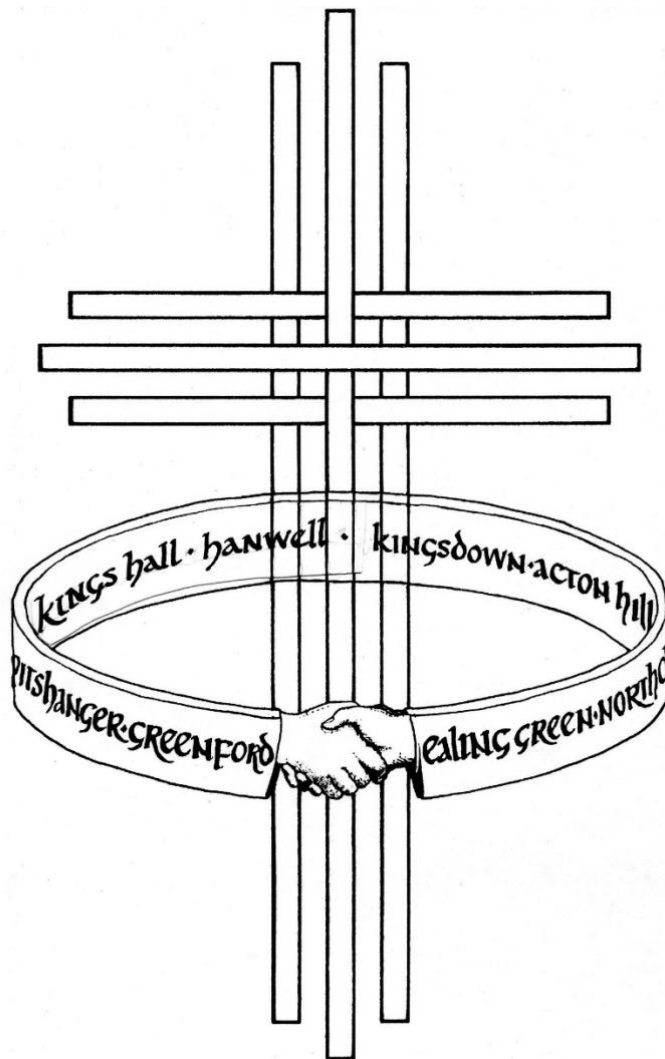


# In-touch

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No 101

March - May 2024



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The magazine for *all* the Ealing Trinity Circuit.

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**Circuit website: [www.ealingtrinity.org.uk](http://www.ealingtrinity.org.uk)**

*Front Cover designed by Marion Narain*

## From the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

What does it mean to live as the People of Christ in the Church? I suspect that if I ask this question in any church, as I have done in the past, there would be as many different answers as there are people present.

In its work on Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, the Methodist Church has said, "The Methodist Church believes that being Christian means:

- Celebrating God who made each person in God's own image
- Being disciples of Jesus who treated each person with dignity
- Rejoicing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to all people"

"This means becoming a church which:

- Is free of all forms of discrimination
- Celebrates the rich diversity of humanity
- Recognises that all people are made in the image of God
- Has structures and processes which allow everyone to participate fully
- Has a leadership which reflects the diversity of our membership
- Offers safe spaces for the general public and for members, to meet with a diversity of people, while still being honestly themselves
- Ensures that its leaders are trained to understand issues of diversity and exclusion
- Listens to, takes seriously, and acts upon any reports of discrimination or prejudice."

We all carry with us biases, prejudices and preconceived ideas. At recent online worship with people from a different denomination one of the lay people present was complaining that the clergy always got to read the readings and the lay people were left leading the prayers. I was struck by how my prejudice had led me to see things differently (I had been thinking how wonderful it was that the lay people were leading the prayers rather than the clergy). My experience had stopped me from being able to see things from her point of view. It's a small example and one that was quickly remedied by me commenting on my different experience and a discussion of our viewpoints. Not all our prejudices are so easily identified or remedied. Some are far more deeply seated and harder for us to identify. However, our biases have a tendency to stop us seeing and treating ourselves and others as God does.

This Lent as a circuit we are challenging ourselves to take the Methodist Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training. After Lent there will be opportunities to reflect together on what we have learned and to work out the implications for our life as a circuit as we live together as the People of God.

To introduce the training you will find a 'User Guide to the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity' towards the end of this edition of *In-touch*.

You can find the training at:

<https://mcb.theologyx.com/courses/>

and also at:

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

As we travel through Lent and beyond I am excited by this and wonder how God will use this opportunity to transform us, enliven us and make us aware in fresh ways of the immensity and richness of God's love.

May God continue to bless you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel".

## **Rev'd Rachel Bending**

As you will have heard the Rev'd Rachel Bending will be leaving the Circuit at the end of July to take up a post as Chair of the Southampton District of the Methodist Church. There will be opportunities to say goodbye to her including a Circuit Service and celebration on 21st July (details on the back page of this edition of *In-touch* and more to follow).

Our new superintendent, Rev Steve Day, will join us beginning work on 1st September. His welcome service will be on 8th September. Steve is currently superintendent of the Croydon Circuit.

## From the Circuit Meeting (1)

The most recent Circuit Meeting was held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at Greenford.

The meeting began by singing 'Be Still and Know that I am God' and sharing the prayer needs of our churches and communities.

As readers of *In-touch* will know the Circuit Invitations Committee has been through the stationing process to identify a new Superintendent Minister to replace Rev Rachel Bending from 1st September. Although not many ministers had indicated a willingness to take up a superintendent's position in London, happily Rev Stephen Day has agreed to join our Circuit. Stephen and his family spent some time visiting the Circuit and both he and the Circuit Stewards felt he would make a good 'match'. Stephen is currently Superintendent Minister in the Croydon Circuit and was previously stationed in Leeds.

At the previous Circuit Meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> September) churches had been asked to nominate someone to be a Circuit Steward. However, the only nomination that was brought forward was that of Karen Whitehouse from Northolt. Karen was accepted by the meeting as a Circuit Steward.

In this context, the Circuit will shortly need to appoint a new Circuit Treasurer to replace Stephen Sears. In addition, the Circuit lacks lay representatives to the London District Synod which generally meets once a year on a Saturday during April although there may at times be a second meeting in September.

The meeting heard that the scheme to redevelop King's Hall in conjunction with Pocket Living had been terminated. Unfortunately, following various changes and the fact that it had proved necessary from the planning perspective to retain the existing façade, the scheme was no longer viable from the Circuit's point of view and it was felt that there was no option but to terminate negotiations with Pocket Living. The next step is to undertake a market evaluation of the site to determine how to move forward.

Although Pitshanger church closed for worship in October, the building is still in use by various hirers and community groups who are managed by Sarah Hunter, the Church Administrator at Ealing Green. No decision has yet been reached as to the future of the building although it was noted that it is proving time-consuming to manage. In addition, hirers are concerned about the uncertainty while a final decision is awaited.

Stephen Sears presented the budget for the 2023/24 connexional year. This was accepted by the meeting. In Stephen's supporting papers, the meeting was told that the results for 2022/23 had been difficult with a deficit at year end of £136,000. However, with around £400,000 in the Circuit's bank accounts at year end it would be possible to continue supporting ongoing deficits.

The draft budget shows a projected deficit of just under £16,000 at the end of the 2023/24 connexional year. This is significantly lower than the previous year partly because staff costs are lower given that Deacon Theresa Simons-Sam has not been replaced and also because the Circuit has received a very generous donation of £75,000 from the estate of the late Vera Marsden. Some of this, however will be restricted to uses that Vera was particularly interested in.

Stephen estimated that the Circuit currently has a 'structural deficit' of about £40,000. He felt it would be possible to eliminate this in future years with improvements to income from the properties the Circuit lets and from assessments from churches. In that context, Stephen noted that this will require churches to increase their incomes from offertories and lettings to support higher assessments in the coming years.

Finally, the meeting approved an updated Circuit Safeguarding Policy. This can be downloaded from the 'Forms and Policies' page of the Circuit website – go to <https://www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/forms-and-policies> and scan down the page.

The date of the next meeting is 'to be advised'.

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## **From the Circuit Meeting (2)**

There was an Extraordinary Circuit Meeting held on Zoom on 31<sup>st</sup> January. The principal purpose of the meeting was to deal with specific issues relating to the King's Hall building.

Firstly, the meeting was asked to formally note that dealings with Pocket Living on the redevelopment of the King's Hall building had been terminated.

In order to assist in developing new proposals for the building the meeting appointed Wainwrights, a major company of surveyors, architects and project managers to conduct structural surveys of the building and concept design

work. Supplementing this, the meeting appointed Gez Pegram as a conservation accredited structural engineer for King's Hall.

Following problems with squatters last year, the meeting agreed that hoarding should be erected across the entire frontage of the King's Hall building and all ground floor and accessible windows boarded up. Ealing Council have shown interest in co-commissioning artwork for the hoarding given that it is likely to remain in place for some time.

The King's Hall Development Committee will seek grant funding for the on-going development work and will hold discussions with Ealing Council regarding the possibility of artwork for the hoarding.

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## **My Calling**

*Karen Whitehouse, Northolt*

I started going to church when I was 7 because I had joined Brownies and went to monthly church parades at Pitshanger Methodist Church. My Dad would drop me off and then return to pick me up. There was something about the music in church that took hold of me. By the time I was 10 I had joined guides and was allowed to travel to church parades by myself. I also got involved in helping out with the church craft fairs and coffee mornings.

When I was about 16 I began to go to church more frequently and sat with my friend's family, and took much more notice of the service. When I was 18 my maternal grandmother died and this got me questioning things. My friend had just started confirmation classes and somehow I ended up going along to church every week. I got confirmed into full membership of the Methodist Church. As a result of this my Mum then started coming to church and took membership herself and became Church Secretary. I stayed with Brownies and became a Brownie leader.

I went on and married Matt at the church, and our 3 children were baptized. Matt was baptized too. But despite all this I didn't feel anything spiritual or connected to the church.

In 2006 I moved churches and came here to Northolt. Suddenly I felt I was at home, I belonged and I was comfortable. I found that there was a music practice on Fridays and I decided to go along. The first song I learnt to sing was "King of Kings". The words really spoke to me - "in Royal robes I don't

deserve". That's when it hit me that Jesus loves me no matter what. I needed to love myself too.

The next hymn that stayed with me had the words "Here I am Lord, is it I Lord". I felt I was being called by God to spread His word via music and song. I then realized that I remember passages in the Bible if I can relate them to a hymn or a song. I joined the music practice when there were 4 of us going through the songs for Sunday on a Friday night. On Sundays we sat in the pews and this went on for a few months. We were getting more confident and suddenly a microphone was set up in front of me and another singer. It was scary as I never thought that my singing was good enough, especially if you asked my brothers or children!

After the first week we got a lot of feedback. We worked more as a group and Toby joined us as our drummer. We named ourselves 'Shalom'. We are always encouraged by the church and the ministers and we like a challenge to learn new songs.

I then felt being called by God to further my calling by enrolling on the Worship Leaders course at the end of 2022. This course trains you to be a worship leader, takes you through why we worship, and how services are put together, and helps you get a better understanding of God's Word.

When my Mum took ill in January 2023 I decided to put my Worship Leader studies on hold, even though my Mum was encouraging me to carry on. When Mum passed away at the end of September, I felt God calling me to serve and carry on with the course, to spread the word of God's unfailing love for all. This is my way of following Mum's belief in me as she always said I am at home in this Church.

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## **A Time and a Season**

*Gerald Barton, Editor*

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens" (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

On my final day with English Welsh and Scottish Railway in April 2004 I included this quote from Ecclesiastes in an e-mail I sent to a number of colleagues some of whom I knew needed to speak to me before my departure. It also seems appropriate now as my employment as Circuit Administrator is shortly due to draw to a close.



I started in the Circuit Office in November 2004 and, apart from the period from February 2006 – October 2007 when I was given ‘leave of absence’ while my wife Sue and I were away in Connecticut, I have been here ever since. By the time of my scheduled retirement at the end of March, I will have clocked up about 18½ years’ service as Circuit Administrator. As Ecclesiastes says however, the time has come when I feel I should step down, step back and hand the baton over to somebody new who can bring the kind of freshness to the role that I once had but which has gradually slipped away over the passing years.

Back in 2004 I was a little surprised when Rev Roger Dunlop offered me the job as my previous experience meant I was really rather over-qualified for it. However, that didn’t bother me as I was happy as a recent, if somewhat young, retiree to take on a much simpler role than I’d had in my railway career. In fact, I suspected Roger was perhaps glad to be able to take on someone who might be able to sort out what the job should be as during the job interview he didn’t seem to be very sure himself (I didn’t find my predecessor very helpful on that score either, as it happened).

Back in the 1980’s one of my previous managers expressed the view that the kind of work people do in their jobs is as much a function of their capabilities as of their job description. So it has been with me as Circuit Administrator. I have found myself doing things I would not have dreamt of, such as my close involvement with the sale of Moullin House and the church at Perivale along with setting up the Circuit website (I’m no ‘tech’ person, by the way) amongst others. At the centre of it all however, is making sure the Quarterly Preaching Plan gets done. It’s not a complicated or difficult job to get the information together so that the superintendent can draw up the plan. Without it however, worship in the Circuit would grind to a halt.

Back in 2004, there were 6 ministers and about 17 active local preachers in the Circuit serving 11 congregations. Now we have just 3 ministers and a similar number of regularly active local preachers covering 7 congregations. Not surprisingly it has become increasingly difficult to programme ministers and preachers to cover our Sunday services leading to regular, and more frequent ‘local arrangements’. Still, the regular round of drawing up the plan continues but it’s clear that the system is creaking and becoming ever more difficult to sustain. At the same time recorded membership has fallen across the whole Circuit from 722 in 2004 when I started down to 350 in 2023 – a decline of over half. At some point in the not too far distant future there will have to be some radical thinking across the Circuit about the way it should go. I know that all sounds rather pessimistic but it has formed the backdrop to my time here.

When I started in the Circuit Office I pinned this cartoon by the late Hector Breeze on the notice board in the office and have kept it there ever since.



*"Oh, we have no end of trouble over people's preconceived ideas about the life hereafter."*

This is God as 'Great Heavenly Administrator'. I put it on the wall as a bit of a joke but from time to time I have pointed it out to superintendent ministers as a tongue-in-cheek description of what their job often *really* seems to be all about. People are called to the ministry for religious reasons – after all, what other basis is there for a genuine call to the ministry? Little do they know! What they very often actually find themselves having to devote a lot of time to is administration in one form or another. Most people 'in the pews' aren't aware of all the things that ministers have to do behind the scenes to keep things running or moving forward. It's something we should be more aware of, however.

I have enjoyed my time in the Circuit Office but, as with all things, there comes a time when you have to let go. This, incidentally includes letting go of being editor of In-touch. When I first took on the editorship in Rev Roger Dunlop's day it was on a voluntary basis, not as part of the job. That was limited to printing and distributing it each quarter. However, Rev Jen Smith decided to make it part of the job so in retiring I also have to relinquish being editor of In-touch. I daresay I may continue to contribute to it in future but it remains to be seen how it develops from here on. In the meantime, I shall look forward to enjoying a fully retired life.

# **I Love Watching the Bats!**

*Ray Garnett, Worship Leader, Hanwell Methodist Church*

Many of you, especially those from Hanwell Methodist, will know that I enjoy a spot of gardening. At times it can be hard work and to enjoy it you have to reap the benefits – usually in terms of watching seeds germinate, watching vegetables grow, watching flowers produce their colours and scents, or watching wildlife that visits. But whatever the benefits are, gardeners have to step back, to leave the work and to sit back and enjoy the outcome. To find a favourite place in the garden where you can sit, perhaps on a bench or in a deck chair to read a book, read a poem, or just listen to the garden, is to reap what it offers.

Often during the day as you work the soil, you hear the sound of nearby trains, aircraft overhead, neighbours' voices over the fence, or builders' tools. But at other times, often early evenings, the sounds change, the song thrushes start to sing, the pigeons start to coo and at mating times animals are on the lookout for partners and start to display. Later you will see them foraging for nesting materials as they build their homes and then for food to feed their offspring.

One of my best times to switch off is early evenings at dusk, when the light starts to fade and different activities begin. The nocturnal animals start to appear. In particular, just prior to the darkness I love sitting on my homemade garden bench looking up to the sky to see the flight and silhouette of moths, birds or bats that suddenly appear. I love watching the bats. They're fast and don't fly in straight lines.

I will often sit there until the light has gone. It can be a quiet time to sit and ponder, and I often ponder about my Christian life and my thoughts on Jesus. In our eagerness to follow Jesus, we can get totally involved in the work going on with people's needs and the life of the Church. Some of us will even consider more training and networking to help with our Christian work. But if we are constantly busy, constantly running from one good thing to another, we can lose out. Our own lives can then become hard and stressful and we lose the joy and peace that God intends us to have.

Sometimes we need to stop and look after ourselves. We need regular periods of rest and relaxation. A little time to spend with God, a time to pray, a time to listen, a time to unwind and a time to read our Bible. And when we down our tools and just sit in the garden and reflect, smelling the perfume of the flowers, listening to the sounds around us and watching the wildlife passing by, then we will be calmer, more centred on God and happier with

our lives. As we sit on our bench, look up to the sky and say a prayer. That time with God will help us to think of the people we are serving. We will have more patience and will be filled with the goodness and wisdom of God. You can't help others if you don't look after yourself. For a short time put the fork and spade away, sit down, look at the freedom of the bats and reflect on all that God has given us.

I love watching the bats!

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## Much More Than They Seem

*Gerald Barton, Editor*

During a recent visit to the National Portrait Gallery I came across a couple of portraits which were not what they at first seemed. At first glance both could be taken for fine 'society ladies' were it not for the fact that they were in a room full of portraits of men who were engineers, scientists, naturalists and explorers etc. Such portraits generally feature some detail that indicates what the sitter was famous for, but not in the portraits of these two women.

The first is of **Ada Lovelace** (1815 – 52) painted by Margaret Sarah Carpenter in 1836.

Ada Lovelace was the daughter of Lord Byron and his wife, Annabella Milbanke. Raised by her mother, who later became a renowned educationalist, Ada became famous in mathematics at a time when few women received any extended education. She is widely regarded as the first computer programmer and the first person to grasp the potential for computers outside of mathematics.

Charles Babbage, known as the 'father of computers' became her friend and mentor. Together they became pioneers of computing with the idea of a mechanical calculator which they called the 'Analytical Engine'.



Ada was taught mathematics from an early age by her mother who, having accused her father, Lord Byron of insanity, wanted to avoid any possibility of Ada going the same way. This laid the basis for a life-long interest which came to dominate much of Ada's adult life. She believed that intuition and imagination were critical to effectively applying mathematical and scientific concepts and valued metaphysics as much as mathematics, viewing both as tools for exploring "the unseen worlds around us". She also often questioned basic assumptions by bringing poetic imagination and science. Whilst studying differential calculus, she wrote to the mathematician Augustus De Morgan:

*"I may remark that the curious transformations many formulae can undergo, the unsuspected and to a beginner apparently impossible identity of forms exceedingly dissimilar at first sight, is I think one of the chief difficulties in the early part of mathematical studies. I am often reminded of certain sprites and fairies one reads of, who are at one's elbows in one shape now, and the next minute in a form most dissimilar."*

Whilst chiefly remembered for her pioneering work on computing with Charles Babbage, there were other, somewhat wayward aspects to her character, for example a love of gambling. In 1851 she attempted to develop a mathematical model for placing large bets. Alas, this was a disastrous failure leaving her thousands of pounds in debt. Fortunately, her work on computing has proved a more enduring legacy.

The second portrait that caught my eye amongst those of all the men was of **Mary English** (1789 – 1846) painted by William Armfield Hobday.

Mary was born in 1789 and had seemingly humble beginnings being the daughter of a 'dockworker' in Faversham. Since she is also described as being literate from an early age, charismatic and 'well-connected' in British society, perhaps the description of her father as a 'dockworker' is a bit misleading. Maybe he was more of a dock manager or even owner and rather further up the social scale than a





docker physically loading and unloading ships. Whatever the truth of the matter, her first marriage must have seen her quite well placed in society as she was able to develop 'friendly relations with financiers and statesmen'.

These relations came to fore on her second marriage, to General James Towers English in early 1819. Shortly after the wedding, the couple sailed to what is now Venezuela where General English served under Simón Bolívar in the Spanish American Wars of Independence until his death from illness in September of that year. At that point Mary went to work for the Colombian financial firm of Herring and Richardson eventually becoming a leading financial figure in the British community in Colombia, a staunch supporter and political aide of Bolivar, as well as being at the centre of Bogotá's thriving social scene.

Known as the 'Belle of Bogotá' Mary received many offers of marriage from, among others the British plenipotentiary in Colombia, Patrick Campbell and, it was rumoured, Bolívar himself. Eventually, however she married a landowner, William Greenup at the start of 1827. They bought a sizeable area of land in San José de Cúcuta with the intention of growing cocoa beans for export to Europe. Subsequently, Mary withdrew from the social scene as her attention was taken up with managing the estate particularly as her husband spent the years from 1832 to 1838 in England. As she wrote "I am now quite alone... To me this is indifferent as I am not fearful."

Mary died in 1846. Despite her closeness to Bolívar she was never granted citizenship by a South American government as, being a woman she could not own land in her own right and therefore did not meet their legal requirements.

Both Ada Lovelace and Mary English lived lives that were extraordinary for their times, something that is not immediately obvious from the way they are presented in their portraits. It would be easy to assume that they were just two among many similar society ladies of the time. Probe a little and a much deeper and more colourful picture emerges of two exceptional women. Our first impressions of people often count for a lot but we should always be aware that they may be more, much more than they immediately seem.

# Not the Ten Commandments

*Gerald Barton, Editor*

I came across the following “Ten Commandments for Reducing Stress” recently in a little booklet with the title ‘Healthy Piano Technique’ by the British – Romanian pianist and teacher Carola Grindea (1914 – 2009) whom I met on a couple of occasions in the early 2000’s. Whilst they were almost certainly included with the aim of persuading overly-diligent piano students to take things a bit more calmly, they clearly have a more general application. You might think, though that they don’t always quite chime with the way we generally look at things, especially no 3.

## The Ten Commandments for Reducing Stress

- i. Thou shalt NOT be perfect, or even try to be
- ii. Thou shalt NOT try to be all things to all people
- iii. Thou shalt leave things undone that ought to be done
- iv. Thou shalt NOT spread thyself too thin
- v. Thou shalt learn to say “NO”
- vi. Thou shalt schedule time for thyself and thy supportive network
- vii. Thou shalt switch off and do nothing regularly
- viii. Thou shalt be boring, untidy, inelegant and unattractive at times
- ix. Thou shalt NOT even feel guilty
- x. Especially, thou shalt NOT be **thine own worst enemy, but thy best friend**

Another musical ‘maxim’ that has stuck in my mind was made by the Austrian – American pianist, composer and teacher Artur Schnabel (1882 – 1952). In a series of lectures published in book form under the title ‘My Life and Music’ he stated that his piano technique was based on achieving:

**‘Maximum effect with minimum effort’.**

It has often struck me how in many situations we seem to do the opposite.....

# Prayers for Israel-Palestine and Ukraine

## A Prayer from the President and Vice-President of Conference

God of peace and compassion,  
We pray for all impacted by the escalation in conflict in Israel-Palestine  
For all who are mourning  
For all who are fearful, today, and for what may lie ahead  
For all traumatised and re-traumatised by what they have experienced.  
Enable us to stand in solidarity with people of peace  
May your Spirit bring peace and healing to your troubled world  
**Amen**

## A Prayer from the Methodist Peace Fellowship

Oh Jerusalem, how we long for all peoples to be gathered up under the wings of peace and yet your heart is shattered and your sides pierced by swords of grief.  
Beloved city, may mercy and justice walk in your streets and markets, show us how to look into each other's eyes with love and equity so that all humanity might die to violence and live to trust our neighbours once again.  
**Amen**

## A Prayer for Ukraine

Holy and Gracious God  
We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia; for their countries and their leaders.  
We pray for all those who are afraid; that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear.  
We pray for all those who have the power over life and death; that they will choose for all people life, and life in all its fullness.  
We pray for those who choose war; that they will remember that you direct your people to turn our swords into ploughshares and seek for peace.  
We pray for leaders on the world stage; that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ.  
Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.  
And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.  
Lord have mercy.  
**Amen**

*Prayers downloaded from the Methodist Church website*



## **The Wednesday Club**

### **A hidden treasure in the heart of Marylebone**

A few minutes' walk from Oxford Street in London, Hinde Street Methodist Church offers meals to people in need. The Club, as it is known, is open twice a week on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Wednesdays, hot food is cooked on the premises, while on Thursdays homemade sandwiches or those donated by local cafés are shared.

At 3.00pm, people have already arrived and are waiting for the volunteers to serve the food. Most of the clients are regulars and they know each other. Michelangelo has been coming to the Wednesday Club for the past six years. "It's good food and great people. We are still in touch with Belinda, the previous vicar, who is now in Scarborough. Sometimes we even have a video call with her from here," says Michelangelo as, with a friendly smile, he quickly picks up his food before going to sit in the room to carry on his conversation.

Michelangelo is one of many who have enjoyed the food, companionship and warmth of the Wednesday club since it moved to Hinde Street Methodist Church in 1986. "We provide food, small items of clothing, toiletries and sleeping bags. Many people who come here are homeless, some of them do have places to live, but they still come perhaps because they are in unsuitable accommodation, in places they don't like or they need some company. Getting out of the cold and having a meal helps save money. Most of the people who come are regulars," says Alan, who has been a member of the church for decades and has been a volunteer at The Club for over 10 years.

The Club runs independently from Hinde Street Methodist Church. It used to depend financially on the church but the Club is now supported by the charitable wing of a financial company. They currently have fifteen volunteers, half of them are from the church and the other half are good Samaritans who have come to London from around the world and work to help the church's outreach including Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela. Caroline, from the US, has been volunteering for the past five years, "I found this place randomly and wanted to come back and see if I could help out."

Bantering with the attendees, the Wednesday Club's volunteers provide food, warmth and an ear to anyone who wishes to have a chat, but the volunteers don't pry. "The clients are a nice bunch, very friendly, but we don't go into people's backgrounds and ask them uncomfortable questions. Some of them are happy to talk a lot, some don't, and both are fine," adds Alan.

Most of the attendees are British and the average age is about 60 years old. The number of attendees remains constant during the year.

“We could expect the numbers to go up because of the increase in the number of people sleeping rough. But they don’t for us which might be due to the fact that we don’t really advertise our service, it’s more a word of mouth,” explains Alan. A drastic increase in attendees would be a struggle as the room used for the club can have no more than 50 people at a time and the volunteers could be overwhelmed.

There was one young man who was working as a musician and security guard for a church at night but was living on the streets during the day. Despite lacking the funds to afford his accommodation, he invested his money in a camera to make a film that was previewed in the West End. Now, he is pursuing a degree in film-making, thanks to his determination and talent and the support of the West London Mission.

In his time of need, he could count on Hinde Street Methodist Church's Wednesday Club where he received meals and listening ears from volunteers and other attendees. “It’s fantastic to hear stories like that. I can’t say that we help, but he used to come here every week. So we helped in that sense, just by providing him somewhere to go. That’s what we’re doing and will keep on doing,” concludes Alan.

*Downloaded from the Methodist Church website*

## **Ealing Animals Fair**

Hanwell Methodist Church, Church Rd, Hanwell, London W7 1DJ  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024, 10.30 – 16.00

Lots of stalls

Live music

Admission free!

Great guest speakers including:

Duncan McNair – *Save the Asian Elephants*

Cat Talbot – *Monkey World (Dorset)*

Michelle Clark – *Dogs on the Streets*

Eric Bowles with Sam Mark – *Animal Law Foundation*

Rob Read – *Captain Paul Watson Foundation*

[www.ealinganimalsfair.london](http://www.ealinganimalsfair.london)

*There are no animals for sale at the fair*

## **Circuit End of Year Service**

including

### **Circuit Awards and Farewell to Rev'd Rachel Bending**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 4.30pm at Greenford Methodist Church

We start with the Circuit Service and Circuit Awards  
and will follow with a meal and a Barn Dance

## **Forthcoming Events around the Circuit**

[as notified to, or discovered by, the Editor]

### **March**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sat 10.30am **Ealing Animals Fair at Hanwell**  
4.00pm *Stalls – guest speakers – live music – admission free*  
*www.ealinganimalsfair.london*

3<sup>rd</sup> Sun 4.00pm **Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill**  
*Alice Jones, cello, Tara Clifford, piano with Dana Morgan, flute*  
*Adults £6.00, Concessions £5.00; Children £2.00 (cash only)*

9<sup>th</sup> Sat 10.00am **Local Preachers & Worship Leaders Retreat**  
3.30pm *Venue tba*

### **April**

7<sup>th</sup> Sun 4.00pm **Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill**  
*Joanna Kacperek, piano*

### **May**

5<sup>th</sup> Sun 4.00pm **Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill**  
*Stavroula Thoma, piano*

Articles for '**In-touch**' **Issue No 102 (April - June)** should be sent by e-mail  
headed '**In-touch**' to the Editor or as hard copy to the Circuit Office.

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