

APRIL 2025



A message from Revd Rosemary Mutopo

**WE ARE JOURNEYING WITH JESUS
TOWARDS THE CROSS -
Don't get left behind!**

As we move through this Lenten season, we are reminded that the Christian life is a journey—a journey with Jesus towards the cross. This path is not always easy, but it is filled with meaning, purpose, and ultimately, the hope of resurrection. However, this journey requires commitment. The question we must ask ourselves is: Are we walking closely with Jesus, or are we being left behind?

Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem, fully aware of the suffering that awaited Him. He never wavered in His obedience to the Father. In the same way we are called to stay focused on our faith, fixing our eyes on Jesus rather than the distractions of the world. In Luke 9:23, He tells us, *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”*

This Lenten season is an opportunity to examine our hearts. Are we fully committed to walking with Christ? Have we allowed complacency to set in? Have we become like the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, struggling to stay awake and alert in our faith?

A Journey of Reflection, Repentance, and Renewal: Lent is a season of self-examination and renewal. Just as Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness, preparing for His ministry, we are invited to reflect on our own spiritual walk. Are there burdens we need to lay down? Sins we need to confess? Attitudes we need to change? The journey towards the cross calls us to repentance and deeper intimacy with God.

A Journey of Love and Service: Jesus' road to the cross was marked by love—love for the outcast, the sinner, and the broken. As we follow Him, we must embody that same love. The best way to stay in step with Jesus is to live as He lived: serving others, forgiving freely, and sharing the hope of the Gospel with those who need it most.

Journey Leads to Victory: Though the journey to the cross is marked by sacrifice, it does not end in sorrow. The cross leads to the empty tomb! The resurrection reminds us that Jesus has conquered sin and death, giving us the promise of new life. The road ahead may be difficult, but if we stay close to Christ, we share in His victory. Let's not get left behind—let's stay faithful, stay watchful, and walk with Jesus all the way to the joy of Easter morning!

“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2). Amen!

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Have a blessed Easter

Rev Rosemary Mutopo

A MESSAGE FROM DAVID JEBB

As some of you may already be aware, one of our supernumerary ministers, Revd Peter Hudson, is currently in hospital undergoing treatment. He is not feeling well, and I had the privilege of visiting him at Watford Hospital, where I shared the Holy Communion with him.

I ask you please to uphold Peter, his wife Celia, and their children in your prayers at this difficult time. Peter is a beloved Methodist minister who retired in our Circuit and also served as a Free Church Chaplain at St. Albans Cathedral for so many years. He has been a remarkable presence in our community, known for his kindness, warmth, and unwavering faith.

Even amid his own pain and challenges, Peter never failed to smile and make others feel welcome. His resilience and commitment to God's work are an inspiration to us all. Let us surround him and his family with our prayers, asking for healing, comfort, and peace during this time.

Thank you for your support and for keeping Peter and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

CIRCUIT NEWS

CIRCUIT STAFF ANNUAL LUNCH AND HOLY COMMUNION – 20TH MARCH

On 20th March Circuit Presbyters, Lay Workers, Circuit Stewards, and a Supernumerary Minister gathered for our annual Holy Communion at Queenwood School near Potters Bar.

The first arrivals checked in at the school reception at 10:30am before walking to the school chapel for the service. The Holy Communion was presided over by the Chaplain, Revd Katie Douglas, with assistance from Revd Rosemary Mutopo. The liturgy was well-suited for the Lenten season, and Revd David Jebb delivered a reflection on Clarity on Our Lenten Journey on the Gospel of Luke 13:31-35. Revd Daniel Yovan read the Scripture, and our Senior Circuit Steward,



Stuart Johnson, led prayers.

Three school staff joined us for the service and the fellowship lunch in the dining hall, where we enjoyed a delicious meal with a variety of choices. Following lunch, we gathered for coffee, tea, and cake in the Head's End reception Room, enjoying a wonderful time of fellowship.

Our sincere thanks to Revd Katie Douglas for hosting this special time of worship and fellowship at Queenwood School. It was a truly meaningful and enriching experience for all who attended. We are looking forward to our next visit in March 2026.

David Jebb



SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

The circuit is planning to run another set of session of **Safeguarding Foundation Module Training**. This is for those who have yet to complete the training, as well as for those whose certification has now expired. Please remember that safeguarding training must be renewed **every four years**, and it is a **mandatory requirement** for **church officers, pastoral visitors, and all those working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults**.

Please contact our **Circuit Administrator, Autumn Leung** who is keeping a record for the Circuit, for further details. Her email is: admin@midhertsmethodists.org.uk

The District is running the following **Advanced Safeguarding Training** module online:

Tuesday 20th May 2025 @ 6.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1270494887409?aff=oddtcreator>

Please book these directly if you need to do the Advanced training course.

EDI TRAINING (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion)

Upcoming EDI Training Dates

We are grateful that **Revd Andrew Brazier** has kindly made himself available to lead some of these sessions.

- **Saturday, 26th April** – 9:30am to 1pm (in person) at St John's Methodist Church
- **Thursday 22nd May** – 2:00pm to 5:30pm (in person) at Hatfield Road Methodist Church
- **Wednesday, 4th June & Thursday 5th June** – 7:00pm to 8:30pm on line.

EDI training is mandatory for preachers, church stewards, pastoral leaders, and others.

If you have not completed this before, please check with **Autumn Leung** and book your place as soon as possible.

THINKING LUNCHESES AT MARLBOROUGH ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Please bring your own lunch and drinks. Half an hour talk and then discussion.

Donations will be gratefully received to cover expenses and any profits will be given to the speaker for a charity of their choice.

Thursday 3rd April from 12.30 to 1.30pm: Rev Peter Crumpler on "Trust in a sceptical world - who do you trust to tell you the truth - and how can we build trust within society."

Thursday 1st May 2025: Sophie Lawrence, Community Protection Herts CC: 'Prevent: a Home Office programme' - helping people vulnerable to radicalisation move away from extremism.

Thursday 5th June 2025: Tim Wood, Chief Executive, 'Through the Roof' - How a Christian charity changes the lives of disabled people around the world.
Please bring your own lunch & drinks. Half an hour talk, then discussion. Donations gratefully received to cover expenses: any profits will be given to the speaker for a charity of their choice.

LENT QUIET DAY AT BIRCHWOOD

I attended this day on 1st March, along with about 15 others from around the Circuit. The hospitality was warm and friendly, and the sessions were led for us by Deacon Malcolm Knowles. There were plenty of times of silence, when we could walk outside, or go to another room, and think about how to prepare ourselves for the coming season of Lent. As the basis for my contemplation, I chose the words from Matthew's Gospel: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." This led me to ask "Lord, what is your yoke?" And to write a poem:

"Take my yoke upon you."

What is your yoke, Lord?

"It is all the suffering in the world, which makes you weep.

It is Satan, who constantly attacks.

It is homeless people huddled in tents.

It is children who carry knives.

It is war.

It is hunger.

It is pain."

But how can I take all that upon me? How can you help me?

"Just do what you can".

I can help those in my own small sphere.

I can support those who have taken your yoke upon them.

I can pray.

I can pray.

I can pray."

"You already have my yoke.

Let's carry it together."

Diana Holt

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

A CHANCE TO CHAT!

A year ago Maggie Dodd, Anna Chaplain to St Albans, started a community initiative in a supermarket called "A Chance to Chat". Meeting in the café (with the agreement of the manager) it

offers folk an opportunity to come together for a cuppa and a chat.



It happens from 9.30am to 11.30am every Monday morning and is supported by a number of volunteers from various local churches. On 7th March we celebrated our first birthday with cake and a visit from the Mayor, Jamie Day, and the Mayoress.

Everyone is most welcome to call in for a Chance to Chat!

A PANCAKE PARTY AT HRMC

Lent started early at HRMC with a Pancake Party on Saturday 1st March, as you can see from the pictures below. As well as freshly cooked pancakes with a variety of tasty toppings, guests enjoyed a pancake themed quiz and table top games.



Hatfield Road - SATURDAY FAMILY TIME



A newly launched series of community events, offering an afternoon of fellowship and fun to children of primary school age and their parents. The initiative grew out of our congregation's conversations about mission in our community. There was also the fact that a cohort of children in our church is going through the best and most active years of their boyhood and girlhood

and so putting together an activity where they could let off some steam together seemed like a good idea.

Let's play some games you won't get to play in school, we said! Invite your school friends, we said! The youngsters heard the call: 12 of them participated in our Air Hockey Tournament in January, our inaugural event. Over two and half hours, they sparred against each other – first through a group stage and then through play-offs, all the way to a nail-biting final. For our second event in March, 15 boys and girls showed up to compete in the Remote-Control Car Race. On the racetracks, elaborately laid out in our Large Hall, we witnessed some thrilling moments of intense competition and driving skill. Good time was had by all and we were pleased to welcome more than a few families who found their way to our church for the first time. And so, we are looking forward to some more of it on Saturday 17th May – our next fixture when we'll host an afternoon of parent-child soft tennis doubles!



Tomas Cvrcek

SHENLEY'S ANNUAL PLANT SALE MAY 10TH 10.00 a.m.



Plants and more



You are invited to attend our

Easter Tea

Saturday 19th April 2025

Drop in anytime between 2.30pm and 4.30pm

at Hatfield Road Methodist Church.

All Ages Welcome

Homemade cakes,

Crafts and activities for children

All Free,

All donations will go to our three chosen charities



AND IN OTHER NEWS.....

MY RETURN BY NIGEL PERROTT

I am now rested and ready to return to the circuit. We are both thankful to the church for blessing us with this time out. Jane and I have travelled, visited friends, attended different churches, and spent time with our families.

During my time away, I finished the book Jane, and I had been working on for a few years, sharing our journey to faith and our experiences with the church.

This journey has often been a rocky one, and we have learned a great deal about ourselves and the churches we have served. We had to learn a new language, a cultural language and at the same time, the language of church!

The story is raw, sometimes funny and at times a little upsetting, but is our story and I hope you will find it encouraging. At its heart, it is a story about how God transformed us and gave us a new and full life.

The book is going to print as I write and will be available from the 1st of May. I will make it available in churches around the circuit and we both hope you enjoy the read!

(Editors' note: Our splendid proofreader, Eric, strongly recommends this book!)



Saturday Morning Prayers at 9am
in April 2025

5th April – Jean Owen

12th April – Deacon Nigel Perrott

19th April – Revd Daniel Yovan

26th April – Dr George Woods

"Come and join us for a 45-minute 'Let's Pray together'
via [Zoom](#)."

AN EXCITING MESSAGE FROM ANGELA BRYDON

Joint District Eco Lead Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District

Angela reports that our Methodist District has reached the target of 100 churches registered for Eco Church! The 100th Church was Kensworth in the South Bedfordshire Circuit.

She also provides a quick update on Blister pack recycling, which seems to be hard to do. Boots are rolling out a scheme but not for bulk collections. She has looked at Terracycle which are quite expensive to use. The cheapest box collection she has found is ReFactory; they have a variety of collections boxes available offering better value for money than Terracycle, You have to pay for the box, which costs from £72 to £108 depending on size. This cost includes a recycled box liner, convenient free collection of your full box, and 100% recycling of all your waste. You can find more information at:

<https://shop.myrefactory.com/product/medicinal-packaging-blister-pack-recycling-box/>



Shenley Methodist Church 

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE SUNDAY 20 APRIL

5:30AM AT SHENLEY WALLED GARDEN
RADLETT WD7 9DW

Join us for a Holy Communion service
with an Easter message, led by the
Circuit Staff.

After the service, enjoy a freshly made Easter breakfast
at a nearby restaurant, which we have specially booked
to open early on Easter Sunday.
Breakfast will be available for purchase.

Please bring a head torch or a light
to help you see the order of service and
sing the joyous Easter hymns.

ALL WELCOME!



St Albans & Welwyn Methodist Circuit 

CIRCUIT YOUTH Bowling NIGHT

2 MAY 2025, 5-8PM

AGES 7-15*
*along with a responsible adult

Hollywood Bowl Stevenage
Stevenage Leisure Park, Six Hills Way,
Stevenage SG1 2UA

FREE FOOD & DRINK

To book a place, email:
rosemary.mutopo@methodist.org.uk
We hope to share transport to the venue

The Fund for Human Need annual report is now available at this link: https://fundforhumanneed.org.uk/?page_id=38



SANDRA LOPEZ

Partnership Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean in the Connexional Team



Revd David Jebb had the privilege of inviting Sandra to Radlett Free Church on 9th March.

She shared about her work and testimony, which was truly inspiring. He also invited her to write an article for the Methodist Recorder. Here, Sandra writes:

Empowering Churches, Transforming Communities!

Popping to the corner shop has been a cherished tradition for millions of Brits since childhood - it's such a convenience! But in Barinas, Venezuela, there's a corner shop that's more than just convenient – it's a beacon of hope, providing groceries that the local community otherwise could not afford.

Venezuela has faced years of crisis, with obstacles to democracy and economic sanctions. Over 7.7 million Venezuelans have migrated to escape poverty. Despite having the largest crude oil reserves, the country's oil industry has collapsed, leading to hyperinflation and unaffordable everyday purchases.

In this crisis, the Methodist Community of Venezuela, through the Bread of Life Methodist Church project, built a corner shop to offer basic food and hygiene items at affordable prices. The local minister, Revd Tomás Alfredo Camacho, shares that most vendors sell goods at prices local families can't afford. Now, the community can buy essential items at accessible prices. Beatriz Gomez, a local woman, expresses her gratitude for the shop; *“Before, the bodegas (corner shop in Spanish) were all very far from me. Now I have one on my doorstep. Prices are very reasonable, and I can find everything I need, despite it being a small shop. I am so grateful to Tomás...and the church that has helped them to set up this corner shop.”*

This corner shop sends a powerful message to the community that God sees them and that God is showing His love through the local Methodist Church.

You can read more about the corner shop project in the spring edition of the Connexion Magazine, or hear Pastor Tomas talk about the corner shop in the recent Lent Soul Food resources: <https://youtu.be/9bHNZf48Mjg?si=i4QHOe7bt6EYwVbC>

It is through the generous donations of Methodists in Britain to the **World Mission Fund** that work like this is possible. To learn more and donate please visit our website: [Give to the World Mission Fund - The Methodist Church](#)

We are all invited to participate in our global Church relationships. Join us in prayer, consider encountering the world church through a volunteer placement overseas and continue learning about what God is doing among our overseas partners. Stay up to date by signing up for the Global Relations e-newsletter: [Global Relationships E-Newsletter - The Methodist Church](#) or contact us directly at gr.admin@methodistchurch.org.uk

Sandra Lopez, Partnership Coordinator for the Americas



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 12th April - District Circuit Stewards meeting 10am.

Friday 18th April - Good Friday

Saturday 19th April - Easter Tea at HRMC p6

Sunday 20th April - Easter Sunday Sunrise Service p8

Monday 21st April – Revd Daniel Yovan’s Sabbatical leave until 21st July 2025.

Saturday 26th April - EDI training, 9.30am - 1pm at SJPB p3

Sunday 27th April – St George’s Day Parade.

Wednesday 30th April – Deacon Nigel’s sabbatical support team on Zoom.

Thursday 1st May - Thinking Lunch AT MRMC p3

Friday 2nd May - Bowling Night p8

Saturday 10th May - Shenley Plant Sale p8

Sunday 11th May - Ecumenical Service, Greenwood URC, Chiswell Green, Watford Rd, St Albans AL2 3HG.

Tuesday 20th May - Safeguarding Training p3

HOW DO I TO SEND SOMETHING FOR INCLUSION IN REPORTER?

Please send your articles to news@methodistreporter.org.uk

Copy must be received by the 20th of the month,
for the following month’s issue.

Please ensure you have permission from people (or young people’s parents) for their picture to be published in Reporter.

Copy is acceptable only in the following file formats:

DOCUMENTS: Microsoft Word (.doc/docx). PICTURES: Jpeg

No scans of documents are acceptable, only the originals, please.

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