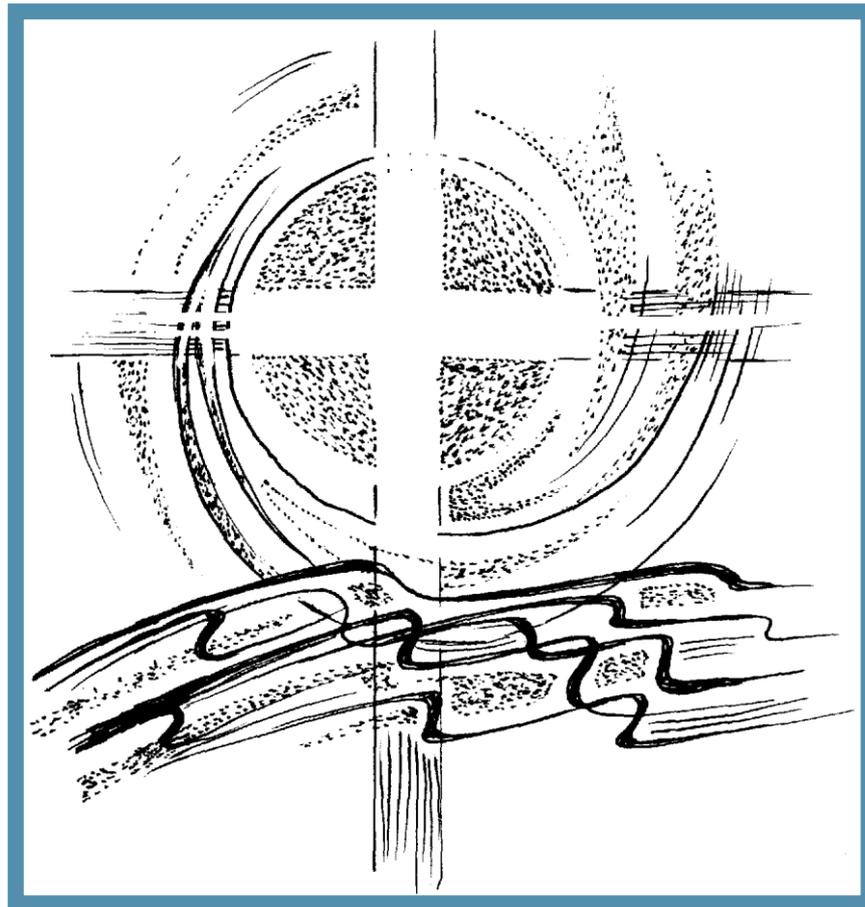


# WINDOW ON WESLEY'S



**OCTOBER 2020**

## **STAFF**

**Ministers:** The Revd Canon Dr Jennifer H Smith BA PhD  
M.Phil (Superintendent)  
The Revd Steven Cooper BTh MA(Cantab)  
MA(Winton)

**Associate Ministers:** The Revd John Cooke MA (Supernumerary)  
The Revd Brian Goss MA (Supernumerary)  
The Revd Paul Hulme BA (Supernumerary)  
The Revd Dr John Lampard BA M.Th  
(Supernumerary)  
The Revd Stephen Penrose (Supernumerary)  
The Revd Ian Yates (Supernumerary)

**Authorised Presbyter:** The Revd Canon Dr Keith Riglin MA MTh ThD

**Leysian Missioner:** Mrs Judith Bell MA(Cantab)

**Community Worker:** Ms Sally Rush BA MA MLitt

**Museum:** Mr Christian Dettlaff MA (Curator)  
Miss Gemma Smith BA (Hons) MA (Learning &  
Community Engagement Officer)

**Administration:** Mrs Ling Arzeian  
Miss Beatrice Omane  
Mrs Tracey Smith

**Caretaking:** Mr Louis Oludare

**Organist:** Mr Elvis Pratt BEng (Hons)

**Church Office:** 49 City Road  
London EC1Y 1AU  
(T) 020 7253 2262  
(E) [administration@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:administration@wesleyschapel.org.uk)

Dear Friends,

Welcome to autumn at Wesley's Chapel; I write this as leaves are beginning to fall, and as the dark evenings are drawing in.

We are coming through a trying and turbulent time, and one we hoped would be over by Autumn: the end point, and time when we can sing and gather and travel, and generally move forward in all our lives, feels like it is still receding in the distance. Saying this is not to be down hearted but to be real: there is never more cause for thanksgiving to God. I have been extraordinarily encouraged seeing the things you are all engaged in – not as superhuman heroes, but as companions with one another in our prayer, work, and care.

With this in mind, our theme for the year is '**Answering the Call.**' In our Annual Report we will be sharing stories of how some of us have been and are 'answering the call,' both during lockdown and as we go forward. We do not know what will come, but we know we will walk with God, and with each other. And we have never been more needed than in these months, when so many have been isolated.

This month, we have some dates upcoming: **Harvest Thanksgiving will be 11 October**, when we will gather gifts for the Whitechapel Mission – see the list below. **General Church Meeting (virtually and in person for those who are able) will be 12.30 on 18 October.** There is a chance to look at where we are, financially and missionally, ask questions, and shape where we are going. We will also elect trustees to serve this year, as we 'answer the call' as a church to serve Methodism, and our community.

Then **25 October we have our Church Anniversary:** we will commission trustees and give thanks to God. Our guest preacher will be Professor Anthony Reddie, pre-eminent Black British theologian and Director of the Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture. Anthony is a local preacher, and hails from Bradford.

He will also be launching the new edition of his book, 'Is God Colour Blind,' which offers theological foundations from which to address the imperative of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement in the life of our local, and global church.

We have found, in these months, that we can be faithful in the smallest things, and make a large impact: livestreamed daily prayer at 10 am and weekly Bible study is a good example, building relationships with a whole new diaspora of people using the simplest means of grace. God has placed this church in a position to serve not only its membership and community, but as a support to many. And we will continue to answer God's call as you listen for it.

Please pray for one another, and stay in touch with your pastoral leader: it may be a long winter to come, but spring will follow.

***With every blessing, Jen***

## **Rooms to let**

The Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Community currently have rooms available to let, and is looking for new people to join the community.



The cost of the rooms available vary and as part of the community we will also require people to volunteer time and commit to coming to our monthly gathering.

To find out more details and request an application form please contact the office at Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission (tel: 020 7253 2262) or email Sally Rush our community worker ([cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk))

# HARVEST THANKSIVING 11 October: Whitechapel Mission needs us more than ever!

Make gifts of money and see what is happening at their website, <https://whitechapel.org.uk> or bring physical gifts to church on 11 October. All will be delivered with appropriate safeguards. As of 2 October, these are the needs:

## Tinned/Dry Food

We have an abundance	We are managing	We need help!	We are desperate!
Pasta Soups Tinned Vegetables Tea/T-bags Tinned Meat Tinned Tuna/Fish Porridge Peanut Butter	Tinned Fruit	Pepper Salt Chopped Tomatoes Weetabix Shredded Wheat Cornflakes	* Ketchup * Brown Sauce * Chocolate Spread * Runny Honey * Nuttella * Squash Pot Noodles Biscuits Baked Beans Plum Tomatoes Sugar Coffee Instant Hot Chocolate



## Toiletries

We have an abundance	We are managing	We need help!	We are desperate!
Toothpaste Bubble Bath Sanitary Towels Soap Shampoo	Toothbrushes Razors Talc Combs Face Cream Shaving Foam	Body Lotion Body Wash Ladies Make-up Hand Cream	Deodorant

## Clothing

We have an abundance	We are managing	We need help!	We are desperate!
Suits Jumpers T-Shirts Padded Shirts Women's Clothing	Trousers 36" waist and above Light Sweaters Hand Towels Bath Towels Shirts Mens Gloves Black Woolen Hats Woolen Scarves Knickers & Bras	Winter Jackets Winter Coats Baseball Caps Shoe & Boot laces	Underpants Socks Boxers Jeans 28-36" Trousers 28-34" Small Rucksacks Mens Trainers Mens Shoes



### ***Bedding - They cannot use duvets and pillows***

We have an abundance	We are managing	We need help!	We are desperate!
Sheets	Dressing Gowns Pyjamas	Blankets	Sleeping Bags

### ***Household***

We have an abundance	We are managing	We need help!	We are desperate!
Toilet Rolls Phone Chargers	Candles Cotton Buds	Nail Clippers 35mm Film Canisters (used to distribute shampoo)	Carrier Bags

### **October Lunchtime Recitals (1.05pm) Entry Free of Charge**

06.10.20	Ivan Hovorun	Piano
13.10.20	Jaga Klimaszewska	Violin
20.10.20	Anthony Gritten	Organ
27.10.20	Julia Raeburn/David Elwin	Flute/Piano



Our Minister, the Revd Steven Cooper writes...

### **Approaching a new normal...**

Following the summer holiday period (such as it was) and then a positively eventful September—with the beginning of the new Methodist connexional year, our visit by the President of the Conference, and our reopening of our doors for Sunday morning worship in-person—as we enter October, and with the now-familiar prospect of continuing restrictions on daily life for at least the next several months, it feels again like we are finding our way into some sort of ‘new normal’.

At Wesley’s Chapel & Leysian Mission, one way that this ‘new normal’ finds its expression is in our now well-established pattern of worship. The backbone of this pattern has become our daily service of morning prayer at 10am Monday to Saturday—accessible to all via our livestream online, or dialling in by phone—together with our Wednesday and Thursday lunchtime services, and of course our worship on a Sunday. If you haven’t discovered all of these worship opportunities yet, do take a look: all services remain viewable on our livestream channel after the event, and many find it very helpful to tune in later at a time suitable for them.

After so many months of unfamiliarity and upheaval that have made planning and development difficult, the sense of a ‘new normal’ (of sorts) brings with it the possibility of new development in some aspects of our life as a Church that had been somewhat stunted by the experience of the past months. I’m delighted to highlight three of these developments here:

### **Choir and new Music Group**

I rejoice in the musical gifts of many in our congregation and the way that you enrich our worship. Thanks especially to Elvis Pratt, our organist, and to Charles Burnett and Lorraine Davis, and to

our choir director Mikyung Kim, for all you have contributed over these past weeks, and which you continue to do!

As it continues to be difficult for many to gather physically, our choir has adapted to the new circumstances by recording its anthems for our worship—about one per month—‘virtually’, with each member of the choir recording their part at home, all coordinated by our choir director Mikyung, who then wonderfully combines the many recording together to create the choir’s performance that we hear in worship. **The choir is always on the look-out for new members, and is for anyone who can sing:** if you’d be interested in giving it a try, please don’t hesitate. Contact Mikyung at [mikyung.kim.9@gmail.com](mailto:mikyung.kim.9@gmail.com)

Alongside this, we are now expanding our musical offering with the formation of the Music Group: comprising both singers and instrumentalists. This Music Group will play in person, in our Sunday morning worship—typically once a month—and is **for those who can read music, and who are confident in performing with a relatively small amount of rehearsal.** It will sing and play a broad choral and instrumental repertoire, according to the gifts of those who come. If this sounds of interest to you, please again contact Mikyung who will coordinate this group.

### **‘Disciple’ Bible Study course starting in January**

As an aid to our growth in our knowledge and understanding of the Bible, and of Christian discipleship, we shall be launching in January the year-long **Disciple** Bible Study course. This is a high-commitment course, entailing daily individual Bible reading (amounting to about 30mins a day, six days a week) together with 34 weekly meetings of participants together for prayer, reflection and worship, spread out with holidays over the course of the year. Over the course, we will read around 70% of the whole Bible, and develop deep resources in ourselves for how we apply our faith to our life. It is a tried and tested course using excellent resources,

and all who have participated in Disciple in the past (myself included) attest to its transformative quality.

The course, we plan, will be led by me and by our Community Worker Sally Rush—and is open to everyone. If you would be interested, or would like to know more, please contact me at [minister@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:minister@wesleyschapel.org.uk) or via our office. We shall confirm the exact schedule for the course in due course, in consultation with those who would like to take it up.

This high-commitment course will run alongside our various less-intensive ways of engaging with Scripture and in reflecting upon our Christian discipleship week by week.

### **Young people's pilgrimage to Taizé in summer 2021**

A heads-up that we are working on plans—subject to the coronavirus situation—for a trip to the Taizé Community in France next summer, for young people and young adults from age 15 (up to age 30). It will be for a week, around the end of July—full details to be confirmed next month: please watch this space. This was sadly cancelled, inevitably, this year; but it promises to be an incredible and transformative experience for those who come.

### **New Islington Challenging Inequalities Coalition**

Lastly, a new development in the Borough of Islington: I'm very pleased to be appointed to the newly-formed Challenging Inequalities Coalition, established by Islington council as part of a new, concerted Challenging Inequalities programme.

The council has expressed a resolute commitment to challenging inequality, racism and injustice in Islington, and to making its community, services and own workplace fairer. The council's commitments toward this end include:

- Ensuring they lead the way as an exemplar employer tackling issues around recruitment and selection, staff development and ensuring they have a representative workforce at all levels of the organisation
- Working with partner organisations to ensure they are collectively working towards tackling racism, inequality and injustice
- Ensuring their Covid-19 recovery plans focus on supporting Black and ethnic minority communities and other disadvantaged groups
- Working with the police to understand the reasons for the high rates of stop and search for the Black community and what can be done to address this
- Investigating the history and origins of all statues, artworks and heritage plaques across the borough to ensure they do not represent issues and events which go against Islington's long history of equality and fairness
- Working with schools to ensure the school curriculum highlights issues of racism, inequality and injustice and is honest about the role of Britain in history
- Creating forums for staff and the community to engage with and be at the heart of our challenging inequality programme.

I've been appointed, as part of this programme, to the Challenging Inequalities Coalition on behalf of the Islington Faiths Forum (of which I am a board member). It met for the first time last week, and I really look forward to the opportunities that it offers for us to work together in pursuit of these aims.

As always, please don't hesitate to be in touch if there is anything that you would like to talk about—in your life, or regarding the life of the Church, or any questions that you have. In these continuing challenging times, may God bless you this month, as always.

**Steven**

## **Tales of a Travelling Preacher Memories of Fifty Years as a Methodist Local Preacher**

*As we come to the end of these memoirs, we give thanks to God for Graham Warr and his continuing ministry.*

For the last eighteen years the ageing and shrinking congregations have become even more apparent. As a preacher the message has subtly changed. I always keep a Children's item available but often don't use it. Sometimes there may be one or two little ones and I do take a story and often one of my puppets just in case.

Recently I have been asked to preach in the Chinese Congregation service that worships at Woking Trinity on Sunday afternoons. I had no idea what to expect the first time I preached. Simon, one of the leaders, led me by the hand, and with the exchange of many emails between us I prepared a sermon for him to translate before the service.

I was very nervous but the service went very well. Our great God had prepared me for this experience because as a Heritage Steward at Wesley's Chapel I had conducted groups from Korea and South America who used a translator and I understood how it worked. I was conscious that a fifteen-minute sermon in English, with a translator takes roughly thirty minutes. The congregation appeared appreciative and happy and it was a wonderful experience.

When I asked Simon how it worked for him, he smiled, and said, "It was very good, but a bit short, we usually have a longer sermon in Chinese without any translation. It is not often a preacher is told the sermon was a bit short. I have been preaching there a couple of times a year since and I enjoy the challenge, the wonderful welcome, the sincerity of the congregation, the joy in their worship but especially that little cup of green tea, slipped into my hand after the sermon. So, refreshing!

Recently the Woking and Walton on Thames Circuit amalgamated with the Guildford Circuit to form the Wey Valley Circuit this has brought more travelling and the opportunities to explore new ways of worship and I am back as a bit more of a travelling preacher to Guildford, Godalming, Stoughton, Merrow and West Horsley. However, the Gospel has not changed but how it is presented has and I have been challenged to present it in different ways for different congregations.

Over the past few years as a Heritage Steward at Wesley's Chapel I have discovered more about the Wesley brothers and early Methodism and it has broadened my faith and knowledge. Last year, 2019, God allowed me the great privilege of preaching twice at the Chapel for a Thursday lunchtime service.

It has become clear to me that God wants us as Christians to share the Gospel by talking about our faith with confidence and openness both in and outside church. As congregations our attitude to worship should be positive and to seek God's word for each of us as individuals and congregations. To be positive in our approach to variations and new forms of worship to encourage and support them even if it is not to our taste and to avoid negative criticism.

When I was starting out in 1970 a Local Preacher colleague, who was a member of my church in Lymington, gave me this advice. Do not be afraid of your youth because we need modern ideas to develop and enhance our worship or it will fade away. She was eighty-four and told me she was always looking to develop and improve her services. She gave me the simple example that she felt the language used about God in the Lord's Prayer was out of date and confided that she didn't use 'thy or thine anymore but you and yours'. Since then when using the traditional form, I have always used you and yours. Now we have a more up to date form.

Change to meet changing needs is not the same as change for changes sake. Indeed, our God, Father/Mother, Son and Holy

Spirit is always present in all we do guiding, leading and sometimes pushing us to love and serve him in changing ways to serve a constantly changing world. As a Preacher and practicing Christian I am often aware I could and should do better, but our loving Lord is always there to support and forgive.

My colleague was right because we do need new blood and ideas across the age range to preach the Gospel of God's love for us.

As Charles Wesley wrote: *'He, (Jesus) left his father's throne above – so free so infinite his grace – Emptied himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race, 'Tis mercy all immense and free; for O my God, it found out me.*

If God has found out you and presented a challenge to take on the work of a Worship Leader or Local Preacher. I hope these memories will show you how God goes with us in every situation. I have found this text to be so encouraging and supportive.

*'In all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither, nor life, nor death, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* Romans 8:37-39 NRSV

Please listen to that call and prayerfully respond.

In spite of all my weaknesses and failings I know God has used me. I pray to continue a bit longer as a preacher but when the time comes for it to end I hope to share this sentiment of Charles Wesley:

*No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him is mine!  
Alive in Him my living head, and clothed in righteous divine,  
Bold I approach the eternal throne and claim the crown, through  
Christ, my own.*

**Graham Warr – Local Preacher and Heritage Steward**

## **A tribute to Naibuka (Sam) Qarau**

*John Showemimo (one of our loyal band of sound engineers and Sunday Stewards and also a church member) wrote the following hymn as a tribute to the late Naibuka (Sam) Qarau to the tune of Charles Wesley's "A Charge To Keep I Have" or alternatively "Blest Be The Tie That Binds."*

We thank you blessed Sam  
For all the good you've done  
Your gracious service to us all  
From morn till rising sun

Faithful soldier of Christ  
Was filled with grace and love  
We miss you Sam, a precious gift  
From God who reigns above.

We thank God for your life  
A friend that we adore  
You're surely missed by all of us  
From land to blissful shore.

Well done dear blessed Sam  
You've passed God's final test  
Receive from God, your glorious crown  
Enter your blessed rest.



Hi

At the moment we're in a time of listening, and this is particularly true in my role.

I'm listening to the community (within and beyond Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission) as part of our Community Audit. It is about listening to and praying for the community....so I'd love to hear your stories, particularly if you live in the area. Please email me at [cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk) or ring the office and arrange an appointment with me.

Wednesday mornings have taken on a special place in my calendar as I go on prayer walks in the community, or if restrictions return pray for it from a distance. So far, we've had a focus on schools, colleges and universities; pubs and the night time economy, gyms and leisure spaces; and the local community organisations and hubs we are part of.

As we write, if restrictions don't change, we are restarting socially distanced socials whilst maintaining an online element and a Zoom based bible study. If you're 18-30's and want to be involved, please do get in touch.

Blessings

***Sally - Community Worker (Emerging Adults)***

### **The Field Bible**

I must have been 8 or 9 when I made my first visit to Wesley's Chapel with my Grandmother. We came to a service celebrating the International Bible Reading Association, of which she was a local representative, and each year my brother and I were given the I.B.R.A. Bible Reading Notes. After the service we visited John Wesley's House which at that time also housed the Museum.

One of the items that made a lasting impression on me was the Field Bible. I remember being overawed that this bible had actually been used by John Wesley himself. Now, of course, I know that the bible we have in our collection is not the one owned by John Wesley but a similar copy to the one John Wesley obtained in 1766 and subsequently gave to Henry Moore.

Henry Moore came to London from his home in Dublin in 1751 and was completely unimpressed when he heard John Wesley preach! However, in 1777 he was converted and became a Local Preacher, travelling round Ireland, he also opened a school and in 1784 he was stationed at Wesley's Chapel and was John Wesley's travelling companion until 1786. In 1789 he was one of the first three preachers to be ordained by John Wesley for the work in England. He was appointed the Superintendent Minister at Wesley's Chapel from 1812 to 1813 and 1823 to 1825. When he died in 1844 his executors presented the Field Bible to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. This bible is the one passed down from President to President at the opening of Conference each year.

Many people think that the name Field Bible comes from the fact that John Wesley carried it with him on his journeys, in the field. However, it is actually known as a Field Bible because it was 'Printed by John Field one of his Highnesses Printers. 1658'.

From the time when the first translations of the bible into English were first printed the publishing was very strictly controlled by the government, on the insistence of the Church of England Ecclesiastical Court. The Archbishops were very reluctant to let the 'ordinary worshipers' read the bible for themselves and, at first, tried to suppress any translations from Latin into English being read. The first translators were treated as heretics and severely punished, many being burnt at the stake. When English versions were finally allowed any publishing firm who wanted to print a bible had to have a special government authorized license. John Field held one of these authorized licenses.

I find the Prayer Room in Wesley's House one of the most important and significant rooms and it is the room that a lot of visitors particularly want to see. One of the most common questions to be asked is "Is this John Wesley's Bible"? Even Methodist visitors often don't know the history and it is a joy to be able to explain the above to them. I am grateful to my Grandmother for introducing me to Wesley's Chapel and now being able to act as a Heritage Steward. I wonder how surprised and pleased she would be.

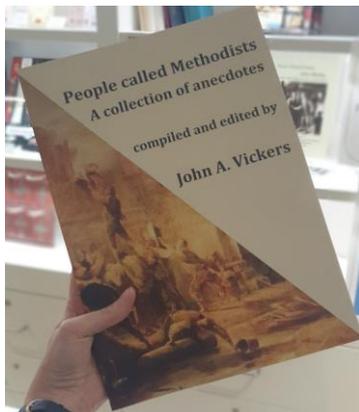
### ***Carole Merriman – Heritage Steward***

#### **A chance for all ages to get involved!**

Currently the Museum continues to open 2 days a week on Thursdays and Fridays, with the situation under regular review in line with government guidelines. For those that are unable to visit, we are still running several initiatives to keep people engaged. Christian, the Museum's Curator, is sharing his knowledge of our furniture collection whilst the House is closed with a series of short videos and so far, he has looked at Wesley's study chair, bookcase, Conference chair, bureau and most recently, the highboy which is currently in the Preacher's Room. To view the videos, visit our Youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3EC0AaQe3mLQTrdBkWqOUA>

We are also running some competitions. We were delighted to receive a new book for our Museum shop by John Vickers 'People called Methodists: A collection of Anecdotes'. We have one copy to give away! Just share your favourite Methodist anecdote, it can be historical or linked to your time at the Chapel. We will pick a winner at random to win the book. Please email Gemma with your anecdote at [Iso@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:Iso@wesleyschapel.org.uk) or write to the



usual Wesley's Chapel address, FAO Gemma. Please send any entries by 18<sup>th</sup> October.

We are also running a creative competition for younger ones. With October half-term fast approaching we are asking for some new creative designs for the façade of the Chapel. Children can re-create the façade using any materials they have at home: paint, pens, pencils, craft materials, loo rolls, collage or lego. There are two age categories Under 5s and 5-13, with the winner chosen by Jen! A photo of the entry should be sent to Gemma at [Iso@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:Iso@wesleyschapel.org.uk) by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The prize for the under 5s will be two lovely Usbourne books, 'Peep Inside a Beehive' and 'Pop-Up London'. The over 5s will win a copy of 'Where's Wally: Double Trouble at the Museum' and 'Art Lab for Kids: 52 Creative Adventures in Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Paper, and Mixed Media'. Visit our website to find out more plus an outline template for the younger artists to use:

<https://www.wesleysheritage.org.uk/family-visits-projects/>

**DESIGN YOUR OWN CHAPEL COMPETITION!**

Get those creative skills fired up to re-imagine the look of Wesley's Chapel.

You can use any media you like: pens, paper, collage, sculpture, paint or Lego.

Visit our website to find out more  
[www.wesleysheritage.org.uk/family-visits-projects](http://www.wesleysheritage.org.uk/family-visits-projects)

## Roundabout

*One of our long time church members calls to mind the changes he has witnessed to the area surrounding Old Street roundabout over the years since he was a child in this poem:*

When the roundabout at Old Street was a crossroads,  
Some landmarks, well remembered, are no more.  
Gone are Kensitas and Bovrils, gone is Dawsons  
That all-sell everything Department Store.

On the north west corner of the Old Street crossing  
The Lying In, where many local folk were born,  
Behind it was the Bank of England printers,  
Former site of a Mad House. Hopes forlorn.

Just past the Vinegar grounds was Ma Gold's fish-shop,  
A miserable place to get a meal.  
The Alexander tearooms were much better -  
More smart, more posh, a far more better deal.

Bombed early in the war, the East Road Cinema  
Was the start of devastation down that street.  
Café, sweetshop, barbers – down to the Three Crowns.  
Demolished to erect an office suite.

The Leysian Mission, now so drastically altered,  
Converted to a smart apartment block.  
Boots, now long gone, turned into Starbucks.  
Giving local elders quite a shock.

It is some fifty odd years since that crossroads  
Became the roundabout we know today  
Will the character and atmosphere of that time,  
Be replaced? We can only hope it may!

AGW



# ALL HALLOWS' EVE - AT HOME CELEBRATION

We're offering free activity  
packs (including craft  
materials)  
to help you celebrate light &  
hope in times of darkness &  
fear.

Order your **FREE** activity pack  
via **Eventbrite**

wesleyschapel.org.uk



Wesley's Chapel  
& Leysian Mission

You can find by searching "All Hallows Eve" on Eventbrite, or the link is  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/all-hallows-eve-at-home-celebration-tickets-122243340121>

## **SERENDIPITY THIRTY-FIVE**

Thanks to the scourge of the Corona Virus pandemic, those of us Heritage Stewards who live in the suburbs of London, or further afield, have been kept away from central London and Wesley's Chapel for months. The Museum of Methodism, John Wesley's House and of course the Chapel itself, have been locked up and inaccessible. As a result, most of us, like the Chapel members, and any visitors, have been denied the opportunity to visit a place which we have grown to love. Not only that, but we have also been unable to journey to see those sites in London associated with John Wesley and his family. Because this is true also for most people, this latest series of Serendipity articles has been prepared as a means of providing a vicarious way of giving Methodists, and any others interested in the history of our denomination, with an opportunity to make an armchair visit to some of those places in London which are within easy access of Wesley's Chapel and are associated with John Wesley and his family.

### **Wesley London:**

#### **Part One:**

Since Wesley's Chapel, "*The Cathedral of Methodism*", sits at the heart of an area which has many sites having some connection with the Wesley family and indeed others are within easy walking distance, it is, a good starting off point to begin our visit. This is what would be learned from a Heritage Steward led guided tour.

#### **Wesley's Chapel Tour - Early History of The Chapel**

Although the Chapel has only been in the part of London, now known as Islington, for just over 240 years it is an excellent place from which to start our exploration of Wesleyan London, because while it was not the first site to have some association with John, it is, perhaps the last.

The modern-day Chapel not only contains many mementos of its builder but also shows evidence of the changes made over the years of prayer filled worship, by the generations of Wesley's followers who have made the building their spiritual home. It has long served this purpose, but of course it started as the replacement for the Foundery. That is, John Wesley's first London Headquarters where he pioneered the work of his mission and formed the foundation of the practice of Methodism.

The Foundery had been established in 1740 in a ruined ordnance factory which John had adopted and adapted for his work as described in Serendipity Twenty-nine which like all previous articles can be accessed online. The Foundery was from its beginnings used very extensively and remained very busy, for nearly forty years until the late 1770's when the buildings dilapidation and the expiry of the ground lease forced its closure. The renewal of the lease was not possible, because the land was required for redevelopment by the City. So, if the work of the Foundery was to continue then a replacement was required and this had to be with a new build, purpose designed structure, on a different site. As to why John Wesley chose to build where he did, is not known, but it might have been because it was then an empty stretch of land close to the Foundery and like the latter, near to the City. It might also have been due to the fact that it is opposite Bunhill Fields where his mother, Susanna Wesley, had been interred some 30 years before. Nevertheless, whatever the reason, this was the piece of ground for which John eventually gained a lease and on which the Chapel he commissioned was built.

The project was of course, even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a costly one to finance and well beyond the resources of Wesley himself or those London based Methodists who were members of the Foundery Society. Although they were able to provide a sizeable proportion, most of the money needed was only raised because John travelled around the Methodist societies in Britain begging for contributions. These came in "drips and drabs" while the

negotiations to secure the lease of the site were being pursued with the City authorities. Indeed, money was still having to be gathered, in free will offerings, when the work started on the building's construction. In fact, John was having to continue to actively seek finance for his Foundery replacement during the course of the year or so that the building work took.

Nevertheless, shortness of funds did not stop the foundation stone being laid by John Wesley on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April 1777. It taking place during the conditions of torrential rain that Wesley thought would keep crowds away. It proved a vain hope, since he found that such numbers of sightseers were present that it was only with great difficulty that he could push his way through to lay the first stone. It bore a brass plate engraved, *"This stone was laid by Mr. John Wesley on April 21<sup>st</sup> 1777"*.

John, recording this event in his Journal, commented that it was probable the foundation stone, *"Will be seen no more by any human eye, but will remain there till the earth and the works thereof are burnt up"*.

The construction work, in the hands of Mr. Samuel Tooth, a builder and contractor, who was a local preacher and class leader at the Foundery, then continued for the next eighteen months. This despite the monetary difficulties which sometimes led to the wages of the workmen having to be paid in arrears.

The Chapel is said to have been designed by George Dance the Younger, a leading City architect of the day, although John Wesley is known to have contributed many of the ideas for the interior symbolic/decorative features. That is as maybe, but the Chapel we have, is similar in its interior arrangements to contemporary parish churches and meeting houses. John Wesley's opinion of the completed building, was that it was big enough to hold all the Methodists in London, while being, *"Neat, but not Fine"*. The latter meaning, that it was well fitted for its purpose, being of clean orderly design without being showy or ornate. It is not certain whether Mr. Wesley would be prepared to

make the same judgement about the interior of the Chapel now, in view of what the Victorians did by introducing stained glass and adding the monuments.

The completed, but only partially furnished building, was opened with a service led by John Wesley on November 1<sup>st</sup> 1778. John himself, apart from quoting the Biblical text he used for his sermon, does not tell us much about this opening service in his Journal. However, a contemporary press report suggested that part of his sermon was given over to a complaint about the way that the female members of the congregation were clothed, with Mr. Wesley chiding that their dress was far too elaborate and ornate.

When first opened for worship, the interior of the Chapel, was only partially furnished due to the lack of funds, and while much of the seating taken from the Foundry was, “pressed into use”, this was far from adequate so that for a long time until the necessary money had been gathered, the greater part of the congregation, including many of the occupants of the galleries, had to stand during the services.

The opening of the of the Chapel, did not signal the end of the development of the site as most of the ancillary buildings were far from complete at that time. The sixty-one-year building lease that Wesley had obtained in 1776 stipulated the erection of a terrace of five “first rate” houses fronting the street, with a central carriage entrance to the Chapel behind. These dwellings should have been up within four years, but by March 1779 non had been started. Wesley petitioned for a reversion of the lease, and eventually was granted permission to build only two houses. The first, John Wesley’s own, was ready in time for him to occupy by October 1779. But the second, on the North side of the frontage, together with another two houses closer to the Chapel, took another five years. Finally, the gap between John’s house, and the other on the opposite side of the entrance, was railed. The entrance being completed by a set of gates, to give the handsome opening to the Chapel we see today.

Although the Chapel that John opened in November 1778, is now known around the world wide Methodist Connexion as “Wesley’s”, this name was bestowed upon it only in comparatively recent times. Certainly, John Wesley never called it thus, indeed it was first referred to by him and those who attended the services, as variously, “The New Foundery”, “The New Chapel” or, later, “The City Road Chapel.

The former members of the Foundery who moved the short distance, to their new place of worship in November 1778, came into a building which is much as we see it today apart from the relatively minor changes described later in this article. But the surroundings were somewhat different, since although fronting onto the City Road, this now busy highway was still under development having only recently been widened as the replacement for its predecessor, the relatively minor lane called Royal Row. Although, then like now, it stood just across the road from the pre-existing Bunhill Fields burial ground and the Honourable Artillery Company’s Headquarters.

To the west, property development work was underway as indeed it was to the east and to the north of the Chapel. This was perhaps similar to the current situation, but in another respect, there was a difference. At the time the Chapel first opened, it stood almost alone, at the south-western corner of a large, otherwise, relatively empty stretch of land. This was a marshy field that had, in its time, been used for a variety of purposes. For example, because of its open nature and elevation, it had provided sites for several windmills, similarly the same conditions also proved ideal for drying cloth on “tenter”, the rigid frames that prevented shrinkage.

Whilst the presence of the windmills had led to the area being known as “Windmill Hill”, the drying of cloth had resulted in the field becoming renamed as the “Tenter Grounds”. However, by the time that John Wesley obtained his lease for the corner of the field upon which he built his Chapel, the area had long since

become used for the dumping of rubbish from the nearby City. This “fly tipping” included the rubble discarded from the re-building needed after the “Great Fire” of 1666. Amongst this was said to be some of the remains of Old St Paul’s Cathedral, which had been cleared away to facilitate the building of the new edifice designed by Christopher Wren. This occasioned a modern Dean of St Paul’s, when preaching at Wesley’s Chapel, to remark, “that the Chapel was built upon the foundations of St Paul’s”. This was apt in more than one way in view of John Wesley’s fondness for that Cathedral and the part it played in his conversion experience.

In 1864, the lease for the land on which the Chapel stands expired and the freehold was purchased for £9000 which was paid for from an appeal which raised in addition, more than enough to provide for a thorough renovation of the Chapel and the installation of new seating.

Now, nearly 250 years after John Wesley consecrated the building with its opening service on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1778, the Chapel stands where it has always stood, but some of the exterior surroundings have been changed immeasurably from what John knew.

The Chapel is now, almost encircled by multi-storey buildings, has back and front graveyard gardens and a cobbled entrance courtyard. The latter is comparatively modern but John would have been around to see some of his deceased followers being buried in the Chapel’s open grounds. Indeed, the first was laid to rest there very soon after construction work on the Chapel was completed. Then of course, John himself, is also interred here, as he wished, surrounded by those he called “his family”, and in the spot he chose.

Additional details of the early days of Wesley’s Chapel can be found in “One in London – The Story of Wesley’s Chapel”, by Max Woodward which can be obtained from the book shop in the Museum of Methodism.

At this point we will conclude this part of the article detailing some of the history of the origin and early days of Wesley's Chapel, and leave it to later editions of Window on Wesley's to continue our tour.

***Keith Dutton - Heritage Steward***

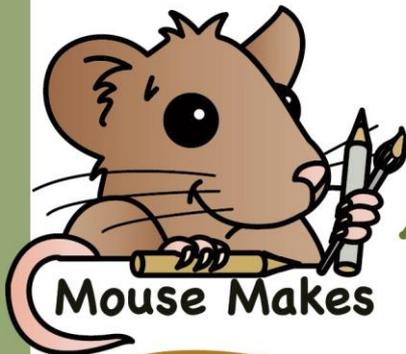


## Sharing with us in Sunday 11am worship?

Find the order of service online at  
<http://ow.ly/Zc0f50zBPpa>

Or sign up to our mailing list to  
recieve alongside weekly notices  
<http://eepurl.com/c-aWr5>

# Children's page



**Jesus** said:  
 "The kingdom of heaven is like a \_\_\_\_\_ **seed** that a man took and sowed in his **field**. It is the \_\_\_\_\_ of all the seeds, but when it has grown it becomes a tree, so that the wild \_\_\_\_\_ come and nest in its branches."

Read  
 Matthew  
 13:31-32

"GOD is the **one** who gives seed to those who **plant**, and He gives **bread** for **food**. And GOD will give you spiritual seed and make that seed grow. He will **produce** a great **harvest** from your goodness."

2 Corinthians 9:10

**Jesus** said:  
 "You do not need more **faith**. There is no 'more' or 'less' in faith. If you have a bare kernel of faith, say the size of a poppy seed, you could say to this sycamore tree "Go jump into the lake" and it would do it."  
 Luke 17:6

So the one who plants is not important, and the one who **waters** is not important. Only **GOD** is important because He is the one who makes things grow."

1 Corinthians 3:7

Look out for seeds in the park and garden and in your kitchen store cupboard.

How many different seeds can you find?

H A R V E S T W O E S  
 F I A F T P L A N T B  
 O F A I T H A T E E R  
 O O J E S U S E E D E  
 D E U L O U G R O W A  
 P R O D U C E S G O D

Find the words in **bold** on this page in the word search



## Worship at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission

Worship services are available and are livestreamed at the following times:

### Monday – Saturday

10.00am Morning Prayer from the Methodist Worship Book – live streamed only

### Wednesday

12.45pm Service of Holy Communion – ***this service is open to the public to attend in person***

### Thursday

12.45pm Service of the Word – live streamed only

### Sunday

9.45am Service of Holy Communion – live streamed only

11.00am Morning Worship – pre-booking is advised, please contact the Chapel office on 020 72532262 or book via Eventbrite at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wesleys-chapel-and-leysian-mission-worship-tickets-117422733557> and select the service you wish to attend.

All services are live streamed

([www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming](http://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming)) and remain viewable afterwards at: [www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/previous-services](http://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/previous-services)

We also have a dedicated email address for prayer requests which will be received directly by our ministers Jennifer Smith and Steven Cooper, and will be prayed during the course of the Daily morning prayer service. Please send all prayer requests to: [prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk)

**If you would like to submit an article, poem, prayer or item of interest for this magazine please email it to:  
manager@wesleyschapel.org.uk**