



Enfield Methodist Circuit



Edmonton Methodist Church



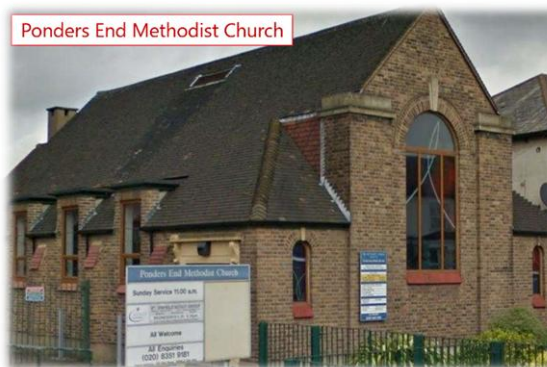
Grange Park Methodist Church

To know God and
make him known

Winter 2025-26 Newsletter



Ponders End Methodist Church



Message from Revd Paul Weary, Superintendent Minister



Remembering Joseph at Christmas

Matthew 1:18-25

Of the various characters in the Christmas Story, I feel particular sympathy for Joseph. Who gives him any credit? From the biblical record he is the most nondescript person you will ever find. All we know about him is his name and his occupation. When we move from the nativity stories to Jesus' adult ministry, Joseph disappears completely from view. Is this because he had died by then? We don't know.

Even his identity as a father seems to be under threat. There were no surnames in those days, rather boys were identified by their father's name. So Jesus would have been known to friends and neighbours as 'Jesus son of Joseph'. But the gospel writers are cautious to say that. Luke says: "He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph." (Luke 3:23) Matthew describes Jesus as the "Son of David, Son of Abraham" but avoids calling him "Son of Joseph". He writes instead: "Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born."

Think about it: all the Christmas carols refer to Jesus as the Son of Mary. Son of Mary, not son of Joseph. And all those beautiful paintings of the Madonna and Child! You will have to look hard to find one of father and son. Joseph is all but relegated to the sidelines. Except for the one little story from Matthew 1:18-25 that – just for a brief moment - turns the spotlight on Joseph.

Joseph is engaged to be married to Mary, but it seems there is a problem. Mary is pregnant! Joseph is devastated by the news. He is a just man, a righteous man, a man of principles. How do you think he must have felt? The woman he loved was pregnant, and she cannot explain to him exactly how. All Joseph knows is that he is not the father.

This righteous man knew his options. He could publicly expose Mary by bringing her before the court, or he could privately hand her a bill of divorce in the presence of two witnesses. The punishment against a woman in Mary's situation, pregnant out of wedlock, was severe. But Joseph's sense of what was right was tempered by compassion. He was not willing to be vengeful or put Mary to shame.

Just as Joseph was figuring out what he thought was the best course of action, God spoke to Joseph, through an angel in a dream. Joseph was to break with convention. Do something out of the ordinary. Even though the child was not his

but God's, Joseph was to stay with Mary, support her, and then raise this son as if it were his own. And on top of all of this, God says through the angel, "don't worry about a name for your son – I've sorted that out too - his name will be Jesus."

I wonder how many of us would have heeded the words of God, and acted as Joseph did? How many of us would have been willing to break with tradition, with the way things are, with the way things always have been, to let God's creative hand move into our lives? How many of us would have surrendered to God in the way Joseph did?? I wonder.

Every generation needs to have their Josephs. People who are willing to wrestle with their God as he calls them to new directions and detours in life. God needs people of wonder and imagination who can envision new means of God working in mission and ministry that may well be different from what they have ever tried in the past.

Every generation needs a Joseph who is willing to be compassionate, forgiving and living beyond the legalism of the law. Looking beyond what is prescribed, to what needs to be done in the name of love and grace.

Most of us try to be decent people, to do what is best for ourselves and our families, and to do the 'right thing' by others. Like Joseph, we mostly do this quietly, without fanfare or attention. The challenge of Joseph's story is to go beyond doing the 'right thing' to doing the *gracious* thing.

To quote a popular phrase, "it's not always about us". It's about *God*, and God's purpose. It's about God's grace being made flesh in human life – not just in the one human life of Christ, but in us as well.

A prayer: remembering Joseph

We pray in thanksgiving for Joseph, whom we barely know, but who, with Mary, bore the astonishing events of Christ's birth, in obedience and with a generous heart. When our lives are overturned by the unexpected, and you reach out to us in dreams, grant us the love and courage of Joseph, that we may be open to your prompting and witness, with him, to your loving purposes for all people and all creation. Amen.

With every blessing,

Paul

News From Trinity

All Saints at Trinity

For the first time, we held our annual All Saints Service on a Sunday morning - and with Holy Communion. We had the best response ever, as evidenced by the candles lit by individuals during our worship. It was beautifully led by Rev Paul and was very much appreciated by all who attended.



Trinity's Harvest for the Whitechapel Mission

Our Harvest Service on 5th October was a joyful occasion, led by Isata Jalloh, with a theme of 'Underpants'! This was in response to a need at The Whitechapel Mission in London, supporting the homeless. The congregation responded generously, with underpants, non-perishable food and money.

Isata's title was 'Sow generously, Share abundantly', and she used a very clever acrostic to drive the Harvest message home:

- U**nderstand the needs of others
- N**ever underestimate small gifts
- D**onate with joy, not just leftovers
- E**ncourage friends to join in giving
- R**espect the dignity of every person
- P**repare your heart to serve
- A**ct with kindness and courage
- N**otice who might be struggling around you
- T**hank God for what you have
- S**hare your blessings cheerfully



The church was decorated with colourful paper underpants, and during the service we wrote prayers on tiny paper underpants, which were hung by the young people. We ended the service enjoying hot sausages in bread rolls with our coffee.

Three sacks of new men's underpants, five sacks of cereal, and six bulging bags of groceries, plus a few toiletries, were taken to the Whitechapel Mission. The miniature paper underpants with our messages and prayers were also passed to the Mission to accompany the new underpants when given out to those who need them.



Concert at Trinity

During the afternoon of Sunday, 26th October, a good audience at Trinity were treated to an excellent hour of music by Beethoven and Schumann by accomplished musicians Bohdana Ravliuk (piano) and Ivanica Novaković (violin).

The concert was a free event with a retiring collection split between the church and Ukrainian Hub which meets there every Saturday.

People were so generous - over £500 was raised and some of the Ukrainian Hub proceeds will be used to buy electric blankets for those in need.

It is hoped that a similar concert will be repeated in the near future and this will be advertised through the Circuit Newsletter.



Taizé Worship for the season of Advent



a service of song, silence
and contemplation

7.30pm Thursday 4th December

Trinity Church Enfield

(Methodist/URC)

Church St, Enfield, EN2 6AN



Remembrance at Trinity

Poppies in the church garden; lining the Communion rail, with a wreath the Guides made; flowing from the Memorial plaque.



Come and support your fellow Church Members

Circuit church members are singing in two Christmas concerts with local choirs

Raymond (Southgate member) is singing with Sing Out Choir Enfield in a concert of Christmas Classics on Monday 8th December 12.30pm at Enfield Baptist Church. Free entry, no need to book, refreshments served afterwards. See poster for details.

Brian (Southgate member), David and Hilary (Trinity members) are singing with Aurora Choir in a Christmas concert on Saturday 20th December 7.30pm at St Andrews Church,

Southgate. The concert is entitled "A season of hope throughout the ages". The Christmas songs and carols will range from the earliest, by 12th Century Hildegard of Bingen, to a first ever performance of a new carol specially commissioned for the choir. Tickets available on the website (www.aurora choir.co.uk) or on the door

Making lives better for autistic adults and those with learning difficulties



One to One Enfield presents

**Sing
Out!**
choir

CHRISTMAS CLASSICS

MONDAY 8TH DEC 12:30PM | ENFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH



Free entry, open to all, refreshments served afterwards.
Donations to One to One Enfield welcome!

Peace with Creation



I attended an A Rocha webinar on 2nd September, at the beginning of The Season of Creation, which was very engaging. A Rocha is the Christian Charity behind Eco Church, helping churches and individuals to live more sustainably and take practical action to care for God's earth.

Andy Atkins has been Chief Executive Officer for A Rocha since 2016. He is a British environmentalist and social justice campaigner, formerly an executive director of Friends of the Earth and Advocacy Director at Tearfund. He is clearly an energetic, visionary and strategic leader and an inspiring communicator. He told us about his childhood. Having been born here to a minister and his wife, they moved to a 400sq mile island off Queensland. He had the most idyllic childhood, running free surrounded by beaches, the sea, jungle and river. He learnt very young how to navigate the dangers and respect every living thing. He was blissfully carefree and happy. At the age of 10 his family moved back to the UK. In a completely alien culture and climate, with his freedom wings completely clipped, teased at school for not recognising Star Trek, Kevin Keegan and The Beatles, Andy slipped into a deep depression. A very concerned aunt suggested his parents introduce him to bird watching. Andy was given a pair of binoculars for his birthday and with his own money bought The Observer Book of Birds. I remember that little brown book! Many homes had one. Tentative at first, Andy started going round his neighborhood and his own large Manse garden, looking and listening. He catalogued every bird he spotted in an exercise book, and drew maps of habitats. The hobby transformed him and gave him peace. Even though he was in a town setting, he felt part of Nature again and knew that protecting Nature was what he wanted to do with his life. A wonderful testimony to the healing power of the created world.



Nancy Hands

FINDING FAITH: CONFIRMATION CLASSES

(For anyone age 12 upwards)


COURSE DATES:

Sunday 1st March 1.30pm – 3.30pm

Sunday 8th March 1.30pm – 3.30pm

Sunday 22nd March 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Sunday 29th March 1.30pm - 2.30pm

Classes will be held on: 

CIRCUIT CONFIRMATION SERVICE:

DATE: Sunday 5th April 2026

TIME: 4.00pm

ADDRESS: TBC

For more information and to register:
Contact Isata - enfieldyouthwork@yahoo.com

Southgate's Light Party

On 31st October, All Hallows Eve, Eve Moldova inspired us to hold our first Light Party at Southgate on Halloween last year. Eve encouraged us to build on the success of that first attempt and gave us the confidence to hold another one this year.



A Light Party is a counter to the darkness of Halloween and celebrates the positive message of Jesus being the 'Light of the world'. Consequently, Southgate Church was transformed with strings of twinkling lights and warmth, with Roddy playing beautiful music, a treasure trail leading to a treasure chest full of glow-sticks, chocolate gold coins and lovely leaflets describing how Jesus is the Light and tables at the back with lantern making, scratch art bookmarks, stars

and hearts to decorate and Lego and Duplo with which to build cities of light. The Welcome area was full of pumpkins to carve, lantern and tealight holders to make, the very popular biscuit icing and lots of delicious cakes and refreshments. Altogether, a free event that welcomed everyone with lots of treats and no tricks!



We had 35 or more children and as many adults come along and everyone enthusiastically applied themselves to all the crafts, following the treasure trail, and eating lots of goodies! At the end we showed a short video explaining how Jesus is the light of the world. We pray that this event planted seeds of faith in those who attended, and provided them with a positive experience of church to reflect upon.

All of us who were helping, really enjoyed ourselves and are very grateful to Eve for her meticulous attention to detail, as she organised the party, ensuring it was a great success, which hopefully will now become an annual event. Eve had a lot of positive feedback.

Ann Collard

Advent Study Groups

Come and join us at one of our 'Gifted' our Advent Study Groups.

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.

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.

These sessions are for anyone who wants to grow as a disciple of Jesus, alongside others. They're rooted in the Advent lectionary and shaped by simple, thoughtful conversation. All that's needed is a willingness to listen, share and make space for others.

We are meeting on a Monday morning at 10am at Bush Hill Park house group (speak to Revd Paul Weary or Helen Lunn for more details) starting on 24th November, Trinity Church Enfield on a Wednesday evening at 7:30pm starting on 26th November and Southgate Bible Study on a Thursday afternoon starting on 27th November.

Why not come and join us

Blessings

Helen

First Aid

If any individual or church is thinking of a really practical, informative and well run First Aid Course, I strongly recommend 'KeepaBeat'. Based in Hertfordshire, courses can be arranged for all ages in different locations. I attended on 1st November at Lancaster Road URC, for a very well worthwhile 3 hour adult session, in which I learnt a great deal in change of practice since I was Nursing.

Nancy Hands



Keep a Beat can be contacted via email info@keepabeat.co.uk or on their website www.keepabeat.com

SOUTHGATE PANCAKE PARTY



**TUESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2026
6:30PM - 8:00PM
SOUTHGATE METHODIST CHURCH**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO OUR SHROVE
TUESDAY PANCAKE PARTY**

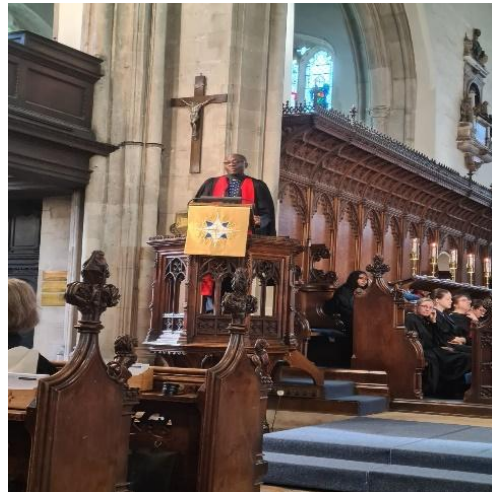
**VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE
WELCOMED TO COVER COSTS**

'Standing in the Gaps'

Commemoration of Benefactors at the University of Cambridge

(By Gabriel Dedji)

There was an avid joy in Cambridge this All Souls' Day, 2nd November 2025. From far and wide, professors, academics and scholars congregated at Great St. Mary's Church, within the University of Cambridge. That was the annual commemoration of the University's Founders and Benefactors (those who have supported the university's infrastructure through their generous donations for centuries). Professors, academics and scholars- university's alumni whose works have revolutionised science, philosophy and much more globe-wide- gathered for the occasion. The names of Kings, Queens and Aristocrats were to be listed amongst those who had contributed to the prestige of the university. The legacies of all those present and past coalesced into a mood which was erudite, celebratory and pensive in equal measure.



Revd. Dr. Valentin Dedji- the minister in charge at Edmonton Methodist Church- had been bestowed the honour of attending to this mood with a sermon. This was a cause for elation because, thirty years ago, he had completed a PhD at Hughes Hall (one of Cambridge's many colleges). The appointment of the preacher had been made through the Lady Margaret Preachership programme (which was founded in 1504) and had garnered even more fanfare because that was the first time an alumni from Hughes' Hall had been chosen for this prestigious commitment.

A great sermon stylised by his typical exuberant grandiloquence was expected. Revd. Dedji's thought-provoking sermon capitalised upon the celebratory mood to inspire all those who were part of the august congregation, to live lucidly, compassionately and conscientiously: prestige was transformed into purpose; fanfare turned into fellowship; honour gave way to humility.

This sermon, entitled '**Standing in The Gaps**', surveyed the economic, social and environmental inequalities that distinguish modern society. To stand in these gaps is to be spiritually, systemically and sincerely generous in order to remedy the ills that these inequalities produce. To stand in the gaps is to embody Christ's servanthood, lowering ourselves to raise others. To stand in the gaps is to be a benefactor in every aspect of our lives.

There were three vital conclusions that this reflection offered:

- Firstly: **we all have a part to play.**

Borrowing John Calvin's quote- "**Even the beggar who has received, has got enough to give**" - Dr. Dedji presented generosity as a fundamental quality ingrained in us all. Our duty to unlock this quality, lies in the call-to-action from Martin Luther King Jr's sermon where he insists that "**A great nation should be a compassionate nation**".

This was most evident in Rev. Dedji's own life where grants and scholarships from The North Atlantic Missiology Project, The Rockefeller Foundation and the Bethume Baker Fund facilitated his studies and a flight ticket from Benin Republic to the UK (fully-paid by a mysterious benefactor who he had never met before) allowed him to travel to this country. His intelligence was incubated within this environment of generosity and it intensified his ability to tend to others' needs as a minister, as a scholar and as a father. Amongst many other charitable initiatives, he notably led the establishment of Edmonton Methodist Church's foodbank to help those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. In effect, he has germinated his own eco-system, transmuting the generosity offered to him into new life that he can pour into others

- Secondly: **we should expect the most from our generosity.**

Modern society is hyper speeding towards an individualism distinguished by suspicion of others and a pessimism in the human spirit. As such, generosity feels dangerous to express because we presume it will be exploited by those who claim to need it: the asylum seekers coming from war torn countries; the homeless beggars asking for spare change; the anxious child in need of state-funded counselling. Through using his own life as an example, Revd. Dedji highlights that generosity is not a weakness, but a strength, which proliferates diversity of thought; resilience; and more generosity. It enriches the welfare of the communities we inhabit. Crucially, it must be understood that these examples are not anomalies, but biblically factual: through the prophet Jeremiah, God proclaims that our individual prosperity is predicated on our contributions to society's welfare (Jeremiah 29:7-11). Furthermore, the Wesleyan principle of

social holiness establishes that we should see ourselves as collectively responsible for the welfare of others. We can practice this through the preacher's call for us to open our eyes, heart and mind to see the need of the people around us rather than our own prejudice, our own reluctance or our own shortcomings

- Thirdly, **we must trust in God.**

Deuteronomy 8:18 calls us to: ***“Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth”***. With this in mind, wealth should not be attributed to individual prosperity, but Godly allocation. He owns our means of production and is our means of production- coming alive fully when we work for His Glory and in accordance with his will. We should trust this will when thinking about the way in which our resources will be used, and this trust should not leave our minds.

This then bears on us a collective responsibility to protect our consciousness even when technologies like AI tempt us away from autonomous thought, practical labour and scientific innovation. These are all mechanisms through which God activates kingdom work and uses us to bring to fruition his will. Thus, outsourcing it all to technology relinquishes us from the intimacy of being God's vessels and it deprives us of the blessings attached to generously working for His purpose. We must trust God; we must abide by the teachings that impinge upon us to devote ourselves to him alone; and we must not forsake our own intelligence, which was fashioned in his image.



This message inspired pensive contemplation and joyous debate amongst the academics in attendance. After the service, everyone prodded curiously, seeking to understand how this sermon which dealt with a number of crucial topics had been pulled together. Importantly, the minister had pulled from

the kaleidoscopic array of his experiences as a community leader in inner city North London; a Cambridge academic, originally from Benin (a French-speaking West-African country) to produce an ecology of knowledge which references life around Britain and around the globe. In conclusion, God is alive everywhere, at

every level of humanity. Through generosity, we can coalesce all these pieces of life into God's full glory. The sermon's final cry quoted Irenaeus de Lyon: "***The glory of God is humanity fully alive***"!

Wedding Celebration at Goffs Oak

Goffs Oak Methodist Church were really excited to be the venue for the marriage of Anne Pulford and Rober Brown on Saturday 1st November. The church was absolutely full with well-wishers, including many from the Circuit, as Rev. Papa Owusu led the marriage service, and as Anne and Robert exchanged rings and were pronounced man and wife. We wish them a long and happy life together.

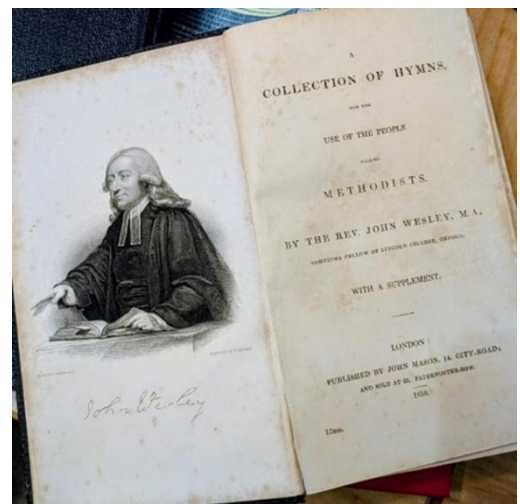


Our Story, Our Song

The theme of this year's Methodist Prayer Handbook is *Our Story, Our Song*, "an encouragement to a journey of discernment as we seek afresh the story God has called us to live and the song God has called us to sing."

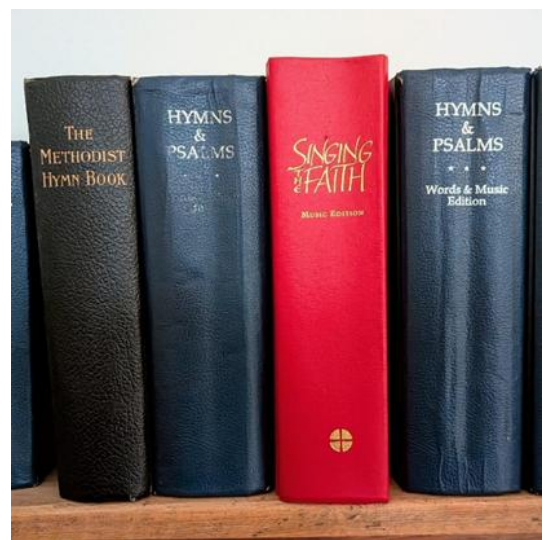
What song has God called us to sing? The psalmist calls on us to "sing to the Lord a new song". Why a new song? Does this mean that the old songs will no longer do?

It was the preface to the 1933 *Methodist Hymn Book* that famously stated "Methodism was born in song." As Methodism developed under the leadership of John Wesley, this new movement demanded



new songs, the vast majority written by John's younger brother Charles (although John himself also wrote a number of hymns and translated others from German into English.) In 1780 many of these were compiled together into a hymn book called *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*. This was the principal hymn book used by Wesleyan Methodists for many years, with additional hymns added in supplements from time to time. Recently I bought a copy of the 1831 edition, and it makes for fascinating reading. Many of the hymns are familiar, although the words have often been updated and verses omitted. Others are no longer in use. Inevitably, new songs over time become old songs, and relatively few of the hundreds of thousands of hymns written over the past few centuries have stood the test of time and are still being sung today.

Recently at Southgate our Thursday afternoon group took a break from our usual Bible studies to have a musical session. Encouraged and accompanied by our organist Roddy Elmer, we were invited to bring a favourite hymn, preferably a hymn that was omitted from our present hymnbook *Singing the Faith*. So we sang 'Trust and obey', 'Children of Jerusalem' and other hymns that did not make the cut. We also looked at some tunes that have fallen out of favour, singing verses of 'O for a thousand tongues' to four different tunes (not all at the same time!) Some of us did not know the old hymns, which goes to show that even old songs can be new songs, at least to us in our own experience. We also sang 'When peace like a river/It is well with my soul' which will be familiar to many of us from funerals, but which has never been published in a British Methodist hymn book. We also talked about why the hymns we had chosen were special to us, often because they evoked memories of Sunday School or other significant moments in the past.



At Southgate we are very fortunate to have Roddy as our organist. But were you aware that as well as an excellent organist and singer, Roddy is also an experienced composer of orchestral pieces, many of which have

been performed publicly. On Saturday 8th November Roddy's latest composition, based on Psalm 46, was performed by the Enfield Choral Society at Christchurch URC, where it was very well received. Psalm 46 is not a new song, although it was being sung in a new way. But its message is timeless. "Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall" (v.6) could easily describe the divisions which we are experiencing in the UK and elsewhere today. In the face of such uncertainty and instability, we need to pay heed to the message of the psalm, that "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

There may be times when we need to sing a new song. But there is power in the old songs, too.

What song is God calling you to sing?

Revd Paul Weary

TLG (Transforming Lives for Good) News

Winter 2025

Annual Review

On Monday, 6th October our local centre here at the Enfield Methodist Circuit had our Annual Review, carried out by Tim Blake, the Church Relations Leader for our region. The report that was issued was very encouraging.

The school confirmed how much Janet's coaching had impacted the children she coaches, their peers and even their relationships with school staff; the children are 'hanging out of the doors waiting for her' and their 'faces light up when they see her', they say.

TLG Sunday at Southgate

Thanks to Revd Paul Weary, we are going to hold a TLG Sunday at the Southgate Methodist Church during the morning service on 11th January 2026.


Please pray for this event to inspire potential volunteers to join this very small team.

Richard Ockan

Enfield Circuit TLG Coordinator

Tel: 07890017431

Email : ockan@hotmail.com



CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICES

DATES AND TIMES

Trinity	December 21 st 6:30pm
Grange Park	December 14 th 6:30pm
Bush Hill Park	December 14 th 10:00am
Southgate	December 14 th 6:30pm
Edmonton	December 21 st 10:45am
Goffs Oak	December 14 th and 21 st 10:15am
Ordnance Road	December 14 th 11:00am
Ponders End	December 14 th 11:00 am



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday 29th November 2025

12 noon till 4pm

Grange Park Methodist Church

Old Park Ridings

N21 2EU



Entertainment by
A.C.T.S.

Tea, Coffee and
cakes available

Admission is free so bring your family and friends

Tables available at £20 for people to sell own products.
Please contact gpmcbook@gmail.com for more details



Please join us for...
CAROLS by TORCHLIGHT

7.00 to 7.45pm
on Wednesday
17th December
at the Goffs Oak
War Memorial...

supported by friends from
Potters Bar Town Band



Led jointly by Goffs Oak Methodist
and St. James Anglican Churches



... and followed by
tea/coffee,
mince pies and stollen
at the Methodist
Church Hall

 **action for
children**
— since 1869 —



PUZZLE TIME

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Worship opportunities across the Circuit

As well as the usual Sunday services, why not try some of these different opportunities for prayer, worship and fellowship across the Circuit?



Ghanaian Worship – 1st Sunday of each month 3pm-6:30pm at Edmonton Methodist Church

“Words & Worship” at Grange Park on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 6.30pm



Tea service at Bush Hill Park on the 1st Sunday of each month at 3pm



“Open Church” at Grange Park Wednesday from 10am-12 noon for quiet prayer, reflection and conversation



Let Us Pray every Tuesday 10.00am via zoom
(Contact Helen Lunn for details)



Soup and conversation at Grange Park every Wednesday 12noon-2pm



Bush Hill Park Wednesday Fellowship fortnightly from 8th September at 2pm



Faith and Fellowship at Southgate Thursdays 2pm-4pm. Bible Study, Fellowship and Tea