Methodist Church	£260.00
Wesley Hall Methodist Church	£200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,344.75</b>

*Linda Ryan*

Connexional Funds Treasurer

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**Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**



**You are warmly invited to join friends across the  
Circuit for a day trip by coach to Broadstairs  
Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August**



**Broadstairs' spectacular coastline has sandy beaches and bucket loads of seaside charm. Here, families and friends rediscover the joy of having fun together beside the shore. In Broadstairs you'll find fishermen's cottages, clifftop walks and independent shops lining original Victorian streets and alleyways.**



**Please join us for our Circuit  
beach trip on Sat. 9<sup>th</sup> August**

We will be leaving by coach from  
three pick up points across the Circuit:

**9am Anerley Methodist Church  
9.15am Forest Hill Methodist Church  
9.30am Lewisham Methodist Church**

We will depart Broadstairs at 6:00pm  
to return to the same locations

All children must be accompanied.

**To book your spot and pay please  
talk to your Church stewards.**

**Book by Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July**

First come, first served  
**£22 per adult; £10 per child**

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## **Wesleyan Friendship Group at Wesley Hall Methodist Church**

The Wesley Hall Wednesday Friendship Group met on 7<sup>th</sup> May to celebrate and remember the jubilation of VE Day 45 and also to reflect upon the sacrifice of those who didn't return. We thought about those from UK & Commonwealth together with our allies.

We also reflected upon the losses of our enemies whilst praying for Peace in our troubled world. We sang wartime songs, played pass the parcel and eat a scrumptious feast largely based on wartime food. We also listened to reminiscences of life during WW2.

*Sandy Colley*

Wesley Hall



Deadline for information for next newsletter: **20<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

Please email details to: [office.bcpc@btinternet.com](mailto:office.bcpc@btinternet.com)

Circuit website: <https://bhcpmethodist.org.uk/>

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## **Report on District Safeguarding Conference**

### **Saturday 15th March 2025 by Rev. Charles ILunga**

This conference, entitled “Unbounded Love” was well attended by no less than 100 people, 10 of them from our Circuit. The Keynote speech was given by the Vice-President of Conference, Carolyn Godfrey. Opening devotions were led by Rev. Esther Akam with a Congolese chant and she spoke of creating a supporting culture where people felt valued, respected and safe. The District Safeguarding Officer, Claire De Stephano welcomed everyone to the conference.

The Vice-President of Conference, Carolyn Godfrey spoke of how Safeguarding is interpreted in our own eyes, vulnerability and the use and abuse of power. She invited us to reflect on the power we hold in our relationships, in our workplaces and in the offices, and in the church. We were asked to consider what kind of leadership we are supposed to offer in the life of the Church, the power we hold, the power people see in us and how we respond to vulnerability. She spoke of the importance of understanding where power lies and treating people with respect and how all are worthy of equal value and dignity.

The District Chair, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Dean then, addressed the meeting speaking of how we aim for life of heaven demonstrated on earth. He invited us to revisit “Called to love and Praise” and referred to the “God Welcomes All” study guide on how faith informs safeguarding.

There followed four pre-arranged workshops to discuss:

- *'Supporting Children and young people's emotional wellbeing'*
- *'Survivors of Abuse' led by Kate Little*
- *'Embedding Good Practice in Daily Life'*
- *'Safeguarding Marginalised Communities'*

If you have any concerns about safeguarding, please feel free to speak to your Minister, and/or church Safeguarding Officer. Also available are:

#### **Circuit Safeguarding Officer:**

Mrs Saira Bohan-Croft: [s.bohancroft@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:s.bohancroft@yahoo.co.uk)

#### **District Safeguarding Officer:**

Claire De Stefano [safeguarding@methodistlondon.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@methodistlondon.org.uk)

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## **Invitation to Mission Trip to Ghana**

### **Saturday 24th January to Thursday 5th February 2026**

The overall objective is to learn about the life and ministry of the Methodist Church Ghana and explore the faith in the Ghanaian context by interacting with both the clergy and lay in the urban and rural settings, to learn from the dynamic growth of the Methodist Church Ghana and how this has been achieved and understand the concept of mission and evangelism, to engage with the history of Methodism and the history of the slave trade and visit projects that are being or have been sponsored by the Methodist Church Britain as well as visit places of interest.

The brief itinerary includes:

- paying a courtesy call on the staff at the Conference Office in Accra
- visiting the Methodist Rafiki Satellite Village (Orphanage) in the Winneba Diocese, to have a session with the children.
- a visit to Cape Coast Castle, to be briefed about the slave trade and visit Sekondi Diocese.
- Engagement with young people, men's and women's fellowship
- Visits to educational institutions and Health Clinics
- In the Northern Region (Tamale/Yendi), we will visit another area to explore the relationship between Christians and Muslims and we will visit some of the rural Methodist Churches to interact with the local people.

The total cost involved is £2,200, and this is for the flight, hotel accommodation, hiring of air-conditioned coach, meals and other miscellaneous expenses. The payment schedule will be paying £1,000 by Wednesday 15th October 2025 and the remaining amount will be collected at the airport before we depart to Ghana.

We are humbly inviting you to be part of this exciting trip to Ghana.

*William*

For further details and to secure a place, contact:

*Rev. William Davis*

*Tel.(mobile) 07930843207*

*Email - william14da@yahoo.com*

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# Pre-school / Nursery Opportunity



in LEE, SE12



The hiring is subject to the signing of a standard hire agreement.  
Costs are £25 hour for a 50 hour week, payable monthly in advance.  
(option for term time only or full time all year round)

Application closing date Friday 16th May

Availability is from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025

Email [hallbookingsbamc@hotmail.com](mailto:hallbookingsbamc@hotmail.com) for further details.

Burnt Ash Hill, Lee, SE12 0QD

We look forward to receiving your application.

Members of the Burnt Ash Methodist Church are actively seeking a full time pre-school or nursery to take up the tenancy of our Main Hall.

Our modern, secure, light and welcoming hall space is available for a set 50 hours per week 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday. There is an option for term time only or all year round.

We are located in Burnt Ash Hill, Lee, SE12 0QD between Heather Road and Kingsand Road.

Street parking is available plus a small car park.

Our recently refurbished Main Hall is the larger of our two halls and is well equipped with the following facilities:

- Main hall area – approximately 144m<sup>2</sup>
- Warm and well heated area
- Wheel chair access to hall and toilet facilities.
- Sizeable, safe and enclosed outside play space with optional storage facility.
- Small kitchen area with fridge, sink, hot water and serving hatch.
- Approved fire exits and safety equipment onsite.
- Modern male and female toilet facilities in lobby area
- Separate disabled toilet with baby change area
- Stage area, with gated stair access

The hall is regularly cleaned and well presented. It is used by other clubs and societies outside the hours on offer here.

Although equipment cannot be left set up over-night in the hall between lettings, we do offer locked storage for both our inside and outside areas.



**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green  
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***DO YOU LIKE A GOOD TUNE?  
THEN WHY NOT COME ALONG TO A CONCERT BY THE***

**ELTHAM PARK PLEASANT  
SUNDAY AFTERNOON ORCHESTRA**

**29<sup>th</sup> June & 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 3.00pm**

**ELTHAM PARK METHODIST CHURCH**

*Westmount Road SE9 1XX*

**13<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 3.00pm**

**BURNT ASH METHODIST CHURCH**

*Burnt Ash Hill, SE12 0QD*

♪ **LIGHT CLASSICS**      **SHOW SELECTIONS**  
♪ **FAVOURITE HYMNS**      **POPULAR STANDARDS**

***ADMISSION FREE (retiring collection)***

***Refreshments available***

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	<b>Circuit Forthcoming Events</b>	
Weekly	Thursday morning zoom Bible Study led by Mrs Margaret Boreham: All are welcome	10am-11am
Thurs. 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Circuit Meeting at Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> July	District Leaving Service for Rev. Dr. Jongi Zihle Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission, EC1Y 1AU	4pm
Wed. 9 <sup>th</sup> July	Circuit Missions Committee meeting at Forest Hill	7pm
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Rev. Richard Grocott leaving service led by Dr Garry Young At Eltham Park Methodist Church	4pm
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Deadline for booking for the Circuit coach trip to Broadstairs	
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> August	Circuit coach trip to Broadstairs. Pick-up points: 9am Anerley Methodist Church 9.15am Forest Hill Methodist Church 9.30am Lewisham Methodist Church	
Wed. 10 <sup>th</sup> September	Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' meeting Sunfields Methodist Church	7.30pm
Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> September	Circuit Leadership Team meeting at Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September	Circuit Meeting Venue TBC	7.30pm

### **Circuit Missions Committee**

If you are interested in finding out more about fundraising for Mission in our Circuit, for example the Mad Hatters Tea Party, Easter Offering, JMA, or any of the other Connexional Funds, you would be welcome at the next Mission Committee meeting to be held at Forest Hill on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm.

Contact Margaret Baker [admin@foresthillmethodistchurch.org](mailto:admin@foresthillmethodistchurch.org) for more details.

### **Women Emulating Susanna Wesley (WESUW)**

Meetings on the fourth Saturday of the month  
at Upper Norwood Methodist Church,  
11am-1pm; 28<sup>th</sup> June; 26<sup>th</sup> July; 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2025

*All are Welcome*

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