

THE CHELMSFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT Newsletter

Issue 39: Nov & Dec 2025



Dear friends in Christ across our Circuit,

This Christmas, as we gather around manger scenes and candlelight, we are reminded that you are a gift made with love. In a world weary from wars, climate anxieties, cost-of-living struggles, and digital distraction, the message of Christmas calls us to rediscover the divine gift of life, love, and hope born in Christ.

As I ponder this year's theme, "Gifted" You Are a Gift Made with Love, three aspects of God's gift come to my mind God's gift among us, God's gift within us, and God's gift through us.



You are a gift. Made with love.

1. **God's Gift Among Us (God's presence)** In a world obsessed with online presence, God offers something deeper, divine presence. We can be connected to thousands and yet feel unseen. At Christmas, God logs in to humanity not through a post or a platform, but through a person, Jesus. The manger becomes the world's first message of love that doesn't fade after 24 hours. Wherever you are, God is with you, present not on a screen but in spirit, community, and care "In the Word made flesh, God dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The miracle of Christmas is not distant glory, but divine nearness. In Jesus, God steps into our human story, into cold stables, crowded streets, and anxious hearts. I am aware many among us face, loneliness or uncertainty this winter, we are reminded that God is with us: Emmanuel in every act of care, Emmanuel in every shared meal, Emmanuel in every prayer whispered in the dark or daylight.

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2. God's Gift Within Us (God's Peace) Our timelines are filled with conflict, comparison, and constant noise. Yet the angels still sing: "Peace on earth." Christ offers inner stillness that no app can provide a peace that restores our balance when the world feels out of sync. This Christmas, pause the endless notifications and listen for God's gentle whisper of peace within. In a world fractured by conflict, division, and economic strain, Christ's birth proclaims peace that surpasses understanding. True peace is not escape from hardship but grace within it. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be peacemakers, offering kindness in tension, patience in difference, and light where fear takes root.

3. God's Gift Through Us (God's Purpose) Each of us is uniquely gifted to reflect God's love. Whether through worship, hospitality, advocacy, or care for creation, the Spirit empowers us to share the gift we have received. This Christmas, let our churches be living mangers, places where Christ's love takes flesh again. As we live in a culture of creating, sharing, and influencing but real purpose isn't measured in followers. It's found in faithfulness. You are gifted by God to make a difference through compassion, justice, and care for creation. Let your life be a living message that goes viral with grace and love. May the Christ who came as the greatest Gift bless you this Christmas with His Presence, Peace, and Purpose and remind you: you are God's gift, made with love. Let me take this opportunity, on behalf of the Circuit Staff Team, to wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and a blessed New Year. May the light of Christ guide your path, fill your homes with joy, and strengthen our shared witness in the year ahead.

With every blessing,

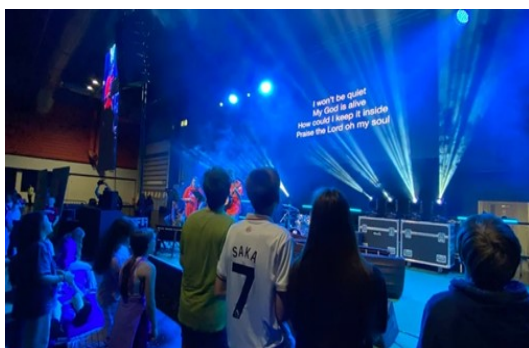
Rev. Asif Karam

Superintendent Minister, Chelmsford Methodist Circuit

3 Generate 2025, at the NEC in Birmingham



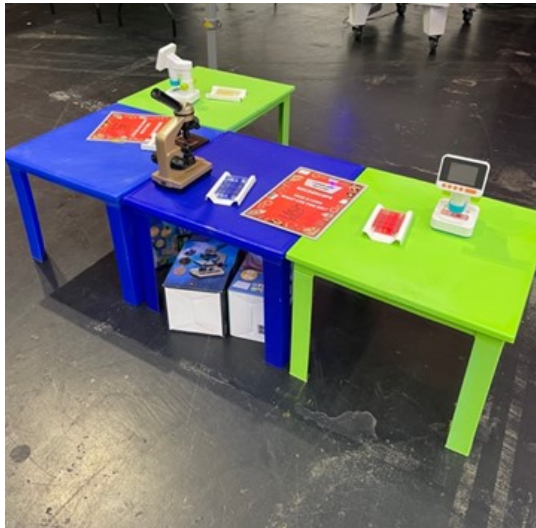
On the weekend 3rd-5th October I had an amazing experience being part of the delivery team at 3 Generate 2025, at the NEC in Birmingham. This is the annual gathering for children and young people in the Methodist Church and groups travel from across the country to share together a fabulous weekend worshipping and exploring their faith together. The theme this year was “**The journey of a lifetime**” and it was incredible seeing over 1500 young people singing their hearts out in praise of God.



I was invited to deliver some activities for the 4-7 age group. The younger children come for the day on Saturday and take part in activities ranging from a climbing wall to role play, arts and crafts, a planetarium and a silent disco. This year, the question we were exploring together was “I wonder what God is like?” and I was asked to bring some science-based activities to help children find out what God is like in creation. We covered a whole variety of activities from microscopes looking at the tiny, to making pictures of star constellations from the night sky. The children also had the chance to do some real science experiments looking at colours in creation using simple chromatography and pH testing.



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It was a real privilege to serve God in this way, using my science gifts to explore the different ways that we can all find God when exploring the world around us. I also did my demonstration of lots of different bubbles, thinking about how God might be like a bubble... we even had giant bubbles which the children were able to stand inside and be surrounded by!



My hope is that for 3 Generate 2026 the circuit will be able to take a group of our children to enjoy this incredible experience and to see that the Methodist Church is very much alive and has a future full of hope.

Rev Dr Jennifer Walters

All Methodist Churches are encouraged to work towards being fully inclusive.

The training module that the church uses for this is EDI
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVE



Passionate about your church?

Would you like to be part of a small team to meet occasionally (on zoom) with our Circuit EDI officer for support and to discuss ideas and ways on how we can work towards being **fully Inclusive?**

If you are interested let your steward know or contact Val Carter, Circuit EDI Officer.

val_carter08@hotmail.com



Forty Years a Local Preacher.

In July 1982, I found myself having a big tussle with God. I was a mum of four young children who was shy, withdrawn, lacking in confidence etc. when I felt God was calling me to be Methodist Local Preacher – but let me go back to May 1982, when it all started.

I had gone to the London MAYC Celebration Weekend as an extra adult, with the Youth Group of Rayne Road Methodist Church and during that weekend I felt God speaking to me powerfully on a couple of occasions.

The first one was during the concert on the Saturday evening: I think this was held in the Royal Albert Hall. Several churches and circuits performed items during the evening show and one particular item spoke to me: it was a drama about a Chinese Mandarin, his garden and a Bamboo Tree.

The Chinese Mandarin had a lovely garden with beautiful flowers on one side of it, a stream ran through this garden but on the other side it was barren and desolate and the flowers didn't grow. The Mandarin walked through his garden every day, tending the flowers and looking at the Bamboo Tree. One day he asked the Bamboo tree for his help: would the tree let him have its leaves? The tree said 'yes', so the Mandarin cut off the leaves. I don't remember what he wanted the leaves for, but obviously they were useful for him.

Next time the Mandarin was walking by the Bamboo tree, he asked for its branches – the tree thought for a bit then said 'yes', and so the Mandarin cut down the branches.

Then when the Mandarin went by next time, he asked the tree for its trunk and its heart. This made the Bamboo sad because if he gave the Mandarin his trunk and his heart, he'd have nothing left.

Eventually it agreed and the Mandarin cut the Bamboo right down and then he cut out the centre, cutting out all the little bits that filled the trunk and he made it into a tube or a channel. The Mandarin then took this new tube or channel and put it in the stream to redirect some of the water flow into the barren, desolate part of the garden.

As the water flowed, new plants and flowers began to grow until that side of the garden was as beautiful as the other side.

As I said, this spoke powerfully to me and I felt that God was wanting to use me like the Mandarin used the Bamboo Tree.

Between May and July, nothing much happened until the Youth Group were to take the evening service on July 9th 1982 and they wanted me to do the talk based on my experiences at the MAYC Weekend with them, and so I gave the talk, relaying the story of the Mandarin and the Bamboo Tree as part of it.

I was very nervous as I climbed into the pulpit ready to read what I had written, when I felt this warmth and heat radiating from the cross on the wall behind me, this warmth and heat enveloped me and it felt right to be there in the pulpit giving the message. But this was when the tussle with God began: as I left the church that night, two people came up to me and said that I should be a Local Preacher. 'Oh no,' I said, 'I couldn't do that!'

Then the following week, some leaflets on 'Becoming a Local Preacher' appeared on the table in the Vestibule and someone said that I should take one. 'No thank you,' I said, 'I couldn't do that.'

Now, I used to do the cleaning at the church at that time and those leaflets were still there when I went to clean so I eventually looked at one. I still didn't think I could do it and my arguments with God ran something like this: 'How can I talk to a church full of people when I can't even talk to one person?' and 'I'm not educated enough, I only have one 'O' Level in English Language as I failed everything else,' and 'I haven't got time,' and 'I won't know what to say,' and 'I don't know enough about the Bible,' and 'my husband will never agree.'

But as the thoughts and the nudging wouldn't go away, I eventually asked to speak with Chris Morley, who was our Minister at the time. Well to cut a long story short, Chris encouraged me and I was put forward to the Circuit for a Note to Preach. I was appointed Brian Llewellyn as my mentor and I began to explore my call to preach.

I began by just reading the lesson. Then I led the prayers. Next, I think I led the service while Brian preached, then I preached while Brian led the service, until finally I took the whole service. I was assessed and passed on to being On Trial when my training began.

I did the Continuous Assessment Course and I trained under Leonard Windsor along with Mike Shelbourn and Dave Drewett. I remember we had many lovely discussions as we grappled with the course and with the scriptures.

And so now we come to 40 Years later and I was presented with a certificate for 40 Years Service as a Methodist Local Preacher, on Sunday 31st August 2025.

It has been an enormous privilege to serve God in this way and in all the other ways He has used me over the years. He is truly an amazing God who changes people and their lives as soon as they say 'Yes' to His calling and I can certainly testify to that.

I have to say that the nerves are still there – but I know God is with me.

I still grapple with what to say – but the Spirit always gives me the message.

I still feel that I can't do it – but I know that 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' Phillipians 4:13

God bless you all,

Sally Chapman



Worship Leaders and Preachers Away Day: Gathered Together: Refreshing Ourselves and our Worship.

On Saturday 25th October a group of Worship Leaders and Preachers came together at the beautiful venue of Mulberry House for a time of refreshing and sharing.

We looked at what groups make up “The whole people of God” with a particular focus on ways to make worship accessible. We identified that true intergenerational worship was about the engagement of all ages present. Every generation has gifts to offer. Inclusion is participation, not just presence and Creativity open doors for deeper engagement. We wondered what the barriers are to inclusive, intergenerational worship and realized there are many issues – feeling comfortable/safe with what we already do; only one generation in the congregation; technology and people to operate it; longer preparation time; more collaboration means more planning time; do we really know what churches want?

We looked at practical approaches and resources for planning a segment of a worship service, practicing working in a group to plan worship.

After lunch we began with a time of relaxation and a meditation on Hebrews 10:19-25.

This was followed by some time reflecting on the realities of the churches we attend – who attends, what traditions exist.

Finally, we worked in pairs to prepare an outline for a service for a specific church featuring “The Lost Sheep” as a theme.

Of course, we began and ended with worship together. Singing “Let us build a house where love can dwell” and “The Lord will bless someone today”, we were blessed by children and thanked God for the gifts of the day.

Many thanks to all who gave up a Saturday to share time, talents, ideas and wisdom together. Special thanks to Rev Jennifer for her contributions to the day and Rev Asif for restarting the idea of regular retreats/time together. Let’s hope we can do it again!

Val Carter

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Hatfield Peverel Methodist Church (HPMC)

is recruiting a

Community Outreach Worker

We have an exciting opportunity for someone with a vibrant Christian faith to make a real difference to the lives of those in Hatfield Peverel, Essex.

Are you excited by the possibility of helping to build bridges between our church and our neighbours, and extending God's love in practical, meaningful ways?

Are you a good team worker with excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work alongside our Minister and dedicated volunteers to organise and support activities, events, workshops and groups in the local community?

Your Christian faith and deep commitment to serving others will serve you well, as will some experience working within community groups or relevant fields. Experience in social media and networking will ensure the Church's mission and message are communicated effectively.

Salary: £16,000 per annum for 25 hours per week (job share considered)

Fixed term contract for 12 months initially (extension considered after review)

Applications by midnight 14th November 2025 (we may close applications earlier if sufficient applications have been received)

Interviews: Monday 24th November 2025

We are looking forward to hearing from you – the application pack with additional information can be obtained from chelmsford.circuit@gmail.com

A Christian faith is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the role, under the Equality Act 2010


The Methodist Church

Hatfield Peverel October 25

The anticipation is building for our 150th Church Anniversary, and the question has been asked (quite rightly): “What were you doing when you celebrated 200 hundred years of Methodism in Hatfield Peverel in 2018?”

Well, we were celebrating the fact that a group of people got themselves together as a Methodist class, and formally assembled to pray and worship. Only 56 years later, they been given some land in Hatfield Peverel Main Street, put in footings for a big chapel and laid their foundation stone. In 1875 the building was active as a place of worship, and so here we are in 2025, now returned to carrying out acts of worship in a community building.

It's interesting to speculate what the reaction was from the local community when this very large raw red brick towered building started to dominate the skyline of the western end of the village. One of the suggestions for a Millennium project for our church, was to floodlight the tower; or have an illuminated cross erected to give comfort to all those stuck in the A 12 traffic queue wanting to get to Witham or Colchester. Sadly, there was no funding available, which mirrors the position recently taken up by the National Highways, now having spent all the budget down at Boreham interchange, there is no funding available for any improvement further up the road.

Returning to the whole brick theme, I often wondered if the railway network was used to bring in building materials for the building of the church: however, there was in 1874 and 1879 a brick and tile works close by at Hatfield Wick, and another behind the cottages at the other end of the village.

Just imagine the joy of those Methodists 150 years ago who had worked and prayed for the church door to open for 56 years (*Matthew C7 v8*) and then it finally happened.

JRC 8.10.25

Picture of a soft red brick made in Hatfield Peverel in the same era as the church construction.

Hugh Marriage Hatfield Peverel trade directory 1899-1922



Safeguarding update

"Safety starts with openness. Talk about it. Know your role. Spot the risks. Together, we can make church a place where abuse has nowhere to hide."



God Welcomes All is a four-session study guide containing new short films with activities and questions for discussion and reflection.

The study guide is based on the Methodist Church's report on the Theology of Safeguarding 2021 and is accompanied by an 8-page facilitator's guide, a 6-page reader's guide, and a series of short films -

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/the-theology-of-safeguarding/>

The new study guide encourages all members of the Methodist Church to look at our Christian calling that offers a welcome to all, whilst ensuring that our worship and wider church life is safe for everyone.

Esther Burton
Circuit Safeguarding officer

esther.burton@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk

Have you got a question?

Or something you are not clear about?

Email it to the address to the left!

Question and answer posts coming soon!



Question of the week

What is cuckooing, what signs **might** you notice, who might be more at risk, and what tactics do criminals use?

Answer

Cuckooing refers to criminals taking over someone's home, usually that of a vulnerable person, and using it for illegal activities such as drug dealing, storing weapons, or exploiting the resident. (The name comes from the cuckoo bird, which lays its eggs in other birds' nests.) Victims may feel unable to say no due to fear, intimidation, or dependency on the offenders.

Tactics criminals use

- Grooming and befriending: building trust or a relationship to gain access.
- Offering incentives: providing money, drugs, clothing, or to pay bills in return for "borrowing a room."
- Coercion and isolation: using threats, discouraging visitors, and reducing support so the victim becomes trapped.

Signs to watch out for

- Frequent visitors at unusual hours.
- A resident who appears more anxious or withdrawn.
- A home that looks neglected or deteriorating.
- Fewer visits from family, friends, or support staff.
- Increased anti-social behaviour at or around the property.
- Litter or rubbish piling up outside the home.

Who might be more at risk?

- People with a history of domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues, or criminality.
- People who are homeless or living in insecure accommodation.
- People who are socially isolated, lonely, or experiencing social difficulties.
- People with a physical or learning disability.
- People experiencing mental health issues or substance misuse difficulties.

What to do

If you suspect cuckooing, report it immediately through safeguarding and community safety channels. **Trust your instincts, it is always better to share a concern than to stay silent.**

Further information

In association with the Metropolitan Police, Tower Hamlets Borough Council has further information and a useful poster about cuckooing on their website: <https://towerhamletscrimewatch.org/crime-prevention/cuckooing>

**CELEBRATE THE JOY OF ADVENT TOGETHER
WITH CHELMSFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT.**

**SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2025 AT
4PM, BROOMFIELD METHODIST
CHURCH CM1 7AG**



The perfect start to Christmas.
Everyone is welcomed.
<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/>

Save the date!

The people who walked in
darkness have seen a
great light; those who
lived in a land of deep
darkness—on them light
has shined.
Isaiah 9:2



Advent

· A Time of Preparation ·

Join us this Advent as we prepare for Christmas together
with a weekly study course. Information to follow.

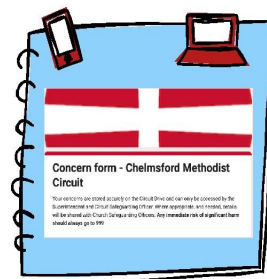
In-person from 2pm at Witham Methodist Church
Wednesdays 3rd, 10th and 17th December

On-line from 7pm
Tuesdays 2nd, 9th and 16th December
Zoom information to follow



Chelmsford Methodist Circuit

<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/>



See something?
Hear Something?
SAY something!

Use our new online form

We always take our safeguarding
responsibilities seriously.
Log it and we will contact you.

[Click here](https://forms.gle/5MID2rcimzZ6NuA17)

THE CHURCH IN GREAT NOTLEY

AND LONGMEAD COURT NURSING HOME

In 2023, after restrictions from the pandemic allowed, we were able to re-establish our links with Longmead Court Nursing Home. Being in London Road they form part of our community and we were delighted to be involved again. We've seen several Activity Co-ordinators come and go and have developed our programme over the last couple of years. Currently Tash organises the residents to attend either in the conservatory or the dining room, depending on the weather. We are really pleased to welcome staff members as well, when they are able to attend.



At the request of some residents we currently offer a short service of Holy Communion and it is surprising how the residents respond, many having had a background in Sunday School when they were children. They certainly enjoy the singing and using their musical instruments. We tend to stick to a set selection of hymns which the residents enjoy and are able to join in. There are some extremely good singers there especially those who were in choirs in their youth.



We had been reliant on keyboards already at the home but recently were donated one in much better condition which has pleased our pianist Ann no end. The services are led by Rev'd Rachel who is supported by Ann, Wendy and June. We are currently looking to enrol some additional support from the congregation at Great Notley. It has been very encouraging to see the benefit the residents get from these services. It prompts memories, gives them time to talk about things that might be bothering them, an opportunity for us to pray with them and sometimes dry their tears. Their responses to the short talks are also sometimes quite surprising.

June Frisbee

NEWS FROM ST AUGUSTINE'S

Recent news from St Augustine's

At St Augustine's, North Springfield, we are still in interregnum and consequently are being kept very busy trying to manage all activities as normal. At harvest time we usually have a harvest supper and this year we decided to have one with a twist! We bravely chose a Murder Mystery Harvest Supper which fortunately proved to be very successful not only with our congregation but also with other parishioners.



On Saturday October 4th, guests were invited to take on the persona of a character from 'Lord Heathcliffe's Wedding Party' but others just came in costume. While the game unfolded, we were all served a three course meal – soup, ploughman's and crumble with custard – which was all included in the ticket price of £15.

The photos show some of the suspects: Ned Sadler, the groom, Lady Gardiner, the horticulturalist, Misty Vision, the clairvoyant,

Mrs Withering, the housekeeper, Rev Will Bedone, the vicar, Annette Hititova, the tennis coach, Inspector Denaux, the detective, etc.. As you can deduce, it was a fun evening. We were supposed to guess "who dunnit" but few suspected that the young bride, Em Fatal, had murdered her husband on their wedding day. The evening's entertainment, which included a raffle, raised over £700 for UNICEF and church funds.



Continued/.....

Also this month we celebrated the Golden Wedding Anniversary of our church steward, Doug Hayton and his wife, Pat. Superintendent Rev Asif Karam led our morning worship on October 12th and said special prayers for the happy couple, congratulating them on their fiftieth anniversary and blessing them for future years of happiness together. Asif reminded us that we are living in 'forgetful times' and urged us to remember the good things in life and be thankful for all God's blessings. When faced with life's problems he suggested we asked ourselves the question: "What would Jesus do?" and even gave out wrist bands as a reminder. (WWJD)



After the service Doug and Pat were presented with flowers and we celebrated with a special cake and a glass of wine.

Jenny Murphy
St Augustine of Canterbury Church

BIG QUIZ

Tear Fund Fundraising Event - Saturday 15th November



tearfund



Email David Hodgkinson
to book your table on
Saturday 15th November.
dthodgkinson@btinternet.com

**No driving in the dark!, this is an
afternoon event together
with family and friends**

Saturday 15th November.

1pm Free ploughmans lunch.
2pm quiz & afternoon tea and cakes.

**All we ask is for you to support the
event with donations to Tear Fund.**

Broomfield Methodist Church CM1 7AG

NEWS FROM HALSTEAD

HAPPY SUNDAYS



On Sunday 6th October we held our Harvest Festival and the church looked beautiful with floral decorations. Donations of produce were passed to the Foodbank of Halstead and an inspiring service was led by Val Carter. All who attended sat down to a dinner of roast meat and vegetables served by our ladies in the kitchen and the donated “puddings” were most desirable. We thank the ladies helping in the kitchen for all their hard work and assure them that their efforts were appreciated and a good time was had by all. Thank you.

Entertaining the children after the Harvest Lunch.
They were having a lovely time with action songs.



JOYFUL CHRISTENING

On Sunday 13th October we held a Christening at our church (a very long time since we held the last!) It was a sunny day and our little church became pleasantly full. **The baby boy called 'Great' is the new baby brother to Majesty and Precious with Mum Rita and Dad Ernest.**

Our new Minister Rev Jennifer led the service which was also our

Communion Service. Her children's address spoke of the importance of water to our world and how we should be mindful of how we use it. The Eucharist was taken by all which was a wonderful moment to share with this young family and their friends.

Chrissie Armitage



HALSTEAD—Young Christians today

Recently at Halstead Methodist Church we held a service prepared and led by Ann our Sunday School Leader, and the young people of the Sunday School. The title of the service was “What does it mean to be a young Christian today”

Archie started the service by explaining that young Christians in the UK today face a unique set of challenges and opportunities. While facing pressure from secular culture, they can find strength in their faith. They are encouraged to be examples of faith, love and morality and to be actively involved in their local church, school community and local community using Jesus’ teachings and guidance.

Archie, Ronnie, Uche, Obinna, Somto and Koko all planned the service with Ann and they chose the hymns. These were:-

He has the whole world in his hands.

Shine, Jesus, Shine.

Give us Joy in our hearts

Oh Jesus I have promised to serve thee to the end.

The hymns were sung “with gusto” in the Methodist tradition and all were accompanied by the drums and other instruments.

One of the highlights of the service was Somto talking about his own personal experiences as a Young Christian today which was truly inspirational.

This was a wonderfully happy service enjoyed by the whole congregation.

Thank you so much to Ann and the young men for making this a joyous occasion. We had drinks and lots of cakes in the schoolroom afterwards which was acceptable to everyone having all truly enjoyed this special day. Thank you.



Heather Williams

Junior church celebrations in July 2025



Who Cares?

In response to Our Calling, Methodist people are to help others to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care.

Face to Face Training at Trinity Methodist, Chelmsford.

- Session 1: Introduction to Pastoral Care
- Session 2: Discipleship and Hospitality
- Session 3: Listening and Prayer
- Session 4: Pastoral Care in Difficult Times

The Methodist Church

A call to all Pastoral Carers to attend these meetings. Welcome attendees from others who feel called to become a pastoral carer or those who may wish to explore pastoral care in the course of their roles within our churches. Delegates should attend both dates

SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2025

10am Start and Finish approx. 2.30pm
Bring your own lunch—Tea/coffee will be provided

Session 1: Introducing Pastoral Care

Session 2: Welcome and Hospitality in Pastoral Care

SATURDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 2025

10am Start and Finish approx. 2.30pm
Bring your own lunch—Tea/coffee will be provided

Session 3: Listening and Prayer in Pastoral Practice

Session 4: Care in Difficult Times and Self-care in Pastoral Practice

The sessions will set churches and Methodist communities on a sound footing to envision and enable a culture of care in their context.

Sessions 1 and 2 particularly consider welcome, hospitality and discipleship in the context of pastoral care and reflect on the pastoral nature of these in our church communities, recognising our shared responsibility and gifts for pastoral care.

Session 3 will help participants to develop listening and communication skills, particularly using language and prayer appropriately and sensitively in pastoral situations.

Session 4 introduces participants to the impact of trauma, transition and loss on individuals, families and groups and helps them understand appropriate boundaries and balance, including self-care, in pastoral ministry, and highlights the importance of reflective practice.

Trainer: Stuart Watkin

Make a Booking

Book on the Chelmsford Methodist Circuit website.

<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/training/pastoral-training/>

It's not too late to book sessions 3 and 4

<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/training/pastoral-training/>

This Advent and Christmas season, the Methodist Church invites you to join ‘Gifted’ with resources to support your worship, welcome, and witness – including service outlines, small group materials, outreach ideas, posters, postcards, digital assets and more.

Gifted is a message of good news to a weary world...

Together, all districts, circuits, local churches and fellowships of the Methodist Church are invited to remind people of their inherent worth and beauty – not because of what they’ve done, or what they can give – but because of who they are.

You are a gift. Made with love.

Gifted:

- Is for everyone in our churches and beyond: both believers rejoicing at God’s gift of Jesus, and those who might find the season more wearying than wonderful.
- reaches out to people longing for transformation but feeling stuck. For those searching for something more, something real – but unsure where to look.
-

Gifted is the Methodist Church's open invitation, speaking the good news to people that they matter. That they are Beloved. Created with infinite care. A gift to the world, just as they are.

Resources

- **Church leaders’ Worship Services package, from Advent to Epiphany** (pdf, online only)
- Blue Christmas liturgy
- Children’s activities
- Advent candle liturgies
-
- **Small group guide** for weekly engagement with Gifted’s themes (pdf, online only)
- **How to be a ‘newcomer friendly’ church this Christmas** (Zoom session, date TBC)
- **Poster** for announcing your Christmas services
- **Thank you ‘gift’ cards** to let people in our communities know they are the gift, with space for Methodists to write their personal message thanking the recipient for being the gift they are
- **Postcards** for you to advertise your own services
- **Digital assets package including social media templates and graphics** for you to use on your own website and social media

Available from early September from Methodist Publishing.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/christmasresources/>

WL&P Explore online (Modules 1 & 5)

7-8th November, at 7pm, online

Online 'Explore' sessions for those completing the 'Worship: Leading and Preaching' course: for Modules 1 and 5

[Click here to book](#)



Neurodiversity awareness

Thursday 13th November at 7pm, online

An opportunity to raise awareness of neurodiversity within the church,
led by Revd Jonny Bell.

Equipping for Equality

A development session for those in the Methodist Church
passionate about Justice, Dignity and Solidarity

Neurodiversity awareness

Thursday 13th November
7pm - 9pm
on Zoom

[Click here to book](#)

The Story That Never Grows Old: From Manger to Memory

By Rev. Asif Karam

Superintendent Chelmsford Circuit

Introduction: Teaching the Tidings, how we hand down the good news of Christmas. The Christmas story is not just Jesus's story; it is our story too. It shapes who we are, both then and now. Down through the ages, this story has been shared with great love and care, passed faithfully from generation to generation. It remains the timeless message of Christmas, one that endures, inspires, and transforms hearts across the centuries. Parents and grandparents have always played a vital part in keeping this story alive, telling the Christmas story through the ages, helping each new generation discover the wonder of the Christ Child and the hope He brings. Truly, it is a story of generations of wonder, where each family learns and lives the message anew. The phrase **"Telling Our Story and Song"** within the Methodist Church calls us to actively share our faith and the story of God's grace through our actions, words, and music. It forms part of the 2025–2026 Connexional theme, encouraging us to live out our faith by *walking, welcoming, and witnessing*, discovering new stories and songs inspired by God's presence in our lives. This Methodist theme invites us to look back and celebrate the past while also looking forward with hope to the future. This year, I am putting together a Christmas Quiz designed especially for parents and grandparents to enjoy with their children and grandchildren. It's something to share and learn together over Christmas meal or during festive gatherings, a light-hearted way to explore the story that binds us all. I trust this will bring joy to every household and help connect the generations, from the Silent Generation to Generation Alpha and beyond. For interest, here's how the generations are often described:

- **The Silent Generation** (born 1928–1945)
- **Baby Boomers** (1946–1964)
- **Generation X** (1965–1980)
- **Millennials / Generation Y** (1981–1996)
- **Generation Z** (1997–2012)
- **Generation Alpha** (2013–2025) – a curious, digital-native generation
- **Generation Beta** (2025–2039) – the upcoming generation, expected to grow up with technology such as AI and self-driving cars as part of daily life, as defined by futurist Mark McCrindle.

May this Christmas remind us that the message of love born in Bethlehem continues to unite us, young and old alike, in faith, hope, and wonder. Below is a modern, fun, and faith-friendly quiz: Christmassy, light-hearted, and designed to connect younger generations (roughly under 30s) with both traditional Christmas stories and modern festive culture. It's balanced between pop culture, Bible knowledge, fun facts, and social trends, perfect for a church youth evening, scouts, boys brigade, girls guide and brownies groups and carol-services after-party, or café-style Christmas event and in all festive gatherings.

Christmas Quiz for Gen Z & Gen Alpha

Ice-Breaker: What year was the first Christmas card commercially printed in the UK?

Answer: 1843

Round 1: Christmas in the Bible

No.	Question	Answer
1	Who was Jesus' mother?	Mary
2	In which town was Jesus born?	Bethlehem
3	Who brought gifts to the baby Jesus?	The Wise Men / Magi
4	What gifts did they bring?	Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh
5	Who told Mary she would have a baby?	The angel Gabriel

No.	Question	Answer
6	Where did Joseph and Mary travel from to get to Bethlehem?	Nazareth
7	Who ordered the census that sent them there?	Caesar Augustus
8	What animals were in the stable (traditionally pictured)?	Donkey and ox
9	Where did the shepherds hear the angels' message?	Out in the fields
10	What does "Emmanuel" mean?	God with us

Round 2: Modern Christmas Fun

No.	Question	Answer
1	What is the name of the snowman who comes to life with a magic hat?	Frosty the Snowman
2	Which 2023 Netflix film starred Lindsay Lohan as a woman who loses her memory at Christmas?	<i>Falling for Christmas</i>
3	What's the most streamed Christmas song on Spotify?	"All I Want for Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey
4	Which reindeer has a glowing red nose?	Rudolph
5	Name two popular social media platforms where people share Christmas videos.	TikTok and Instagram
6	What colour are traditional Christmas holly berries?	Red
7	Which company's Christmas advert first featured Santa Claus wearing red?	Coca-Cola
8	What date is Christmas Day?	25 December
9	Which famous video-game company created the character "Mario", often used in Christmas toys?	Nintendo
10	What's the name of the elf in the film <i>Elf</i> ?	Buddy

Round 3: British Christmas Traditions

No.	Question	Answer
1	What meat is traditionally eaten for Christmas dinner in the UK?	Turkey
2	What sauce is usually served with it?	Cranberry sauce
3	What is inside a Christmas cracker?	A paper hat, a joke, and a small toy
4	When is Boxing Day celebrated?	26 December
5	Which royal gives a speech on Christmas Day?	The King (currently Charles III)
6	What British shop is famous for emotional Christmas adverts each year?	John Lewis
7	What sweet treat is stirred while making a wish?	Christmas pudding
8	What song begins "Good King Wenceslas looked out..."?	<i>Good King Wenceslas</i>
9	Which plant do people traditionally kiss under?	Mistletoe
10	What day marks the start of the "12 Days of Christmas"?	Christmas Day

Round 4: Pop Culture & Tech Christmas

No. Question

- 1 Which platform popularised the phrase “It’s Giving Christmas”?
- 2 What 2020 song by Ariana Grande and Justin Bieber raised money for charity?
- 3 What’s the name of the snowy village in *Frozen*?
- 4 Which streaming platform launched a “Yule Log” video for ambience?
- 5 What tech gift topped UK wish-lists in 2024 for gamers?
- 6 What is the name of the AI assistant on Apple devices?
- 7 In *Home Alone*, where were Kevin’s parents flying to?
- 8 What festive film ends with the line “Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings”?
- 9 Which singer released the hit *Last Christmas*?
- 10 What 2023 Disney film celebrates 100 years of Disney magic?

Answer

TikTok
Stuck with U
 Arendelle
 Netflix
 PlayStation 5 / PS5
 Siri
 Paris
It’s a Wonderful Life
 Wham!
Wish

Round 5: Christmas Around the World**No. Question**

- 1 What is “Feliz Navidad” in English?
- 2 In which country is St Nicholas said to have been born?
- 3 What do Australians often eat on Christmas Day?
- 4 What is the traditional Christmas drink called “Glühwein”?
- 5 In which country do children place shoes outside for St Nicholas Day?
- 6 What date is Epiphany celebrated?
- 7 Which continent celebrates Christmas during summer?
- 8 What is the name of the large Christmas tree in New York’s Rockefeller Centre?
- 9 What animal pulls Santa’s sleigh in most countries?
- 10 In what country is Father Christmas called “Père Noël”?

Answer

Merry Christmas
 Modern-day Turkey
 Barbecue / Seafood
 Mulled wine
 Germany / Netherlands
 6 January
 Australia / Oceania
 Rockefeller Christmas Tree
 Reindeer
 France

Bonus Round, Emoji Christmas

(Guess the Christmas carol or phrase from emojis)



We Three Kings



Away in a Manger



Jingle Bells



Peace on Earth



Love Came Down at Christmas



Let It Snow

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Moreover, your contributions help to create a vibrant and dynamic newsletter that reflects the diversity and richness of our church communities.

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