



The Methodist Church

Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 52

March 2025

Superintendent Minister's Letter

Dear friends,

Moving on with God

*'Foxes have their holes and birds their roosts,
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his hat'* (Matthew 8:20)

'Doesn't time fly by quickly, it only seems like yesterday that you arrived!', so commented one of the kind ladies in a fellowship group I was leading recently as I was explaining that I will soon be moving on from the Blackheath & Crystal Palace circuit after seven years as your Superintendent Minister!

In some respects, yes time has flown, and memories of my arrival and early days of ministry, particularly at Lewisham and Eltham Park seem very recent. In other respects, I feel that together we have achieved a lot as a circuit these past seven years. I look back with great affection on some of the great times we have shared together, including significant acts of worship, parties and weddings, baptism and celebrations of life. I remember with joy all those recorded services we put together whilst our churches were closed during the Covid epidemic. I remember fellowship meetings, Bible studies and lots of committee meetings where we struggled to make sense of Christian faith in difficult times but were for ever sure of our Lord's presence with us. I will always hold fond memories of you, the people of the Circuit.

As a Methodist Minister, now in my 35th year of travel, I have got used to the idea of 'Moving on' after each appointment. I am now coming towards the end of my sixth circuit appointment and will soon be moving to my seventh. Last year, I once again went through the 'Stationing process' and was matched with the Croydon circuit as Superintendent Minister. Following a matching visit last November, Carol and I agreed to this move, as have the Croydon circuit. Conference willing, we will be moving in August and will take up the appointment in September. We continue to feel excited by this appointment, the new friends we will make, the new churches we will serve, the

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new opportunities for mission and outreach. We feel ready to take up one more fresh challenge.

Moving house, moving job or even moving church is never an easy process. The thought of another house removal and settling into a new house feels rather daunting. Nevertheless, in the verse quoted above, Jesus seems to suggest to his disciples that when on Mission, Christian leaders should avoid putting down roots that are too deep. The message is to travel light and be ready to embrace change for the benefit of the Kingdom of God.

Of course, there are often good reasons why it is simply not practical for us to 'up sticks' at short notice. Sometimes our calling in the Christian life is to stay where we are and see through the work God has entrusted us with. Yet what these verses are perhaps suggesting is that all of us need to be flexible in life and willing to embrace change when it is presented to us.

My prayer is that as we prepare for the changes that the next year will bring, we may all remain open to the ways of the Holy Spirit and eager to discern his purposes for our lives, and the lives of our church,

Amen

Richard



Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit Way Forward Group

Are you are interested in being involved with discussions on issues concerning the Circuit's future growth and development? The Way Forward Group meets approximately four times a year via zoom and would welcome new joiners.

Next meeting zoom meeting is on Thursday 13th March 2025 at 7.30pm.

Please contact the office office.bcpc@btinternet.com for more details.

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**BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE
CIRCUIT MISSIONS**

LENT 2025

***SAVE 30 PIECES OF SILVER
FOR THE 40 DAYS OF LENT***



Matthew 26:14-16

Then one of the twelve disciples, the one named Judas Iscariot,
went to the chief priests and asked,
“What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?”
They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to him.
From then on Judas was looking for a good chance
to hand Jesus over to them.

**STARTING ON ASH WEDNESDAY
5th March 2025**

Gift Aid in an Easter Offering Envelope

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Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit
Lent Bible Study 2025 via zoom:
‘Followers of Jesus’ by John Birch



The staff team will be running the Lent course at 7.30pm on Tuesday evenings as follows:

- Week 1:** 11th March ‘Nicodemus’ led by Rev. Richard Grocott
- Week 2:** 18th March ‘Mary and Martha’ led by Rev. Charles ILunga
- Week 3:** 25th March ‘The woman at the well’ led by Rev. Craig Gaffney
- Week 4:** 1st April ‘James, Son of Thunder’ led by Rev. William Davis
- Week 5:** 8th April ‘Mary Magdelene’ led by TBC.

There is a booklet that accompanies the course. If you would like to receive a pdf, please contact Linda office@btinternet.com

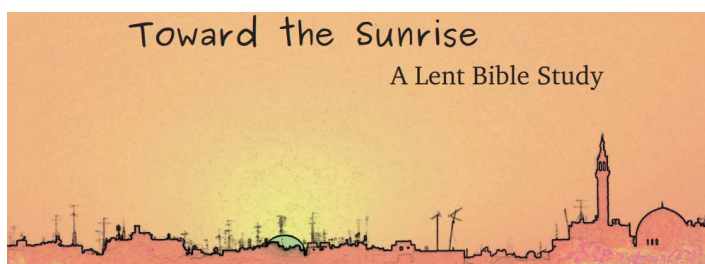
*All are welcome;
you can join for the full course, or individual sessions*

The recurring zoom link is:

<https://zoom.us/j/95747958364?pwd=TYsvtvIOpVopPZ7KXbCuPTL0JKU62r.1>

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IN PERSON LENT COURSES AROUND THE CIRCUIT



**‘Towards the Sunrise - Jesus on the Emmaus Road’ by John Birch
led by Rev. Craig Gaffney**

Burnt Ash: Weekly from Wed 3rd March 10.15-11am

Hither Green: One session on Tuesday 8th April at 7pm

Sunfields: 27th March, 3rd April, 10th April at 7.30pm

The five study sessions to be covered individual or in fewer sessions are:

‘Be prepared’, ‘What are you looking for?’, ‘Walking toward the sunset’,
‘Waking to the sunrise’, and ‘A good place to be’.

All are welcome



BLACKHEATH AND CRYSTAL PALACE CIRCUIT

Circuit Confirmation Service: Sunday 18th May 2025

4pm at Hither Green Methodist Church

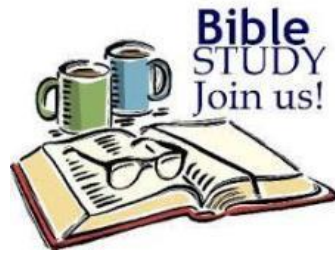
The Circuit is delighted to announce that following the youth/young adult Confirmation Exploration Course run by Rev. Craig Gaffney in November 2024, eight young people from Hither Green, Sunfields and Eltham Park Methodist Churches are to be confirmed in a special Celebration Confirmation Service at Hither Green on Sunday 18th May, in a service led by Rev. Craig Gaffney.

We hope that lots of you will attend this glorious occasion and support these young people. The service will be at 4pm, but will be followed, in the upper room at Hither Green, by a bring and share celebration.

All are welcome

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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, 07483 86 86 12

Recurring zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/98461065032?pwd=NTJFUmJlWHVubjZwaWVCNzd0MlEvdz09>



The Mission in Britain Fund (MiBF) supports, largely, New Places for New people projects through allocation of funding to Districts and Circuits. The Fund also supports Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice projects, via Districts. This work is only made possible by kind donations.

The 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party' organised by the Circuit Mission Committee and held at Burnt Ash on Saturday 22nd February raised a magnificent **£410.06** towards Mission in Britain. A lovely afternoon of fellowship; sharing together a wonderful afternoon tea, and music accompaniment from Martin Cleave's trio.

Thanks to all who came along; huge congratulations to Mary Sparkes and her team for a most enjoyable and worthwhile afternoon

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CIRCUIT YOUTH EVENT

- SUNDAY 16TH MARCH
- 5PM – 6:30PM
- HITHER GREEN
METHODIST CHURCH
- 7 – 23 YEAR OLDS
(UNDER 12 ACCOMPANIED)
- FAITH – FUN - FOOD



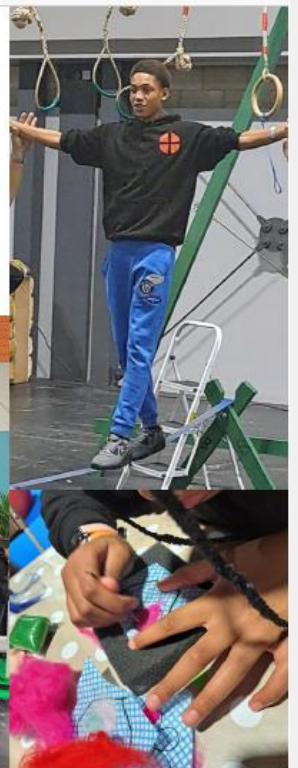
For more information contact Rev. Craig Gaffney: craig.gaffney@methodist.org.uk

Attention all young people around the Circuit!

3Generate 2025

Methodist Children and Youth Assembly
3rd – 5th October 2025
NEC in Birmingham (coach provided)
Ages 8 - 18

For more information, and to book, contact Rev. Craig Gaffney
craig.gaffney@methodist.org.uk by 8th June 2025



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A prayer for Mothering Sunday 30th March 2025

Clothed with Strength and Dignity
Lord, on this special day set aside for Mothering,
we thank You for our mothers,
for all who fulfil the role of mother,
and for our 'Mother Church'.

We thank You for the dignity, high calling
and honour You give to mothers and mothering.
Equip all mothers with the courage
and confidence to share their faith with joy.
Grant them wisdom, tenacity and love,
to meet the demands of this age.
Grant them zeal and grace
to meet the opportunities of each day.
Protect them. Guide them.
Comfort them. Strengthen them.

May all who serve in 'mothering roles'
know the peace that passes all understanding
as they seek to live and work for you.

Amen



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Circuit Easter Offering Service
Sunday 4th May 2025 at Lewisham Methodist Church



Refreshments served at 4pm; Service starts at 4.30pm

Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr Jonathan Dean,
Chair of London District

The Easter Offering 2025 service focuses on every person's right to education. Stories tell of people who are committed to changing lives through education.

Education for All, Hope for All offers churches, Circuits and Districts a moment to consider how education transforms lives and communities, opening God's promise of hope and fullness of life for all people.

The service includes the dedication of the Easter Offering donated to the **World Mission Fund**, which works with over a hundred of the Methodist Church in Britain's Partner Churches and organisations around the world.

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 9th July at 7pm.

Contact Margaret Baker admin@foresthillmethodistchurch.org for more details.

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**We are called to be a growing,
inclusive, evangelistic and
justice-seeking Church**

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training

Please register for the online training via:

<https://mcb.theologyx.com/course/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-foundation-module/>

You can either log on and do this in your own time, or you could get together as a group to complete the training, with one person logging on. Please remember to send a copy of your certificate once you have completed the course to Linda office.bcpc@btinternet.com.

A reminder that training is mandatory for Ministers, Local Preachers, Worship Leaders, Circuit Safeguarding Officers, Circuit and church stewards. The Circuit are also encouraging church trustees to engage with this worthwhile training.

JUNIOR MISSION FOR ALL (JMA)

Many congratulations to Eltham Park Methodist Church who have been awarded the JMA shield by the Missions Committee for the largest percentage increase in their donations in the year 1 Sept 2023 to 31 Aug 2024.

Church	2022/3	2023/4
Anerley	£165.20	£106.75
Burnt Ash	£ 96.39	£104.00
Eltham Park	£315.83	£605.36

The History of JMA

The movement began in 1812 when Joseph Blake heard a very inspiring sermon about missionary work. In 1841, JMA became an integral part of the Methodist Church throughout Britain.

Further details are available on the Methodist website

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/junior-mission-for-all/our-story/>

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District Safeguarding Conference
Central Hall, Westminster
Saturday 15th March, 10am–3.30pm

The subject of this year's safeguarding conference is 'Unbounded Love'. What is unbounded love? Unbounded love means being there to support others through their struggles without any limits or conditions. It is about helping carry their burdens while honouring their personal boundaries and respecting their autonomy. This type of love allows us to lighten someone else's load, so they can find the strength to lift themselves up when they need it most.

The keynote speaker is Carolyn Godfrey. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in ONE of the four workshops:

- Supporting children and young people's emotional wellbeing
- Embedding day-to-day good practice in our contexts
- Survivors of abuse
- Safeguarding and marginalised communities

Register via: <https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/safeguarding/annual-conference>

For further details please contact the District Office. We hope that all the Safeguarding Officers in our Circuit will attend, but the event is open to anyone interested in learning more about Safeguarding guidelines in the Methodist Church

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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**

**30th March, 27th April & 25th May 2025
at 3.00pm**

**ELTHAM PARK METHODIST CHURCH
Westmount Road SE9 1XX**

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

ADMISSION FREE

Refreshments available

Women Emulating Susanna Wesley (WESUW)

Meetings on the fourth Saturday of the month
at Upper Norwood Methodist Church,
11am-1pm; 23rd March; 27th April; 25th May 2025

All are Welcome

Deadline for information for next newsletter: 20th May 2025

Please email details to: office.bcpc@btinternet.com

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

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Living hope is a project which aims to provide good quality education for disadvantaged children in Baddomalhi, Pakistan

Dear Friends,

It is with great joy that we bring you this wonderful news! Although the playground is not yet fully ready or equipped, the children are already making the most of it and loving every moment. It has become a safe place where our students can run around, play games, and enjoy themselves to the fullest. Seeing their smiles and laughter fills our hearts with gratitude. In addition to the playground, we have also created a dedicated space for gardening. The children are excitedly preparing the ground and getting ready to plant some vegetables. This hands-on activity not only teaches them about nature and sustainability but also gives them a sense of pride and responsibility.

Living Hope is deeply grateful for your unwavering support and prayers. Your generosity has made these developments possible, and we cannot thank you enough for being a part of this journey. Together, we are creating a brighter and more joyful environment for the children we serve. Thank you for standing with us and for your continued prayers. We will keep you updated on the progress of the playground and garden.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Rev Imran Malik,

10 Portland Road,

Hawkhead Road,

Paisley, PA2 7GH



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London Freedom Walk 2025

Enjoy the sights of the city from a different perspective as you join us on a five-mile route, calling at London's iconic churches, where walkers will discover their history and the stories behind the work they do. The event marks the start of **Christian Aid Week 2025**, which raises money to support communities working to free themselves from poverty and tackle the challenges of the climate crisis.

What's happening?

The third London Freedom Walk takes place on Saturday, **10th May 2025**.

It sets off from St Martin-in-the-Fields ... follows a family-friendly five-mile route ... calls in at some of the city's churches, where walkers will discover their history and the stories behind the work they do.

The walk will start at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square London WC2N 4JJ and end at St Paul's Cathedral, in time for the 5pm Evensong.

Why are you doing this?

The event marks the start of Christian Aid Week 2025, which raises money to support communities working to tackle the challenges of poverty and the climate crisis. Every year, the charity's supporters around the country have seven days and so many ways to help make a difference, and walkers in London are doing their bit by stepping out around the capital.

What is Christian Aid Week all about this year?

This year the Christian Aid Week appeal is focusing on the work of the organisation's partners in Guatemala. Guatemala is among the ten countries in the world most vulnerable to disasters and climate emergencies. Over the past three years, extended dry seasons have severely damaged the livelihoods of subsistence farmers, who rely upon rain for their crops.

The event organisers are still in the process of planning the walk. Please checking on the Christian Aid website for updated information.

To reserve a place, go to

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/christian-aid-freedom-walk-london-2025-tickets-1077518740559>

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	Circuit Forthcoming Events	
Weekly	Thursday morning zoom Bible Study led by Mrs Margaret Boreham: All are welcome	10am-11am
Wed. 5 th March	Ashing services: Burnt Ash Methodist Church led by Rev. Craig Gaffney Wesley Hall Methodist Church led by Rev. Charles ILunga Hither Green Methodist Church led by Rev. Craig Gaffney Lewisham Methodist Church led by Rev. Richard Grocott	11am 3.30pm 7.30pm 7.30pm
Tue. 11 th March	Circuit Lent course via zoom week 1: 'Nicodemus' led by Rev. Richard Grocott	7.30pm
Thurs. 13 th March	Way Forward Group meeting via zoom	7.30pm
Sat. 15 th March	District Safeguarding Conference 'Unbounded Love' Westminster Central Hall	10am
Tue. 18 th March	Circuit Lent course via zoom Week 2: 'Mary and Martha' led by Rev. Charles ILunga	7.30pm
Wed 19 th March	Circuit Treasurers Meeting at Burnt Ash church	7.30pm
Tue. 25 th March	Circuit Lent course via zoom Week 3: 'The woman at the well' led by Rev. Craig Gaffney	7.30pm
Sat. 29 th March	Circuit Safeguarding Officers gathering. Details TBC	
Tue. 1 st April	Circuit Lent course via zoom Week 4: 'James, Son of Thunder' led by Rev. William Davis	7.30pm
Tue. 8 th April	Circuit Lent course via zoom Week 5: 'Mary Magdelene' led by TBC.	7.30pm
Thurs 29 th April	Circuit Leadership team meeting at Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Sun 4 th May	Circuit Easter offering Service at Lewisham Methodist Church led by Rev. Dr. Jonathan Dean	4.30pm
Sun 11 th - Sat. 17 th May	Christian Aid Week	
Tues. 13 th May	Local Preachers; and Worship Leaders' meeting Anerley Methodist Church	7.30pm
Sun.18 th May	Circuit Confirmation service at Hither Green Methodist Church led by Rev. Craig Gaffney Followed by Bring and Share celebration	4pm
Wed 4 th June	Circuit Property and Resources Meeting Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Thurs. 3 rd July	Circuit Meeting at Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Wed. 9 th July	Circuit Missions Committee meeting at Forest Hill	7pm

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EASTER SERVICES AROUND THE CIRCUIT

All are Welcome

Maundy Thursday Services: Thursday 17th April



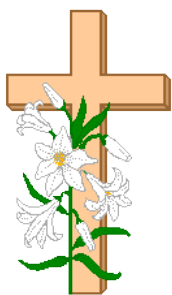
Upper Norwood	7pm led by Rev. William Davis (HC)
Eltham Park	7.30pm led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
Forest Hill	7.30pm led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)
Sunfields/URC	7.30pm led by Rev. Craig Gaffney (URC)

Good Friday Services: Friday 18th April



Anerley	9.15am led by Rev. William Davis
Lewisham	9.30am led by Rev. Richard Grocott
Burnt Ash	10am led by Dr Linda Ryan
Sunfields	10.30am led by Rev. Craig Gaffney
Forest Hill	10.30am led by Rev. Charles ILunga
Wesley Hall	10.30am Joint service at Forest Hill
Eltham Park	11am led by Rev. Richard Grocott
Upper Norwood	11am led by Rev. William Davis
Hither Green	12.30am led by Rev. Craig Gaffney (Tenebre)

Easter Day Services: Sunday 20th April



Eltham Park	9am led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
Anerley	9.15am led by Rev. William Davis (HC)
	11am led by Mrs Valerie Tredinnick
Wesley Hall	9.30am led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)
Burnt Ash	10.30am led by Mrs Jeannette Warren
Hither Green	10.30am led by Dr Garry Young
Lewisham	10.30am led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
Sunfields	10.30am led by Rev. Craig Gaffney (HC)
Forest Hill	11am led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)
Upper Norwood	11am led by Rev. William Davis (HC)



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