

THE CHELMSFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT Newsletter

Issue 36: May & June 2025



Dear friends

I write to you on Easter Monday, with my heart still full of the joy of Resurrection Sunday.

Easter morning may be behind us, but the power of the resurrection is ever-present. Christ is risen, not just as a historical event, but as a living truth as I said in yesterday's sermon: "People cannot change this truth, but this truth can change people."

This powerful true truth breathes eternal life into our present moments and this changes everything. Jesus said in John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." This means eternal life isn't only what we wait for on the other side of heaven, it begins right here and now. On this side of heaven, in this earthly life, every act of faith, every choice to love, every step toward hope, we are already living in the reality of God's forever kingdom.

But on this side of heaven there are challenges like,

Scroll through the headlines. Browse your social media feed. The world (this side of heaven) we live in still aches with pain, conflict, injustice, and despair. Let me say this, the Easter message doesn't ask us to ignore that reality rather it calls us to confront it

with resurrected courage as did the disciples. So, I wonder how do we, as Easter people, live out this powerful true truth?

- * By being witnesses of new life, in how we forgive, serve, and speak life into brokenness.

- * By carrying resurrection hope into the forgotten corners of our communities.

- ◆ By being peacemakers in our homes, encouragers in our workplaces, and bringers of light wherever we go.



Continued/....

Friends, we are certainly not spectators to the resurrection, we are participants in it. The tomb was empty on Easter day what does this teach us. That means there is no situation too dead for God to bring life. Not in our families, not in our churches, not in our neighbourhoods, not in our world.

Let's live as people who believe that as what early church believed and did. Let's show the world with boldness, demonstrate with compassion that Easter is not a day, it's a lifestyle. Let's make the risen Christ known not only in word, but in the way we live, love, and lead. Christ is risen so we rise, too.

With all my love in His deathless love, and with Easter hope,

Rev. Asif Karam

Judas ate too

Hours before the death of Jesus, **Judas ate too.**

Jesus fed Judas too.

Jesus prayed for Judas too.

Jesus washed Judas' feet too.

I struggle to fathom **what kind of love this is ...**

A love that would feed the mouth that deceived you.

A love that would wash the feet of the traitor.

A love that could forgive even the vilest of betrayals.

Honestly I struggle to comprehend it.

And then, suddenly, **I realize.. that I'm Judas too!**

And in that moment, ***I'm so thankful & altogether overwhelmed that,*** Judas ate too.

The true test of Christianity is not about loving Jesus
but loving Judas.

Showing love to someone like Jesus is so easy,

But loving someone hard to love,

a sinner like Judas is difficult

That's what 'following Jesus' is all about.



John Wesley's pulpit, from the 18th century, was removed from the first Wesleyan chapel on Maidenburgh Street, Colchester, known as "The Great Round Meeting House." A quick prayer of mine was: Lord, do it again with me, please...

Rev Asif Karam

JOHN WESLEY preached from this 18th Century Pulpit (removed from the first Wesleyan Chapel in Maidenburgh Street, Colchester, known as "the great round meeting house")



MALDON—Members of the Knit-N-Natter group with the bleed control kit safe that they saved for. It will be installed on the outside of the church in the next week or two.

BROOMFIELD METHODIST CHURCH

Lent and Easter at Broomfield



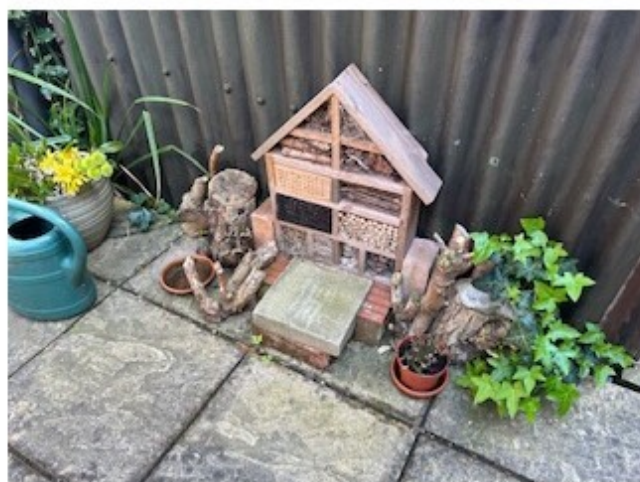
At our April Messy Church, the children had fun making gifts to give to their mums on Mothering Sunday, with the theme of Messy being "Thankfulness". The mums were kept busy with their own crafts so that the children's gifts could be kept secret

On Passion Sunday the service took the form of readings, hymns and music as we traced the steps of Jesus from Palm Sunday to his arrest and sentencing to death. At each stage of the journey a symbol was added to our cross which was made from our Christmas tree.





In our Peace garden wooden rabbits were added to an Easter tree, with the names of babies who were still born or who died shortly after birth. Parents and siblings came to remember their little ones who touched the earth so lightly but are always loved and never forgotten. These rabbits will now be in memory boxes which are kept at home by our families



Our Overcomers group have been busy transforming a sterile patio into a beautiful garden, a wonderful, colourful place to sit and reflect. On Easter morning our congregation were invited into the garden to think about the resurrection and to collect an Easter egg! At the end of the service everyone was given "seeds of hope" to plant and nurture at home for transplanting into the garden in a few weeks time.

Dianne Hodgkinson

Dear Friends,

Sheridan and I want to say a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to all our friends in the Chelmsford Circuit.

Our Farewell Service seems like quite some time ago now, with so much having happened since then, but on that occasion and at many other times, we've both felt totally overwhelmed by all your kindness, support and generosity.

Your good wishes towards us for the future and your appreciation of both mine and Sheridan's ministry whilst in Chelmsford were expressed in such a moving way at that service.

With the presence of the District Chair there we were reminded of being fully part of the Methodist 'Connexion', which is one of the distinct features of our approach to 'being the people of God'. We are very grateful to all who worked so hard to deliver such a joyful and Spirit-filled event, (even though there were tears at times!): The Circuit Leadership Team; Rev Asif, who crafted a moving service; and all those who participated, not least with music and singing and so many kind words.

In addition to the service, we have been blessed with many lovely cards and messages. Your generous gifts from both the Circuit and the churches have been another moving expression of your good wishes for us which we will translate into something to remember our precious Essex years by.

After moving on Sunday 30th March, I hit the ground running with the chaplaincy work commencing on Tuesday 1st April, but despite not being able to find my shoes amongst the boxes(!) all is going well so far. Sheridan's counselling work online is also up and running, with hardly a pause.

We have so much to give thanks to God for, but most of all it is for you all, God's people, the disciples of Christ, that we are grateful and giving thanks.

Blessings to you all,
Mark and Sheridan

A call to all Pastoral Carers



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->

BOOK ONLINE

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

CHELMSFORD CIRCUIT

WELCOME SERVICE

Rev. Asif Karam

Chelmsford Circuit Superintendent

and **Rev. Dr Jennifer Walters**

Service led by:

Rev. Dr David Chapman

District Chair,

Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District

Witham Methodist Church

Guithavon Street, Witham CM8 1BJ

Wednesday 3rd September 2025

7pm followed by refreshments


EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Large public car park on Guithavon Street.

karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk



The Methodist Church



Rev. Asif Karam cordially invites
you to join him for a
Reaffirmation Service
for all Local Preachers and
Worship Leaders
in the
Chelmsford Circuit

Trinity Methodist Church
Sunday 14th September 2025
6pm followed by refreshments

RSVP.

Guests, members of your family
and church members are welcome.

Karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk

Methodist Church Eco Community Network



Here we are very definitely moving into spring. The blackthorn is frothy with delicate white flowers, the hawthorne sprouting those bright green leaves tasting of cheese (I'm told), amorous frogs and romantically inclined hedgehogs making a racket in the garden at night....deep joy.

How serendipitous then, that the Eco Community Network is holding its next webinar on community gardens. 'Well that's all very well,' I hear you say, '...but our church doesn't have a garden.' Well I'm glad you said that, because we have four speakers with experience of four different ways in which our churches can create some sort of green space that benefits the community and the environment. We will be covering community gardens on church premises; a community garden on the land that once held a church; running a community garden 'offsite'; and how to do the garden thing when there is no available land, church-owned or otherwise.

If you're looking to become an Ecochurch you'll need to tick the outdoor space box one way or another, and this webinar will show you how. If you're not yet aiming for Ecochurch, come anyway and learn how to provide for your non-human community. What's not to like?

What: Eco Community Network 'Greening our Spaces: window boxes to community gardens'

When: 21 May, 1900-2100

Where: book here

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/methodist-church-eco-community-network-tickets-1113977529779?aff=oddtcreator>

Stuart Watkin

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Learning & Development Officer | The Connexional Team

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7467 5230

EASTER OFFERING

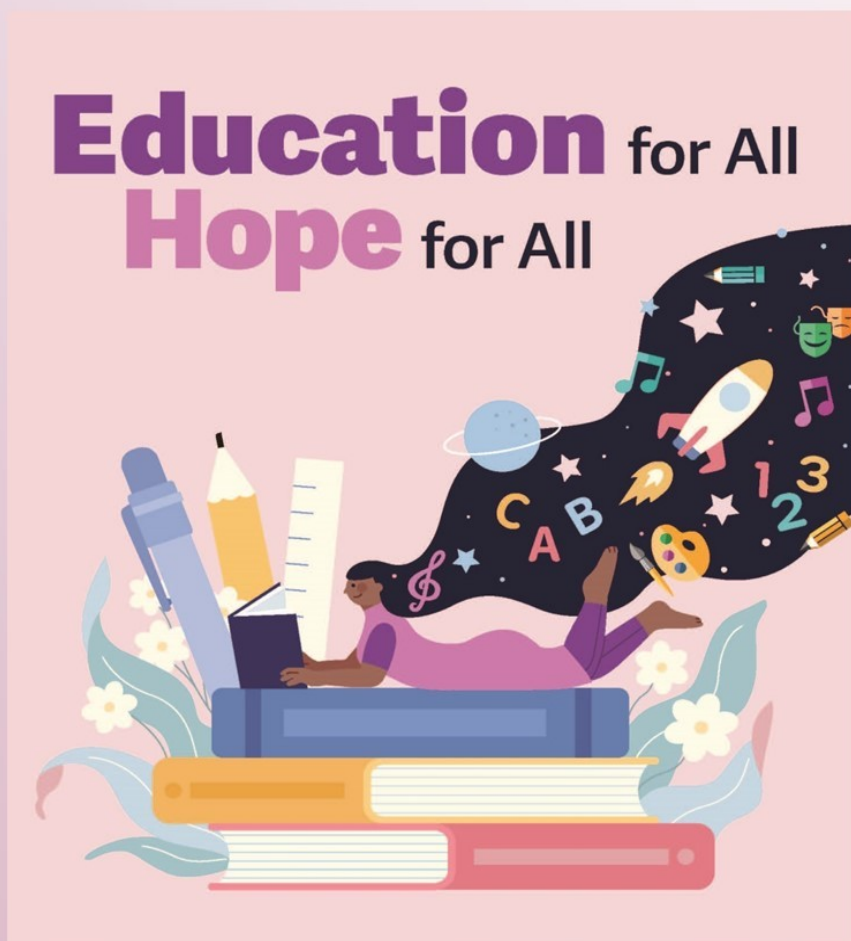
SUNDAY 18TH MAY 2025

4pm Witham Methodist Church

Please
come along
and
support
this event.

Everyone is
welcome.

Plenty of
parking in
nearby
public car



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



Methodist Women
in Britain

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

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

Witham Methodist Church. Guithavon Street CM8 1BJ

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN
ESSEX & EAST LONDON
BRADWELL
PILGRIMAGE
AND GATHERING

people of hope

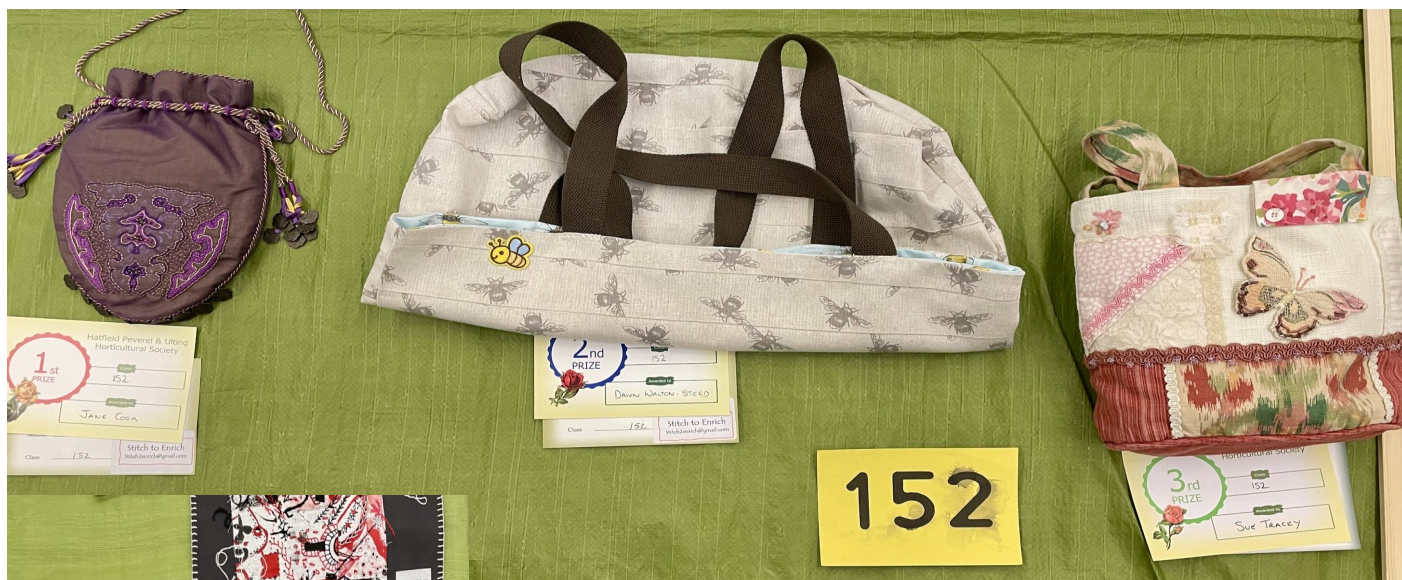
5th july 2025

Join us for a day of inspiring talks & reflections, workshops, live music & worship, time for prayer & contemplation, refreshments & fellowship. Starting from St Thomas's Church. **10:30am - 3:15pm**

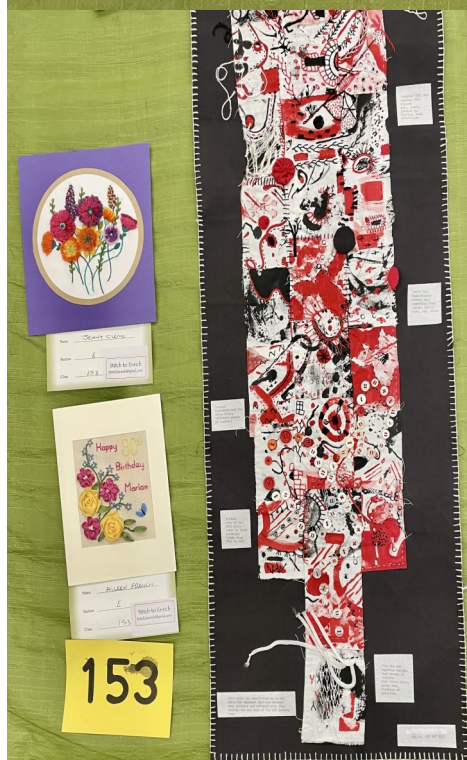
For more information bradwellpilgrimage.co.uk



With special guest,
theologian, writer and
broadcaster
Elaine Storkey



Well done to members of
Stitch to Enrich who
 presented a wonderful display
 of work in the handicrafts
 classes of the
**Hatfield Peverel and Ulting
 Horticultural Society**
 Village Show.
 You are all stars!



Strategies to Increase Church Attendance

Engaging the Community and Growing Your Congregation

Introduction

Increasing church attendance can be a challenging yet rewarding endeavour. It involves a combination of strategic planning, community engagement, and creating an inviting atmosphere. This document outlines effective strategies to attract new attendees and retain current members.

Understand Your Community

A deep understanding of the community's needs, demographics, and interests is crucial. Conduct surveys, hold focus groups, and engage with local leaders to gather insights. Tailor your church programs and services to meet these needs.

Create a Welcoming Environment

First impressions matter. Ensure that your church is clean, well-maintained, and accessible. Provide clear signage and friendly greeters to welcome visitors. Create a warm and inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels valued and accepted.

Enhance Worship Services

Revitalize your worship services to make them more engaging and relevant. Incorporate contemporary music, dynamic speakers, and multimedia presentations. Ensure that sermons are meaningful, inspiring, and relatable to the congregation's daily lives.

Offer Diverse Programs

Provide a range of programs that cater to different age groups and interests. This could include youth groups, Bible study classes, community service projects, and social events. Diversified programs can attract a broader audience and foster a sense of belonging.

Leverage Technology

Use technology to reach a wider audience. Live stream services, maintain an active social media presence, and create an informative and user-friendly website. Offer online resources such as podcasts, video sermons, and virtual prayer groups.

Engage in Community Outreach

Participate in community events and collaborate with local organizations. Host open houses, charity drives, and family-friendly activities. Being visible and active in the community helps build relationships and encourages people to visit your church.

Personal Invitations

Encourage congregation members to invite friends, family, and neighbours. Personal invitations can be highly effective in attracting new attendees. Provide invitation cards and organize 'Bring a Friend' Sundays to make it easier for members to extend invitations.

Continued/.....

Follow Up with Visitors

Implement a follow-up system to connect with visitors after their first visit. Send personalized emails or letters, make phone calls, and invite them to upcoming events. Show genuine interest in their feedback and address any concerns they may have.

Foster Small Groups

Small groups provide a more intimate setting for members to connect and grow in their faith. Encourage the formation of small groups based on interests, life stages, or geographic locations. Promote these groups as a way to build deeper relationships within the church community.

Provide Excellent Hospitality

Offer refreshments, childcare, and comfortable seating. Ensure that visitors have access to information about the church's programs and services. Train volunteers in hospitality to provide assistance and make visitors feel at home.

Celebrate Milestones and Achievements

Recognize and celebrate the milestones and achievements of your congregation. This could include baptisms, confirmations, anniversaries, and community service contributions. Celebrations foster a sense of community and make members feel appreciated.

Conduct Regular Assessments

Regularly assess and evaluate the effectiveness of your strategies. Gather feedback from congregation members and visitors. Use this information to make necessary adjustments and improvements.

Conclusion

Increasing church attendance requires a multifaceted approach that involves understanding your community, creating an inviting atmosphere, and offering engaging programs. By implementing these strategies, you can attract new attendees, retain current members, and grow your congregation.

CHELMSFORD CIRCUIT GRANT SCHEME

Supporting Churches within our Circuit

The Chelmsford Circuit Grant Scheme was adopted by the Managing Trustees at the Circuit Meeting on Monday 17th March 2025.

You can view The Terms of Reference on the Circuit Website along with Application Forms for three areas that you can apply for a grant, General, Property and Training.

<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/grants/>

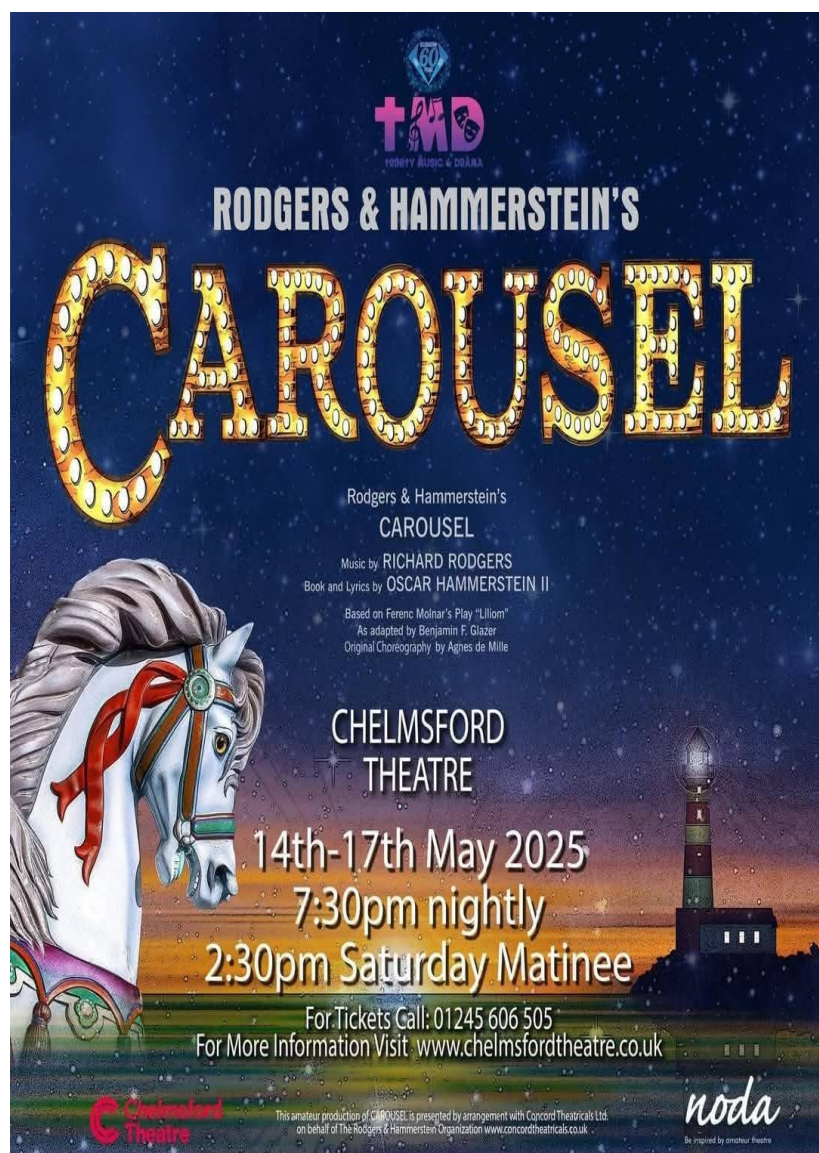
If you are interested, please speak to your own Treasurer or Representative to the Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustee) within your own church.

Fully completed application forms must be returned by the end of June 2025 for consideration by a Committee of Trustees, at the end of July 2025.

AUTHORISATION TO PRESIDE AT SERVICES OF HOLY COMMUNION.

We are delighted to announce that Val Carter and Jim Lowe have both been given authorisation to preside at Holy Communion Services in the current Connexional year to September 2025.

TRINITY MUSIC & DRAMA 14th to 17th May 2025



7.30pm nightly
and 2.30pm
Saturday Matinee
Book Chelmsford
Theatre

01245 606505
£21 - £23 pp

Great for all the family.



Premier.
lifeline | 0300 111 0101

HEALING
CONFERENCE
2025

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF SPOKEN BLESSING



Renowned speaker and author Roy Godwin unpacks the simple yet powerful ministry of speaking blessing.

THE GREAT HALL
Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London

17
MAY
10:00 - 4:30PM



KEY SPEAKER
ROY GODWIN
International Speaker
& Author



WORSHIP
DAVE BILBROUGH
Musician, Song Writer & Worship Leader



THE MCHW
STAFF TEAM



**JONATHAN
CLARK**
Director, Premier Lifeline



BOOK NOW
via our website at mchw.live or call the church office on 020 7654 3809

'Alison Bryan is a local preacher training in the N Herts Circuit.

She coordinates the Healing Ministry at Methodist Central Hall Westminster and is organising this year's annual healing conference coming up on May 17th at MCHW. The theme is **'The Transforming Power of Spoken Blessing' with speaker Roy Godwin.**

Roy is an international author and conference speaker who has broadcast frequently on radio and television.

He is known as a pioneer of the recovery of the simple yet powerful ministry of speaking blessing.

He is the founder of The Blessings Course and the missional Local Houses of Prayer movement, which have circled the globe.

His first book, *The Grace Outpouring*, tells of a prolonged move of God's Spirit at a remote location in Wales, when hundreds were saved, healed, restored, delivered, and set on fire for Jesus.

Come and hear incredible testimonies, experience God's transforming, healing power for yourself and leave equipped to speak powerful, transformational blessings over people and communities.

For more information and booking go to MCHW.live/healing2025



Annual Global Mission Conference 2025

"The World is my Parish - Celebrating World Mission in Methodism's past and exploring God's Mission in the future."



Friday 30th May to 1st June 2025

Cliff College, Calver, Hope Valley, Sheffield S32 3XG

We are delighted to welcome **Rev'd Reynaldo Leao Neto, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council** as our Keynote Speaker, as well as the Connexional Vice President, Carolyn Godfrey, and the Methodist Youth President, Bea Hulme.

Saturday will include **a time of celebration and worship**, and Sunday worship will include thanksgiving, for the contribution of lay mission partners.

There will also be panel and discussion time as we look to the future. In 'table talk' sessions, you will be able to talk with returned and previous mission partners, District Partnerships, Global Relationships area coordinators and MWM partners and friends.

Working with the Methodist Heritage and Communications teams, there will be opportunity to share memories of previous experiences, so do bring along (scannable) photos and memorabilia.

Book early, as we expect a full conference; Day visitors are also welcome Saturday and Sunday.

Do pass this information on to others who you think might be interested.

To book and for further information and updates go to
<https://mwm.org.uk/conferences/>

Contact: bookings@mwmuk.onmicrosoft.com

organised by Methodists for World Mission in partnership with
the Methodist Church in Britain - Global Relationships


The Methodist Church
Global Relationships

THE CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER

This is **YOUR** newsletter.

By contributing to the circuit newsletter, you play a vital role in enriching the spiritual life of the entire circuit. Your articles can inspire others to take action, provide comfort in times of need, and encourage a deeper understanding of faith.

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

Email: karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk

WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU





Full Brochure for 2025

[https://media.methodist.org.uk/media/documents/
Learning Network Brochure September 2024.pdf](https://media.methodist.org.uk/media/documents/Learning%20Network%20Brochure%20September%202024.pdf)

Also on the Circuit Website

[https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/training/learning-network-
guide-/](https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.co.uk/admin6/training/learning-network-guide/)

Many thanks for all those who have supported the Circuit Newsletter by sending in articles and sharing the newsletter with colleagues, friends and family. I really appreciate your

NEXT CIRCUIT MEETINGS

Monday 2nd June 2025—Halstead 7.15pm

Saturday 20th September—Trinity 9.45am till midday

Circuit Administrator: Karen Murrell.

Email: karen.murrell@chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk

[https://www.facebook.com/
chelmsfordcircuit](https://www.facebook.com/chelmsfordcircuit)

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

**‘Share your
news’**

**Deadline for
July/August 2025
by Mid June**