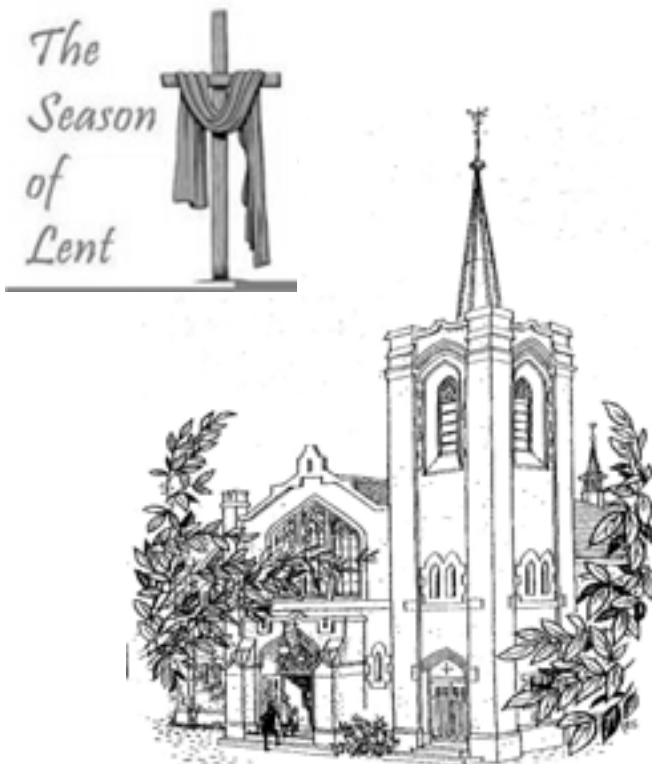


The Drive Methodist Church
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

NEWSLETTER

February 2026



Minister: Revd Jacqueline Jones
Email: rev.jacquelinejones@outlook.com

[http:// www.drive-methodist.church](http://www.drive-methodist.church)

**Church Mission Statement
of
The Drive Methodist Church**

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

Letting Go: A Season of Faith, Mission, and Gratitude.

As this newsletter reaches you, a group from our circuit will be in Ghana on a mission visit - a journey rooted in relationship, learning, generosity, and shared faith across borders. It is a reminder that the Church is never confined to one place; we belong to a global body, called to walk with one another in humility, curiosity, and love.

On 18 February, we also enter the season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday - a sacred threshold that invites us to pause, reflect, and return to God. This year, our circuit will be engaging with the Methodist theme of "Letting Go."

Letting go is not about loss for its own sake. It is about making space - releasing what weighs us down, loosening our grip on certainty, pride, fear, or even comfort, so that God may shape us anew. Lent asks us gently but honestly:

What do we need to put down in order to walk more freely with Christ?

For some, letting go may mean habits that no longer serve life. For others, it may be grief, resentment, exhaustion, or the pressure to have everything figured out. And for many of us as churches, it may mean letting go of "the way we have always done things," so that new life can emerge.

The words of scripture remind us:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me."
(Psalm 51:10)

This Lent will also carry a deeply personal dimension for me. I find myself in a season of lasts. My last Christmas in the circuit - My last Watchnight service - My final Covenant services - My final Lent and Easter journey here in Barking, Dagenham, and Ilford.

Following Conference, I will be moving south to serve in the Exeter Circuit, a transition that comes with both excitement and tenderness. Seasons of ending are never simple. They hold gratitude and grief side by side.

I remain profoundly thankful for this circuit:
for faith shared in worship, for support given in difficult moments, for laughter, prayer, challenge and growth, and for the friendships formed along the way.

As we enter Lent together, whether journeying locally or across continents, may we trust that letting go is not an act of abandonment, but an act of faith. The God who calls us forward is the same God who has walked faithfully with us until now.

A Lent Prayer

Holy and gracious God,
as we step into this season of reflection and repentance,
teach us how to let go.
Let go of what no longer gives life,
of burdens we were never meant to carry,
of fears that shrink our hope,
and of habits that keep us from loving fully.
Create within us clean hearts and open spirits.
Make room for your healing, your justice, and your peace.
As ashes mark our beginnings,
may grace shape our becoming.
Lead us through this Lent with honesty and courage,
so that we may arrive at Easter
lighter in spirit, deeper in faith,
and renewed in love.
In the name of Christ,
who walks with us always.
Amen.

Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni
Supt Minister, Barking, Dagenham & Ilford Methodist Circuit

EDITOR'S NOTE

WELCOME to our February Newsletter and the first issue for 2026.



This will be an exciting year as our fundraising for The Drive Centenary Mission Development Project will start in earnest. See Jeremy's update on page 19 and make a note of the dates in your diaries for the events in the year. Don't worry - I will give a reminder each month!

For six weeks from 8th February the Sunday services will focus on our journey of faith, our purpose and why we exist as a church in 2026. Each week the service will follow a theme which will align with our logo – ***Our church, Our story, Our future.*** Please join us for each one if you can.



I can't believe it has been a year now since I took over again as Editor. I have to admit that I have enjoyed the task this time round more than I thought I would. Maybe it's because I am now fully retired and have more time available to source items.

However, I still rely on you, dear readers, to send me your news, stories and anything else you would like to share with our church family.

So have a great month and I look forward to hearing from you.



WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS TO GOD...

...for all those known to us who are unwell and for all those who we have concerns for at this time.



...for those who are unable to come to church because of ongoing illnesses.



...for those in hospital and those who have had or about to have operations.



...for those going through difficult times because of financial worries, health anxieties or depression.



...for those in a time of grief following the loss of loved ones.



***O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
when I call answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
come and listen to me.***

Taizé Community

THANKS

Thank you so much for all your good wishes following my knee replacement operation. I am home now resting whilst trying to keep up with my physio exercises. Unfortunately I will not be able to drive for at least 6-8 weeks so will be relying on Uber. Thank you again.

Jeremy Foster

HAPPY  **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY to:**



**JANET ON 6TH
EMILY ON 7TH**



**AND TO EVERYONE CELEBRATING
A BIRTHDAY IN FEBRUARY
HAVE A LOVELY DAY!**



(If you would like yours or somebody else's birthday mentioned then please let me know! – Ed.)



CHRISTMAS AT THE DRIVE



TDY PARTY

Following the Nativity presentation rehearsal on 13th December, our young people had a great time taking part in crafts and games while enjoying a tableful of goodies. Meanwhile we older participants enjoyed a welcome cup of tea!

Diane Foster

NATIVITY SERVICE

It seems like a long time ago, but I still want to say well done and thank you to all who made the Nativity service such an enjoyable time of worship together. Many people commented on how much they had enjoyed it.



Rochelle wrote the 2025 Nativity, so let's see who is up for the challenge of writing it in 2026!

Could it be you?

Jo Wright

Many thanks to you as well Jo, Michelle and Rochelle for making it happen – I really enjoyed taking part! – Ed.

CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE

In the subdued light of candles, our Carol Service was again well attended by families and friends and it was good to see folk from other churches in the circuit.



I was so pleased to have been part of our choir, singing the traditional Christmas carols and lovely anthems. Our thanks to Andrew for putting the service together and coaching us with encouragement and patience at our Tuesday evening practices and Sunday mornings with the chorale. It was good to have the extra help of members and ex-members of the Valentine Singers as well as the lovely voice of Merlin, our regular tenor at special services.

Thank you to all the lesson readers and of course to Anne and her team for organising the delicious refreshments in the Parlour afterwards.

This is my sister Susan's and daughter, Louise's favourite service. Once again they were not disappointed.

Diane Foster



CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE

On walking into the church from a very wet Sunday evening to find the church with its beautiful Christmas tree and decorations just lit by the candle displays (put in place and lit by Jeremy Foster) was wonderful.

I joined with the TDMC choir last year for the carol service and was keen to join again this year. Andrew our Musical Director and organist had put together an excellent programme including quite a few choir carols as well as the familiar readings and congregation carols. There had been many rehearsals beforehand and a run through earlier in the afternoon.

The service was well attended despite the bad weather and it went without a hitch and enjoyed by all. Very welcome refreshments of hot drinks, mince pies were supplied by Anne Dellow and her family, thanks Anne.

Maggie Smith



CAROL SINGING AT THE WARM SPACE

If you were in the Grange Hill area on 17th December around 11am you may have heard some loud joyous singing. Jo and I joined other volunteers and clients at the Warm Space café to sing Christmas carols and songs. It was well attended and Jan Cheal accompanied us on the piano while everyone sang to their hearts content. Jo and I had a practice of a couple of the descants we would be singing at our own Carol Service. I think people were impressed!

Diane Foster



CHRISTMAS CHARITY COLLECTIONS



During our services in December we had three charity collections. I am pleased to report that the combined total of the cash and card donations was £588.75. We have sent £318.23 to Shelter, £156.04 to Grange Hill Food Bank and £114.48 to Haven House Hospice.

John Higgins
Treasurer

THANKS FROM SHELTER

We are incredibly grateful for the £318.23 raised at your Candlelit Carol Service, please do pass on our sincere thanks to everyone involved for their generosity and support. Donations like this make a real difference to the work we do.

Ellie Pocock
Regional Community Fundraiser, Shelter

THANKS FROM GRANGE HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

Thanks to all at The Drive for the donations of toys collected at their Nativity and Toy Service. They were given out at an event held at the centre on Christmas Eve.

Melvin Dawson
Grange Hill Management Committee



THANKS RECEIVED FROM SAMARITAN'S PURSE



Thank you so much for supporting the 2025 Operation Christmas Child Appeal. Long after Christmas Day has passed, your shoebox packing, processing, and prayers are still making a global impact as children experience joy, love, and hope through gift-filled shoeboxes.

Now, the moment many of you have been waiting for... In 2025, the global Samaritan's Purse family packed over 12,205,900 shoebox gifts!

This includes an incredible 232,844 shoebox gifts from the UK alone! That means over 12.2 million children experienced great joy and a heartfelt reminder that they are loved and not forgotten. And it all started with simple acts of kindness and generosity from people like you.

We pray that 2026 is filled with blessings, and we look forward to partnering with you again later this year.

Your Samaritan's Purse UK Team



Behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

Luke 2:10, ESV

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

After the busyness and rush of getting ready for Christmas, some may breathe a sigh of relief when it is over. However, the work of Christmas is just beginning as Howard Thurman says in his poem below which was submitted by Lorraine Bendon.

Lorraine says:

"I love how it contrasts with the chaotic times of getting everything done in time for Christmas and simplifies the basic but enormous tasks of getting on with life and making a true difference".

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

Thank you for sharing this with us, Lorraine - Ed.

Howard Washington Thurman (1899–1981) was an American author, philosopher, minister,



theologian, Christian mystic, educator, and civil rights leader. As a prominent religious figure, he played a leading role in many social justice movements and organisations of the twentieth century.

CHRISTMAS IN JAMAICA



Over the Christmas holiday, me and my family went to Jamaica. When we got there we had to do a lot of cleaning because no one was there for a long time, but when that was done we had a lot of fun.

A lot of our family came to our house for Christmas and we all played a lot of games. Then we went to my aunty's birthday party which was really fun and we had a lot of nice food. The next day we went to the beach for the whole day and that was my favourite part of the trip. We also went to the countryside to visit more family and went to the Blue Lagoon on the way to our aunty's house.

The jerk chicken was really nice and yummy. We stayed at her house for the night and then we came back to our house and relaxed until New Year's Eve. We went out with our neighbour that day for the New Year's countdown and there was another big party going on.

After it was New Year's Day and it was raining so we just stayed in our house and got our things ready to come back to the UK because we were leaving in two days. It kept raining for the last few days so we were mainly at home but we still enjoyed our time and brought lots of nice things back for our family and friends in the UK.

Emily Blake

Sounds like you had a really good time, Emily. Thank you for sharing this with us – Ed.

HILARY'S PRAYER COLUMN



A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

The Christmas season is over at last.
The year is under way and
we shall soon look to Lent and Easter.
The new calendars are up and the diaries
are frighteningly full of blank pages.

The memories of last year,
of the last two years cluster about us
and we wonder what this year will bring.

What will be the challenges and opportunities,
the anxieties, the joy and the sadness.
What will be on the blank pages of the diaries
when we come to the end of the year.

We thank you, Lord, that you are always with us
and never leave us to face the year alone.

Bless all of us who come to worship you.
May we all be blessed to know your presence
with us today and all the days of this year.

Amen

CARD MACHINE

At the time of writing I have just received the Report for December 2025 which was the first month following the installation of our card terminal. I am pleased to report that a total of £303 was donated via the machine spread across the Church Collection, Haven House Hospice, Grange Hill Foodbank and Shelter.

When you tap the screen it will bring up the options of Church Collection, Development Fund and any specific charity for which we are collecting as part of our Communion giving. Please be careful to tap on the specific option to which you wish to donate as we are obliged to allocate the funds as specified.

Many of you will be familiar with the Gift Aid scheme. Thanks to Joel's administration of the scheme we receive over £5000 from HMRC each year through Gift Aid. But in case you are not familiar, Gift Aid allows the church to reclaim the tax on any donation provided the donor is a UK Tax payer. This means that a £10 donation will be worth £12.50 to the church (at no additional cost to you) if it is Gift Aided.

When you use the card terminal to donate to the Church Collection or the Development Fund the system will ask if you wish to Gift Aid. If you click "Yes" the system will ask for your name, post code and your email address. You only have to input this information once, as the system will recognise your card next time. Please note that we are not able to collect Gift Aid for any third party charities.

If you have any questions about Gift Aid or the card machine please speak to Joel, John or myself.

Jeremy Foster

FOR THE LOVE OF FLOWERS

Our flower team would like to thank you all for the kind comments we received after decoration our church for the Christmas season. We really love what we do, flowers are our passion and we care very much that our supporters are happy with the flowers that they ask us to purchase. We are mindful of the fact that whilst we look for good quality blooms we are aware of costs, which at certain times of the year can be exorbitant. Recently we have been using a mix of fresh blooms and greenery from our church garden and occasionally one or two silk flowers.

Our Christmas arrangements are enhanced by the addition of coloured baubles, branches sprayed with glitter, feathers, ribbons and much more. We enjoy being immersed in boxes that have stored the 'fruits of our labour' from previous years. It's always amazing how we seem to produce something different with the same 'tools'. These items along with some fresh blooms do help spread the cost and with some tidying up, we can avoid the need to shop for one more week.

The recent cold spell challenged us as we had problems finding blooms that were not damaged by the cold or the journey that some blooms have to make from other countries, therefore we have decided that in future the first week or two of the New Year our arrangements will consist of silk flowers only. Also at this time of year the temperature in

the church drops so low that occasionally the flowers have frozen.

The flower rota will be displayed on the notice board as usual but we ask that anyone who wishes to choose a date for a dedicated arrangement, to please give your

details and money to a member of the flower team prior to the day you have requested.

Please note that only one dedication each week can be accepted.

Many thanks

Anne Dellow

Flower Team:

Lorraine Bendon

Janet Brunnen

Anne Dellow

Ruth Joyce



COVENANT SERVICE – SUNDAY 11TH JANUARY 2026

This service is the most special service in The Methodist Church's year. This is celebrated on a Sunday at the beginning of January. It is a beautifully worded service with Holy Communion.

I have not been to a Covenant Service for an extremely long time and found it very meaningful.

Maggie Smith

Pleased you were with us Maggie – Ed.

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 8TH FEBRUARY

The Methodist Church in Britain has a history of commitment to challenging issues of racial justice. In 1978 racism was declared a sin by the Methodist Conference.

The Methodist Church has a long history of Black leadership, going back to the days of Wesley himself. We celebrate this and work to be anti-racist in all that we do.

We believe that the universe was created by a loving God who chose to become a human being in Jesus Christ, who has redeemed the world and sent the Holy Spirit to enable us to love one another with God's love. All human beings are equally children of God and loved by God. Since none is outside the love of God, none should be outside our love either. We believe that the diversity of the human race was

no mistake on God's part. God deliberately created variety within the human family and wants us to take as much delight in that variety as God does.

(Text taken from methodistchurch.org.uk)

**SATURDAY LUNCH
13th FEBRUARY 12.30PM FOR 1PM
THE DRIVE CHURCH PARLOUR**



On the menu this month is beef or vegetarian cottage pie. Price £5. A form will be at the back of the church for you to add your name and choice. Please join us for good food and good company.

Lorraine Bendon, Anne Dellow, Ruth Joyce



**GRANGE HILL METHODIST CHURCH
COMMUNITY CENTRE
BURROW ROAD, IG7 4HQ**

Invite you to a Warm Welcome Space
serving hot drinks, biscuits, snacks
and a warm welcome

Every Wednesday 10.00am – 12.00pm
<https://www.warmwelcome.uk/spaces>

CENTENARY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

By the time you read this article I anticipate that the demolition of the Scout Hut and Garage will have been



completed. Whilst the work is being undertaken by contractors working for the new site owners, we have a vested interest in getting what will be a slightly larger car park back in full operation.

Our architect has now submitted plans to London Borough of Redbridge for those development works requiring Planning Permission.

These include, refurbishment work on the car park, the proposed glass doors to the Eastern Avenue church entrance and the solar panels to the roof of the Hall.

2026 will be our Fundraising year to enable us to undertake the work in 2027 ready for our Centenary celebrations in 2028. As matters stand, we have £350,000 in our Development Fund against a target of £600,000. We have made an application for a substantial grant from the Barking Dagenham & Ilford Circuit Mission Investment Fund which, if successful, will significantly close the funding gap. We will then be making further applications to other Methodist and third party grant making trusts.

However, we also have to raise at least £50,000 from our own efforts. This will include a Gift & Pledge Sunday on 15 March followed by a Community Launch on Saturday 25 April with a cream tea followed by an entertainment. Please do give your full support to these events and put the dates in your diary.

During the rest of 2026 we plan to have a number of Fund Raising activities including a Plant Sale on 16 May and a Flower Festival over the Church Anniversary weekend of 4/5 July. In addition, we are planning an Autumn Fayre in October and a Big Sing Event in November.

All of the discussions and planning over the last three years are now coming together and I am confident that if the whole church family support the initiatives planned for 2026 we will complete the work in 2027.

Jeremy Foster

CENTENARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SAVE THE DATES!!



DATE	PREACHER/ LED BY	THEME
Sun 8 th Feb	Morning Worship Revd Jacqui Jones	Faith
Sun 15 th Feb	Morning Worship Andrew Taylor	Service
Sun 22 th Feb	Morning Worship Revd Jacqui Jones	Purpose
Sun 1 st Mar	Morning Worship TDY	Commitment
Sun 8 th Mar	Morning Worship Members of the Congregation	Sacrifice
Sun 15 th Mar Pledge and Gift Sunday	Revd Jacqui Jones & Revd Stephen Normanton	Gratitude
Sun 25 th April 3pm	Church and Community Launch event – strawberry cream tea and entertainment	
May 16 th May	Plant Sale	
Saturday/Sunday 4 th /5 th July	Church Anniversary and Flower Festival	
October (Date TBC)	Autumn Fayre	
November (Date TBC)	Big Sing	

SINGING THE FAITH – THE FOURTEENTH YEAR BE STILL, FOR IT’S BACK AT THE TOP...



We first used our Methodist hymnal *Singing the Faith* on Sunday 15th January 2012. Since then I have kept a note of the hymns and songs used (from now on, I'll just refer to them as "songs"). Here are the song stats for 2025.

Included in these figures are the songs we have been using in the Worship Song slot at the start of services, but not included are the 4 songs chosen by preachers that are not in *StF*, and any songs the choir has sung alone.

During 2025 we sang 205 different songs from *StF*, which is 18 more than were used in 2024, and is the most different songs we have used in all our time using *StF*. These were the most frequently used songs:

6 times	566	<i>Take my life, and let it be</i>
5 times	20	<i>Be still, for the presence of the Lord</i>
	545	<i>Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart</i>
4 times	24	<i>Come, now is the time to worship</i>
	66	<i>The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases</i>
	544	<i>As the deer pants for the water</i>
	553	<i>I am a new creation</i>
	645	<i>Will your anchor hold in the storms of life</i>
	706	<i>Longing for light (Christ be our light)</i>

A further 16 songs were chosen three times, 41 twice and the remaining 139 just once. Of the total 205 songs used, 12 were completely new to us. 566 *Take my life, and let it be* is top of the list for the first time. However, others that used to

be favourites have not been sung recently - 693 *Beauty for brokenness* was chosen 4 times in 2023, but has not been used since then, and 495 *Dear Lord and Father of mankind* which was chosen 6 times in 2017 has only been sung 4 times in all the years since, the last time being in 2022.

Taking the fourteen years we have been using *StF* overall, we have now used 539 of the 790 songs available (not including the Canticles and Psalms section), which works out at just over 68 percent – more than two thirds!

12 songs have been used at least once every year since 2012 (counting the COVID years 2020/2021 as one year). These songs include seasonal favourites such as 202 *Hark! the herald angels sing* and 212 *O come, all ye faithful*, but 298 *Christ the Lord is risen today* does not make this list as we didn't have an Easter Day service in either of the COVID years. 147 *The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended* is included in these 12 songs as we sing it every year at the Evening Prayer service in July.

The top two songs in the first fourteen years of *StF* overall have been there since the start, but the order has been reversed:

57 times	20	<i>Be still, for the presence of the Lord</i>
55 times	94	<i>To God be the glory, great things he has done</i>

Be still has not held the top slot since that first year in 2012, so it remains to be seen if it can maintain this position in 2026. Number three in the overall list is 503 *Love divine, all loves excelling*, but even that still has a long way to go to challenge the top two places!

Andrew Taylor



STUDENT SUNDAY 15TH FEBRUARY

The Methodist Church recognises The Universal Day of Prayer for Students which is coordinated by the World Student Christian Federation, and has been celebrated since 1898, making it one of the oldest ecumenical days of prayer. Student Sunday is a great opportunity to pray for Britain's student population.



(Text taken from methodistchurch.org.uk)

ASH WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY

On Ash Wednesday, the palm leaves and crosses saved from last year's Palm Sunday are burnt into grey ashes. They are then smeared in the shape of a cross onto the foreheads of Christian people.

It's a powerful symbol – an unexpected image. If you're walking down the street or coming out of a shop and you happen to pass someone who has been to a church service and is marked with this prominent lenten sign, you'll look twice. The cross makes a person stand out.

But not just the person. This sign, whether worn on the forehead or not, signals for all Western Christians the beginning of Lent. A period of focussed reflection follows, as it did for Jesus when he spent 40 days in the wilderness prior to three years of itinerant ministry.



(Text taken from methodistchurch.org.uk)

LOST FOR WORDS

Some readers may recall that last year I wrote about some of the churches that I attended many years ago, one of them being the chapel in Great Ormond Street Hospital. My introduction to the chapel was in the summer of 1951 when I was six years of age and awaiting an operation on my foot which had been burnt when I was two days old. My article ended with the words 'I doubt I will ever see the chapel again.' I had no reason to think otherwise but someone who had seen my article had an idea, the result of which enabled me to have an experience that was to have a great impact upon me in the months ahead.

That 'someone' was Lorraine. She asked me if I had a free day, there was a 'nod' to my recent birthday and not wishing to be too presumptuous about any plans she may have, I told her that mid-October was suitably free so we settled a date and arrange to meet at Wanstead Station. Having a shared interest in social history I did wonder if we were going back to my East End roots for a trip down memory lane and perhaps a visit to a pie and mash shop. In the meantime I looked forward to my mystery day out.

In October as we alighted the train at Holborn, Lorraine asked me if I had any idea why we were there. I told her that my only connection to Holborn was Great Ormond Street Hospital. She replied "That's where we're going!" I'm not usually lost for words but on this occasion I was truly speechless! Within a few minutes we arrived at the hospital and a volunteer took us to a door, as we entered the area, ahead of me I saw a prominent stone structure which appeared to be an entrance. I felt very strange and told Lorraine that I felt I had been here before. A lady introduced

herself to us, her name was Dorothy and she was the Lead Chaplain and Head of Spiritual Care for the hospital. Lorraine had made contact with Dorothy and told her about my article in the newsletter. By a strange coincidence the hospital was celebrating 150 years since the chapel was built and they had been looking for former patients who may wish to share their experience of Great Ormond Street Hospital. Dorothy replied to Lorraine with an invite for both of us to visit the chapel. I was overwhelmed with emotion as I realised that thanks to the incredible kindness of Lorraine and Dorothy, I was to see the chapel again after 74 years. We were also introduced to Kate who was the Roman Catholic Curate and Patience who was the Baptist Minister.

The Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Team are available for everyone at Great Ormond Street Hospital whatever faith, belief or worldview. Prayers for the hospital are said in St Christopher's Chapel every weekday at 10.30am.

Dorothy asked me if I would like to enter the archway. As I tentatively walked through, my eyes captured all that I had gazed upon as a six-year-old child. It was such an emotional moment and I could not hold back the tears.

The chapel was designed to 'astonish and delight' children whilst instilling in them 'religious awe and wonder'. Those words were written in 1875 and I have no doubt the beauty of the chapel continues to astonish children of today as much as it did those in Victorian times. The beauty of the chapel had not been diminished by my childhood memory, it was a blessing to behold. Dorothy told us that she would be offering prayers and said that parents find peace and solace in the chapel. A young couple came in and we were told that their three week old baby girl was having brain surgery that

morning. They joined us in prayer and I was able to share some time with them. It was a poignant moment as the three of us held each other and they spoke of their immense worry and sadness. Lorraine asked our church family to pray for the baby and we continue to do so as she receives ongoing care and treatment.

We spent several hours in the hospital and saw a stunning outdoor creation of a scene from the film of *Peter Pan* that has been designed and paid for with a donation from Disney. Great Ormond Street Hospital own the publishing rights to the story of *Peter Pan*, that they were bequeathed by the author, James Barrie.

Before we left, Dorothy introduced us to Ellie, the External Communications Officer, she was pleased to tell me that I was the oldest former patient she has met so far and asked if she could write about my time as a patient in the fifties. I agreed and my five minutes of fame was printed in the *Church Times* and *BBC Online News*.

I shall be ever thankful to Lorraine for an amazing birthday gift and to Dorothy for welcoming us to the chapel – a day I will always remember.

Anne Dellow



What a truly wonderful story Anne and such kindness shown by Lorraine and Dorothy – Ed.

(You can see a picture of Anne and a bit of her story on the GOSH website).

A BOOK REVIEW - THE GO BETWEEN

The Go Between was written by L P Hartley and published in 1953. It is his most widely known novel and there are many film and TV adaptations



The main character is Leo Colston who, in late middle age, looks back on the events of the summer of 1900 when, as a rather naïve 12 year old, he was invited by his boarding school friend, Marcus Maudsley, to spend the summer holidays at Brandham Hall in Norfolk. The Maudsleys are a wealthy family who rent the Hall from Viscount Trimingham who is engaged to their beautiful daughter Marian. The marriage will raise significantly the social standing of the Maudsley family.

Marian is friendly towards Leo who develops a schoolboy crush. She asks Leo to carry messages to and from Farmer Burgess with whom she is in a secret, but inevitably doomed, relationship. Leo is happy to act as the “go between” believing the letters relate to a business matter. When Leo realises their true purpose, he feels taken advantage of and sees Marian’s friendship as disingenuous. Out of a sense of duty to Viscount Trimingham he tries to end the liaison by refusing to deliver anymore letters. But Marian pressures him to continue.

The story culminates when Leo is traumatised by his discovery of the lovers in a compromising situation and by the subsequent tragedy that follows.

At one level the book is a simple “coming of age” story but it is also an account of Edwardian social hierarchy, deceit, manipulation, tragedy and trauma. It is well worth reading.

Jeremy Foster

METHODIST PRAYER HANDBOOK 2025/2026

From ancient times, communities have defined themselves by the stories they tell and the songs they sing about themselves.

In 2025/2026 we call upon the Methodist people to join us in a soul expedition deep into the heart of our calling, journeying afresh into the story of grace and the vocation that God has placed upon us.



- **A Shared Story** – exploring the richness of God’s love and grace to, with and for us in Christ, learning to live by hope for the future, and rediscovering our story by celebrating our roots.
- **A Shared Harmony** – responding by living in a way that draws others to bring their praise to Jesus and by longing and working for a world transformed.
- **A New Song** – sharing in a soul expedition as we journey with God’s Spirit to discover the new songs that God is inspiring within, among and around us.
- **A New Chapter** – rediscovering the gifts of testimony and storytelling as we commit ourselves to hear not only our own voices, but the voice of Christ amongst those who are marginalised, sharing stories of lament, hope, surprise, expectation and festal joy for opening a new chapter in our mission.

Order online at orders@norwichbooksandmusic.co.uk
or phone: 01603 785928



**ANNUAL JMA BEETLE DRIVE
AND TEA (and raffle)**

**SATURDAY 21ST MARCH 2026
THE DRIVE METHODIST CHURCH HALL**

2.30pm for 3pm start

**Join us for an afternoon of fellowship,
food and fun for all the family!**

**Don't worry if you've never played before -
all will be explained on the day!**

**Tickets available soon from Diane Foster
So put the date in your diary now
and tell all your families and friends**

Watch out - there's a Beetle about!





A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
THE DRIVE METHODIST CHURCH
CENTENARY DEVELOPMENT
MISSION PROJECT
CHURCH AND COMMUNITY LAUNCH
SATURDAY 25TH APRIL
FROM 3PM
STRAWBERRY CREAM TEA AND CAKES
WITH MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT
TICKETS AVAILABLE SOON

HELPLINES

SAMARITANS

Available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts. www.samaritans.org 116 123 (free to call from within the UK and Ireland), 24 hours Email: jo@samaritans.org

MIND

Mind offers advice, support and information to people experiencing a mental health difficulty and their family and friends. Mon to Fri 9am to 6pm (except bank holidays). www.mind.org.uk InfoLine: 0300 123 3393 to call, or text 86463 Email info@mind.org.uk

PAPYRUS UK

Papyrus is the national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide. They support young people under 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, as well as people concerned about someone else. Their HopelineUK service is open 9am - midnight every day of the year (including weekends and bank holidays). www.papyrusuk.org Helpline: 0800 068 4141 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

YOUNGMINDS

www.youngminds.org.uk Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri from 9.30am - 4pm, excluding bank holidays)

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY (CALM)

A helpline for people in the UK who are down or have hit a wall for any reason, who need to talk or find information and support. thecalmzone.net Helpline: 0800 58 58 58 thecalmzone.net/help/webchat/ 5pm—midnight, every day of the year.

BROOK YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICE

Information, support and signposting service for young people under 25 on sexual health. Local services available via text message offering free contraception, pregnancy testing, counselling. brook.org.uk

CHILDLINE

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc. 0800 1111

FORCED MARRIAGES

Enter Forced Marriages into search bar at top of site - Service provided by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to protect young people from forced marriages abroad. Service offers help to young people in these circumstances to help get them back to the UK. 020 7008 0151 gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage

NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION

0808 800 5000 email: help@nspcc.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk
For anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

FREEPHONE 24 HR NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

0808 2000 247 www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

Run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, this is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

NATIONAL LGBT DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

0800 999 5428 galop.org.uk/get-help/helplines/

Emotional, practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

Helpline providing support for families and friends of problem drinkers, whether the person is still drinking or not.

0800 0086 811 www.al-anonuk.org.uk

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

<https://capuk.org/> Free help getting out of debt, budgeting and making your money go further.

AGE UK ADVICE

0800 678 1602 www.ageuk.org.uk Information and advice for older people.

DIARY		
FEBRUARY		
Sun 1st	11.15am	Morning Service led by TDY
Tues 3 rd	7.45pm	Choir Practice Parlour
Sun 8th	11.15am	'Faith' led by Revd Jacqui Jones
Tues 10 th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Parlour
Sat 14 th	12.30pm for 1pm	Saturday Lunch Church Parlour (see page 19)
Sun 15th	11.15am	'Service' led by Andrew Taylor
Tues 17 th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Parlour
Wed 18th	7.30pm (TBC)	Ash Wednesday service at Beacontree Hth MC
Sun 22nd 1st Sunday in Lent	11.15am	'Purpose' led by Revd Jacqui Jones
Tues 24 th	7.45pm	Choir Practice Parlour
Thur 26 th	7.30pm (TBC)	Lent Bible Study via Zoom – details to follow
MARCH		
Sun 1st 2nd Sunday in Lent	11.15am	'Commitment' led by TDY
Tues 3 rd	7.45pm	Choir Practice Parlour
<i>Deadline for items for March Newsletter: Sunday 22nd February</i>		

GOD LOVES YOU



V₄

alue others above yourself
(Philippians 2:3)

A₁

bide in love, for God is love
(1 John 4:16)

L₁

et all that you do be done in love
(1 Corinthians 16:14)

E₁

ncourage one another and build each other up
(1 Thessalonians 5:11)

N₁

ever stop praying and giving thanks
(1 Thessalonians 5:17–18)

T₁

rust in the Lord with all your heart
(Proverbs 3:5)

I₁

n everything, show kindness and grace
(Colossians 3:12)

N₁

ourish your heart with God's Word
(Psalm 119:11)

E₁

mbrace forgiveness as Christ forgave you
(Ephesians 4:32)

S₁

hine your light so others see His love
(Matthew 5:16)

Services every Sunday at 11.15 am

Communion services as announced

Senior Church Stewards: Michelle Garner, Diane Foster
stewards@drive-methodist.church

Property Steward and Bookings: Jeremy Foster
property@drive-methodist.church
bookings@drive-methodist.church

Church Council Secretary: Theodora Garner
secretary@drive-methodist.church

Music@The Drive: Andrew Taylor
music@drive-methodist.church

Pastoral Secretary: Lorraine Bendon
pastoral@drive-methodist.church

The Drive Youth: Jo Wright
junior-church@drive-methodist.church

Flower Rota Secretary: Anne Dellow
flowers@drive-methodist.church

Safeguarding@The Drive: Lorraine Bendon
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JMA Secretary: Diane Foster
jma@drive-methodist.church

Newsletter Editor: Diane Foster
newsletter@drive-methodist.church

Pre School: Kay Whiddon
Pre-school@drive-methodist.church
Term time only: Mon to Fri 9.15am-12pm; 1pm-3pm