



CROSS CURRENTS



Winter 2025-26 “Our World”

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EDITORIAL

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What's in a name? Foreigner, alien, stranger, immigrant, asylum seeker, refugee, exile, evacuee, expatriate are all words used to define people, living but not born in this country, or people like me neither of whose parents was born British. Each word is subjective. I particularly dislike the term asylum seeker because of its negative connotations. Recently cases of "asylum seekers" who have committed crimes have been given disproportionate coverage over similar crimes committed by indigenous British people. The word "asylum" itself has resonances of the institutions set up to confine people with mental illnesses, intellectual impairments and unmarried mothers. There is also a racist element as the press talks of Ukrainian refugees, but Afghan asylum seekers. However, what they have in common is both are fleeing from conflict. Others are fleeing oppression and climate change. Take a look at the picture of the Crooked Cross in the article on Cambridge which commemorates people who arrive in small boats.

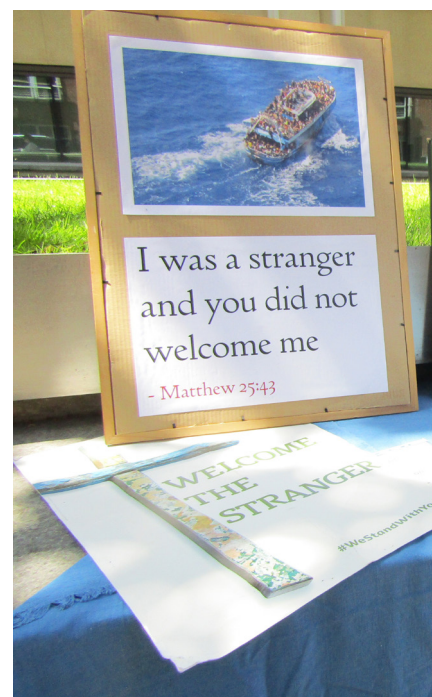
This edition of Crosscurrents is all about the World. We

are celebrating diversity and international friendship. The visit of our friends from Leipzig coincided with celebrations to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE day. Rather than think about victory we chose the theme of peace, as the date also marked the end of the war.

Peter Cornick wrote afterwards As we talked, ate, sang, laughed and prayed together, the sense of deep peace between us all was built – the peace that we share in Christ.

Hinde Street has benefitted in the last 25 years from our close ties with Kings Cross, and its international links with Asia, especially China, Hong Kong and Malaysia and we are delighted to welcome the Rev. Dr. Linberg Wong as the new Minister at Kings Cross. You can read his story in this edition and also learn about the exciting preparations for redevelopment.

You can also read about the contribution made to the United Kingdom by those whose origins stem from Africa and the Caribbean but who are very much part of us.



Climate change, as said above is one reason why people leave their homes to seek a new life abroad and you can read about eco-church and plastic reduction giving us practical ways to make the planet a better place to live.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this edition of Crosscurrents- at one point I had only 4 short pieces! Enjoy reading it.

Cathy Slater

HINDE STREET CROSSPIECE

Rev Peter Cornick reflects on our place in the world, in God, and in each other's lives.

Voyager 1, launched in 1977, is the farthest human made object from the world. Over 15 billion miles away, it left the solar system, but not without taking one last picture of the world from which it came. Taken at a mere 3.6 billion miles away, 'The Pale Blue Dot' is now an iconic photograph of earth showing a vast expanse of space and the planet we live on as a tiny dot. If the photograph was intended to be a scientific record, it has become an invitation for us on earth to reflect, with humility, on our place and significance. For people of faith, it raises the astonishing prospect that God's love has sought us out, even on a tiny dot in the universe. The Psalmist, without the benefit of a spacecraft, sums it up magnificently.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? (Psalm 8:3-4)

Attached to the side of Voyager 1 is a 'golden record' in case any extra-terrestrial being ever finds it. Should the curious ET happen to have a record player available, they will find music from Bach and Chuck Berry, the sounds of various animals, human voices, as well as directions on how to find us – it's the blue dot, next to the red one – can't miss it. This time-capsule describes how the world, the earth, is full of life and creativity.



For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. (Ephesians 2: 10)

I have been fortunate enough to observe recently – from a grandparent's distance – new life and how a human child begins to interact with the world around them. There is human wonder in hiding behind your hands pretending to disappear, only to appear seconds later smiling. Of course, when the child smiles back and chuckles, something more than a game has been achieved. There has been an early form of communication – an exchange where one action leads to another – a set of social expectations is being formed.

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139: 13-14)

When I think about my grandson, I notice that he has loving parents, a wider supporting family,

a house, clothes, plenty of toys – and he was born in a hospital with all the care required. Yet in other parts of the world, the story is less favourable. The loving parents and family might be the same, but resources are different. There is an injustice in the world not visible when it is only viewed as a blue dot. Gladys, in Guatemala, writes:

We are experiencing extreme climate change. Women are most affected, as there is no water to grow food and feed their children. (Christian Aid)

Christian Aid note in the same article, that Gladys' community didn't cause the climate crisis yet are affected by its devastating results. With support from across the world, the women in Guatemala are finding the means to farm collectively which combats the changing climate. A charity such as Christian Aid is an example of people organizing themselves to support and empower other people to live and be creative. Inequality, or any type of suffering, was not mentioned on the 'golden record' in order that only a positive message would be offered to the outer stars. Our calling as the people of God, given the reality of inequality in the world, needs to be justice seeking.

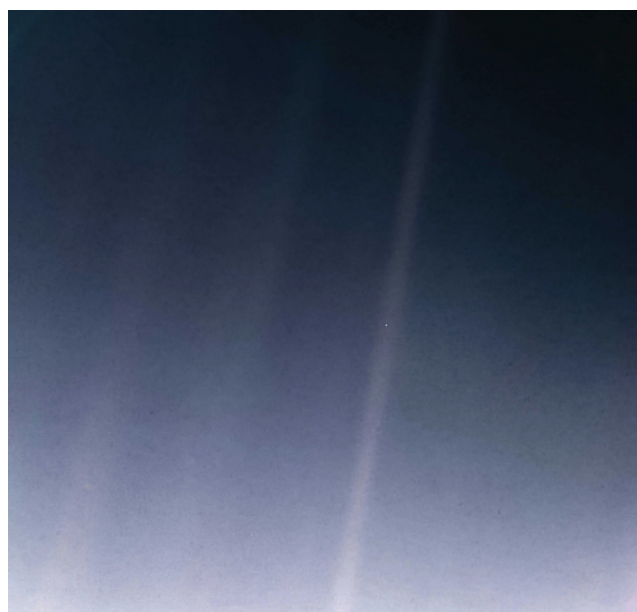
What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

The world is a rather wide topic to cover in a few words! I have tried to bring perspectives from 15 billion miles away to the aching reality of the world, whilst reflecting on the new birth in my family. We are in a season which celebrates an infant – Jesus. Born, not in a clean hospital but

in some sort of outbuilding, without the luxury of medical assistance; blessed by loving parents and some curious visitors, but with an inequality of resources. Not long after the birth, we believe Jesus was forced to flee as a refugee due to violence where he was born. Perhaps we could reflect on that story when we make policies on who might be able to seek asylum in our country. God enters our world – this tiny blue dot – as a baby; a communication of love to an unequal world. That baby would teach us, above all, to love our neighbours, to seek justice, whether in our street or in Guatemala – or even in space.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of God's only son, full of grace and truth. (John 1: 14)

Rev Peter Cornick from Hinde Street



"The Pale Blue Dot", Feb. 14, 1990, NASA's Voyager 1

KING'S CROSSPIECE

Rev Dr Lindberg Wong speaks on what it means for him to have joined KXMC.



Greetings in the name of Christ. It is an immense joy to join King's Cross Methodist Church (KXMC) as the new minister-in-charge. I come from Sarawak, Malaysia, and I serve as an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in Malaysia. Over the years, God has been shaping in me a deep passion for urban mission and cross-cultural ministry. I speak English, Malay, Mandarin, and two Chinese dialects – Foochow and Cantonese, which often help me to connect with people from various cultural backgrounds and generations.

My theological journey began at Trinity Theological College, Singapore, where I earned my Master of Divinity, and later continued at the Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary, where I completed my Doctor of Missiology. These studies, alongside years of pastoral experience, have strengthened my conviction that the Gospel is not only timeless but also deeply relevant in the complexity of today's cities.

Since 2015, I had been praying for God to open a door to serve in the UK. It took ten years of waiting, preparation, and refining. Yet, through each step, I could see God's quiet hand at work - shaping my heart, growing my faith, and confirming His call. Now, standing here in London, I see this not as a coincidence, but as the fruit of His gracious guidance. I am joined in this new chapter by my wife, Belinda, and

our two young boys, Theodore and Theophilus. Together, we are learning to make London our new home and are deeply thankful for the warm welcome we have received from the KXMC family. Many have gone out of their way to help us settle in – from preparing the manse to arranging school placements, NHS registration, and other essentials. Your hospitality and care have made our transition far smoother than we imagined.

When I first encountered King's Cross Methodist Church, I was deeply impressed by its rich tradition and history. KXMC has a remarkable story – a church that has carried out extensive social ministries, reaching out to people from many walks of life. I believe this holds great potential for the future. Being located at the very heart of London, KXMC stands at a crossroads of cultures and nations. My prayer is that the church will continue to grow in unity in Christ, so that together, we may do greater works for His Kingdom and bring transformation and blessing to society once again.

Having lived in London for two months, I find it to be a city that is both immense and inspiring – full of opportunities and needs, a city that opens countless doors for ministry. I am continually amazed by its rich tapestry of cultures, nationalities, and histories. Yet beneath the surface of diversity lies a deep hunger for meaning, belonging, and hope – needs that only the Gospel can fully meet. And, I pray that KXMC would be a place where these needs to be met.

At KXMC, while we look forward to the exciting plans for the church building redevelopment, I sense an even greater call for inner renewal – to strengthen discipleship, nurture leaders, and rediscover our shared mission as one body in Christ. As my family and I begin this journey among you, I invite your prayers – that we may serve faithfully, love deeply, and walk humbly with God. May the Lord who has begun a good work among us bring it to completion for the glory of His Kingdom.

“The mission of the Church is not only about where we are, but who we are becoming in Christ. May every step we take together at King’s Cross leave behind the footprints of faith, hope, and love – for His glory and for this city.”

Rev Lindberg Wong from King’s Cross

POETRY

“God Direct”

Slogans flashing past street lamps
TV euphoria chanting his name
“Could he be the one?”
Football tycoons attracted, crowds clambering -
“A media Celebrity”
yet of no fixed abode.

His 12 royal followers
Supped with him, mesmerised listening
His speech dynamic -
No faults, no syllables missing -
A symphony complete with dramatic healing -
Stumps recreated whole,
Blind screens unwound literally -
“A true divinity, God’s grace in our seeing”
sang the chorus at the World’s Olympic theatre
Eyes aghast, touched by His newness
His lifestyle so different, yet completely at one.

This gem, this man so totally selfless
Not self-seeking, each gift solely given for others,
was viewed ‘a misfit’, ‘a tramp’ by the so-called
Authorities -
- the Jewish elite impregnate:
“No healing allowed on our Sabbath”
their hatred of difference, intolerance growing -
Big Brother extremists thus hissing
Who can one trust?

The selfless dignity, His healing
immaculate Or Emperor Big Brother, the
crucifix beckoning?
To our immense shame, Big Brother: the
Jewish elite screeched
“Down with our state vermin”
The High Priest, Caiaphus exquisitely clad
In a 66 piece diamond suit rolled
“No harm is meant here at all -
This Crucifixion - our just, earthly merit”:
beautifully clipped this Lucifer victim.
Mankind abstains
from such reality.
As their Celebrity, “King of the Jews” hung
dying
the sun eclipsed totally -
Unknown on a Sabbath
For 3 hours absolute darkness blackened
the earth
The shrouded robe, guarding the centre -
the Jewish Temple’s secret anchor
Slit, sliced, dragged down directly in two
The verdict, a visual warning
- direct from God
“Outright Guilty”
You don’t walk away from a warning like
that.

“Our Maker”

“AM WHO I AM”*1

Holy, Holy, Holy

Our universal Creator

“King of Kings”

“Lord of Lords”*2

Our Host immaculate

from on high beaming down

towards us

Our shadow within His rocke

priceless:

Earth, air, fire, water

sustained growth within our universe

mingling

Divine rapture hovering

The Holy Spirit igniting our life

on offer

bliss extraordinary

new lives transformed in Israel the beginning of a new age

The Messiah matchless

“annus domine”*3

“This is my Son, the beloved with whom I am well pleased”*4

The Almighty’s breath newly flowing

within us

“bringing our souls out of prison”*5

prayer the oxygen of our souls our shield, our Christian faith:

the sword of the Spirit

Harps uniquely swaying

Drums passionately beating

A lifeline of instruments filtering expanding our universe:

dynamic inticing exquisite

“I AM WHO I AM”*1

Harps uniquely swaying

Drums passionately beating

A lifeline of instruments filtering

expanding our universe:

dynamic

inticing

exquisite

“I AM WHO I AM”*1

Claire Stone, 18 Feb 2007 & Jan 2025/3 May 2025

1. These words from the Almighty to Moses (The Bible, NRSV, Old Testament Exodus 3v14), words from Almighty Lord Jesus (The Bible, New Testament, Gospel of John 8v58)

2. from “Hallelujah Chorus” by Handel: “The Messiah”. Also in The Bible, NRSV, New Testament, Revelation 20v16.

3. Latin words meaning “Year of the Lord”

4. From the Bible, NRSV New Testament in 3 of the Gospels occurring in the baptism of Almighty Lord Jesus by John the Baptist: Gospel of Matthew 3v17, Gospel of Mark 1v11 and Gospel of Luke 3v22

FROM LEIPZIG TO CAMBRIDGE



The last time Hinde Street visited Leipzig, there was a day trip to Wittenberg so when a group from Leipzig came to us last May, we decided to do a trip to Cambridge for a change of scene from London and because Hinde Street has contacts with the city. Two former ministers live there now- Rev Dr Stuart Jordan, who began our relationship with Kreuzkirche in Leipzig 39 years ago, and Rev Dr. Carole Irwin. Malcolm Haslett formerly of this Parish and now living in Cambridge is a Cambridge Alumnus as are Gordon Slater and John Swarbrick, and I am an Alumna.

The coach was due to leave Hinde Street at 9:30 but the driver got lost and we arrived in Cambridge's Wesley Methodist Church about half an hour late.

We received a welcome and prayers at Wesley Methodist Church with Rev Dr Stuart Jordan. "In a world of conflict, of division, of misunderstanding, of suspicion," Stuart told us, "it's easy to fear and blame the other, the stranger, whoever they are. We recognise it in

ourselves, we know it in our communities, we see it displayed in our national politics. A key part of our Christian calling today must surely be to promote hospitality. In the words of the late Pope, to build bridges not walls."

This was followed by a buffet lunch organised by Dottie Haslett and kindly provided by the Wesley congregation.

We then had a talk by Rev Dr Carole Irwin, about her work with the pioneering Lyn's House in Cambridge. It is a Christian community with 3 residents, who are working, or studying in Cambridge. They live there for one year. Four small groups, made up of people of differing intellectual abilities, meet fortnightly in The Lodge for a simple meal and prayer – and just to spend time together and once a month, they hold tea parties for the whole community of Lyn's House: friends, supporters, residents, trustees, volunteers all come together to spend time together over a cup of tea, and for a simple prayer. Everyone shares and contributes equally. You can read more about it at <https://lynshouse.org/>

We then split into groups for walking tours of the city and colleges with the four Cambridge alumni.

Malcolm Haslett wrote:

It was an enormous pleasure to welcome our friends from Hinde Street and Kreuzkirche Leipzig to Wesley Church in Cambridge, and show them some of the city. Several members of the visiting group came with me to visit



Pembroke College. The main point of interest there was the chapel, with its warped, slanting cross. This is made up of two timber beams from the wreck of a refugee boat washed up on the southern shores of Sicily. The Dean of Pembroke, James Gardom, and the minister of the nearby United Reformed Church, Nigel Uden, travelled to Sicily several years ago, to visit refugee camps there. They also made contact with workers from the Italian Waldensian Church, who have made particular efforts to safeguard refugees from Africa, often in the face of official disapproval and sometimes public hostility. The problem of refugees and exiles is, I believe, not unfamiliar to our friends in Leipzig, a city which has in the last three years given refuge to a large number of people who have fled from Ukraine.

John Swarbrick wrote :

I led a small group which made its way to Wesley House on Jesus Lane, where I trained for the ministry from 1986 to 1989. Sadly, Wesley House has moved to smaller premises in Cambridge, and its role has changed; it is now a centre for ministers from overseas who want to study for postgraduate degrees. Wesley House was built in 1921 on land bought from Jesus College and was a gateway for Methodist students to access the wonderful resources for learning at Cambridge University. Since 1972 it had been part of the Cambridge Theological

Federation. Originally, this collaboration was with one United Reformed and two Anglican theological colleges, but it has now widened to include students from the Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox traditions.

Unfortunately, we were unable to walk around the court at Wesley House. Jesus College has bought the site back, and as we discovered, it has already started to make changes. We were able to have a look around Jesus College, visiting the chapel and other parts of the buildings, discovering that new a café for visitors had been opened, backing on to the former common room of Wesley House!

We then had a walk across Jesus Green, which brought us back into the city centre, and continued down Trumpington Street to visit the Fitzwilliam Museum and see its dazzling collection of paintings. We spent a thoroughly enjoyable time there before setting off for Wesley Church for a short act of worship. Our friends from the Kreuzkirche in Leipzig enjoyed their day with members and friends from Hinde Street.

Cathy Slater writes:

I took a group to my College, Newnham the only all- women's college remaining in Cambridge or Oxford. It was the furthest from the Methodist church of the colleges visited. We looked at the outside of Peterhouse, the oldest college where I told them an anecdote of a student contemporary with me called Prince Charles, but as we were short of time did not enter the nearby church where the arms of the Washington family-stars and stripes are displayed but showed them a photo. We crossed Silver Street Bridge where there was a lot of punt traffic , and they could take photos of the Mathematical Bridge and Queens College. We arrived at Newnham after seeing a sundial that tells you how long it is since sunrise, but unfortunately it was cloudy, so no shadow could be seen.

We entered through the wrought iron gates that had been stormed by aggressive male students

in 1921 strongly objecting to awarding women full degrees. In the end it was 1948 when we could receive them. By now it was 3 pm so after a brief look at the gardens there was a unanimous vote for a cup of tea and cake. Afterwards we attempted to see the largest of the 4 halls with its wonderful plasterwork and paintings but it was set for a grand dinner so we could only see it through the windows and could not walk through the college itself as examinations were happening in a few weeks and we could not disturb the students. However they were able to enjoy the lovely architecture from outside. We returned via the University Library and another bridge and arrived in perfect time to see some new graduates in their gowns and hoods emerging from the Senate House , before walking a few yards further on to join the rest of the party at King's College for Evensong in the Chapel at 5 pm, where we had reserved seats in the choir thanks to Carole Irwin.

Roger Cotterrell wrote:

The visit to Newnham College in Cambridge, led by Cathy Slater, was a real highlight for me of the weekend with the Leipzig visitors. I am not a great fan of Oxbridge, and my firm allegiance is to London University, a vibrant part of the busy metropolis. However, Cathy showed us a delightful Cambridge institution with a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere, and an unpretentious air of academic excellence





about it. Not least, this pioneer women's college, founded in 1871 and set among lawns and trees, boasted a pleasant lounge where we could all have afternoon tea and cakes.

It was good also to talk with our Leipzig guests about their impressions of London, and to share with them the superbly organised programme put together by David Alpin and others, and the great welcome we all received in Cambridge from Dottie and Malcolm Haslett, and Stuart Jordan. The chance to experience evensong in King's College Chapel and to hear the wonderful choir was very special. In an entirely different way, so was the fish and chips supper (some of the best I've tasted for a long time).

Ann Cotterrell wrote:

The Leipzig visit will remain in my memory as a lovely event, with everything perfectly planned, by David Alpin and others, to be pleasurable for the hosts as well as the guests. We travelled by coach to Cambridge where we experienced wonderful hospitality at the Wesley Methodist Church from Malcolm and Dottie Haslett and friends. Split into groups, several of us were shown by Cathy Slater around her former college, Newnham, a women's college set in beautiful gardens. Later, Evensong at King's College Chapel included sitting in pews close to the choir – the Christmas Eve broadcast from King's will have new resonances for me.

On Sunday, our guest from Germany enjoyed a visit to the London Transport Museum and a walk across London with Martin Single while other Leipzig friends went in different directions. The party on Sunday evening, organised by Hannah and Will Fremont Barnes, provided an opportunity to relax, have fun, and

get to know our Leipzig guests better.

Gordon Slater writes:

I took about 12 people, mostly from the Leipzig group but including a few from Hinde Street, on a walk through the historic centre of Cambridge on the way to my college, Gonville and Caius. We strolled down Jesus Lane, passing Jesus College and Wesley House, and paused at the Quaker Meeting House where there was a brief discussion of the peace posters displayed outside. We went on to the Round Church and then down Trinity Street past the magnificent Tudor gateways of St John's and Trinity, to the more modest entrance to Caius where I had permission to view the chapel and the three courtyards. We were able to view the memorial to Francis Crick inlaid into the floor under the Great Gate (the double helix of DNA intertwined with the two snakes which are part of the College arms), and the memorials and stained glass in the chapel. There was a lively discussion about the English university system, and quizzical looks when trying to explain the respective roles of the University and the colleges at Cambridge. We had intended to go further but there was a general demand for refreshment, so after failing to get into Crick and Watson's pub, we adjourned to the pub next door and enjoyed hospitable conversation until it was time to cross the road for evensong in King's College chapel.

Our day at Cambridge ended with fish and chips from a van brought to Wesley Methodist Church where most of the Germans asked for curry sauce while Hinde Street members went for Ketchup. The bus then took us back to Hinde Street with a few stopovers en route. We met the next morning for a Sunday service on the theme of Peace.



Cathy Slater

OPEN HOUSE AND ART EXHIBITION

The second week of September 2025 was a particularly busy one at Hinde Street as we not only hosted artworks by various local artists at our Community Art Exhibition, but also opened our doors for this autumn's Open House Festival.

Over a period of three days from Thursday 11 September to Saturday 13 September, 216 people visited Hinde Street and took in 'A Celebration of Colour' in the form of crochet pieces, paintings, drawings, photographs, models and more. With a wide variety of different styles, media, and approaches to colour represented by artists from all skill levels and backgrounds, the church space was transformed to a true community gallery.

Children and adult visitors alike were also

The photographs shared are mainly those of members of Hinde Street but we also had works from the wider community which we have not been able to show.

invited to participate in the exhibition by creating their own improvised artworks on the theme. In addition, Saturday visitors were treated to sweet treats and hot drinks, piano and organ music, and Rev Peter Cornick's talks on the history and architecture of our Grade II-listed church.

On their part, both ministers and stewards got to enjoy getting to know friendly locals, some of whom had never had the chance visit Hinde Street before. This opportunity to build further connections and community in Marylebone was a wonderful part of the occasion.



Alison Gowman



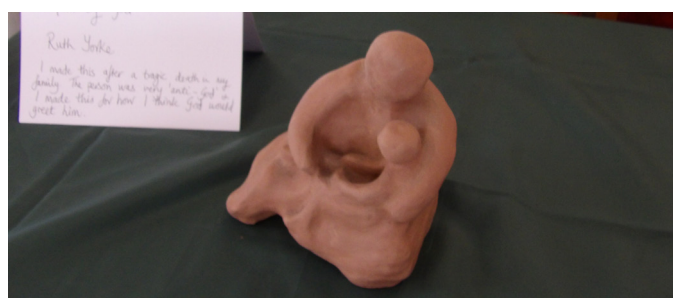
Karen Slater



Peter Cornick



Karen Slater



Ruth Yorke



Peter and Helen Cornick

Visitors to Open House and the Community Art Exhibition were asked to write comments - here are a few of them:

"The exhibition is a wonderful way of connecting the community. I really enjoyed viewing the pieces which are wonderful all in their own ways. What a wonderful initiative!"

"Wonderful to see the inside of this church which I have walked by so often and wondered what it is like inside. Very welcoming!"

"Beautiful paintings in a lovely small church with

a pleasant atmosphere and soundtrack. Very warm welcome from the staff, thank you!"

"Nice work - a joy of colour. Thanks to all the artists of all forms."

"What a tapestry of different colours, designs, marvellous paintings - the glow fitting for Jesus. God bless!"

"Thank you so much for this - quite moved at the eclectic combination."

"It's a lovely idea to have this lovely inclusive community arts event in the church and open up to visitors and the local community alike. The church is so beautifully maintained and I hope there'll be more events in the future."



Ruth Yorke and Helen Cornick

Gordon Slater

A heartfelt thanks to all our artists, organisers, volunteers (including the wonderful Mary from Open House!), and administrators for their hard work in not only making these two events happen, but also for making them so special! Thanks also to Alan Brooks, author of the brilliant *West End Methodism: The Story of Hinde Street* on which Rev Peter based his Open House talks.

ECO-CHURCH: DAILY ACTIONS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

At Hinde Street, we're taking steps to become an Eco-Church (<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>). To be an eco-church, our action and concern for the environment is measured and evaluated across five different categories: Worship & Teaching; Buildings & Energy; Land & Nature; Community & Global engagement and lifestyles. An eco-church group is looking across our activities as a church to see how we're doing already, and the actions we can take to improve our relationship to the whole of creation.

Lots of this is up to all of us in the church community, but the Lifestyle section in particular is focussed on how we all take action, day-to-day, to decrease negative impacts on the environment as a consequence of the way we live our lives. The scale of the climate crisis can often be overwhelming, and requires big and bold action on a global scale to build the kind of change we need to see. Sometimes, individual action on a small scale is criticised for being too limited to make a difference. However, we all have a part to play. Taking everyday action, however small, is about adjusting our attitudes and bringing us into right-relationship with creation, as well as making a tangible impact.

To get us started, I've brought together five action areas, with top tips for easy actions we could all take to change our lifestyles, and get us closer to becoming an eco-church! If you give some of these actions a go, how about letting everyone know how you get on? You could write a short update for Weekly, or report back in the next edition of Crosscurrents!

1. Measure your foot(print)

The environmental impact of our everyday lives is complicated, and it wouldn't be possible to understand the full picture of how our actions harm or help the environment. However, carbon footprint calculators are a good way to begin understanding the impact of our actions, and the steps we can take to reduce the harms our actions can cause to the planet.

The footprint calculator from Climate Stewards is an accessible impact measure, which an individual or household can do online. It covers household actions, travel, food and expenditure. It also gives you tips on how to reduce your impact, or offset your impact by supporting community projects around the world.

You can use it to measure your own carbon footprint here: <https://footprintr.me/>.

2. Switch up your energy use

Our at-home energy use can be one of the biggest contributors to our carbon footprint. Using electricity is such a big part of our day to day lives, that it can be difficult to notice when our actions are over-using or wasting energy. The Energy Saving Trust (<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/>) offer some 'quick wins' – easy actions you can take at home to reduce your energy use. Here are some of their top tips:

- Turn your devices off 'standby' by switching them off at the plug when not in use.



TVs, broadband routers, computer monitors, printers, laptops, games consoles or smart speakers all consume small amounts of energy whilst on standby. Even chargers plugged in but not in use consume energy (and the life of the charger is shortened).

- Don't put more water in the kettle than you need - it is one of our most electricity intensive appliances. Only boil what you need.
- Buy A+ rated when replacing, or buying new, electrical appliances. Most appliances and shops will have this information readily available, and it will often save you money in the long run.
- One small but powerful action is reducing how much data (photos, videos, files etc) that you store on the 'cloud', or online data servers such as OneDrive. According to the Financial Times in May 2021, the carbon emissions from tech infrastructure and the data servers that enable cloud computing now exceed those of pre-Covid air travel. Whilst Microsoft and Google have set targets to be carbon neutral, the impact of 'Cloud' storage is still significant. You can help by regularly deleting things from your backed up files that you don't want or need.

A big step you can take is to change to a green energy supplier. There are several energy suppliers available now which offer a fully renewable tariff for electricity, including Octopus, Ecotricity, Good Energy and SO Energy. By choosing a green energy company, you're also supporting investment in renewable energy and helping decarbonise the National Grid. You can see advice on switching

energy supplier at USwitch here: <https://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/green-energy/>.

3. Travel lightly

In London, many of us already use public transport regularly as the (mostly!) quickest way of getting around the city. Using public transport dramatically reduces the carbon footprint of a journey that might otherwise be made by private transport, like car or taxi. Of course - walking or cycling is even better! Perhaps, you could choose one or two journeys a week that you could switch to walking, cycling or even scooting?

Websites such as Cycle Streets <https://www.cyclestreets.net/> and Cycling UK <https://www.cyclinguk.org/> can help you to map out the best cycling routes.

Sustrans also have great advice on cycling safely: <http://www.sustrans.co.uk/>.

4. Choose wisely

Most of us have a lot of stuff. Squeezed into small flats, stuffed into cupboards, or kept for a rainy day, often the items we buy now have a short shelf life, or are single or limited use. The items we buy, however essential, have an environmental impact at every stage of their journey, from creation to being thrown away. Our culture puts an emphasis

on having the right things, or buying new, more fashionable products, often at the cost of fast and environmentally detrimental production and limited quality control. Considering what we buy more carefully can be a significant step towards reducing our environmental impact.

The Story of Stuff is a campaign that developed out of a single animation. They now work through storytelling, policy, and grassroots action to challenge the throwaway economy and fight for systems where communities and ecosystems can thrive. Why not take a look at the animation that started it all at: <https://www.storyofstuff.org/>.

- Buy second hand – look in charity shops, or online at sites such as Vinted or EBay, to find second hand alternatives to the things you need.
- Buy less – ask yourself: do I need it, want it and love it? Taking time to slow down and consider purchases rather than making snap decisions could be simple win.
- Have a ‘switch off Sunday’ – could you do one day a week unplugged from your digital devices? This works as a way to stop the temptations of quick, online consumerism, and challenge us to get outside, see friends and focus on our priorities.

5. Waste not, want not

You’ve probably heard them before – the three Rs of waste: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. UK households generate around 27 million tonnes of waste a year. Despite a vast increase in the accessibility of household recycling, much of this waste still ends up in landfill sites, which produce carbon dioxide and methane gas, affecting climate and biodiversity. Could you challenge yourself to take one action for each of the three Rs? Here are some ideas:

Reduce: Avoid single-use items - use reusable water bottles, coffee cups, and shopping bags; Minimize packaging - buy in bulk, which often has less packaging per item, and choose products that use minimal or eco-friendly packaging; Go paperless - opt for digital bills, tickets, and subscriptions to reduce paper waste.

Reuse: Repurpose items - before throwing something away, consider if it can be used for another purpose, in your home & garden or someone else’s; Donate or sell - give away clothes, furniture, or other items you no longer need to charities or sell them online; Use durable products - choose products that are built to last over disposable alternatives, like rechargeable batteries instead of single-use ones.

Recycle: Make more effort to put items in your household recycling, cleaning them out beforehand; if you don’t have a household food waste collection, most councils have a food waste recycling drop off place; recycle broken electronics and old fabrics by taking them to a local drop of point.

Our journey to becoming an eco-church is part of our mission, to be a church that is part of the world-wide community of people who follow Jesus Christ, sharing the love, grace and compassion of God with those around us. By being considerate about our environmental impact, our actions point towards God’s love for all people, and all of create. As usual, we won’t always get it right – but our intention to be a community who put our love into action is a good start.

Hannah Fremont-Brown

ROBERT'S TRAVELS



Robert Mitchell and Leao Neto at church lunch

After Sunday lunch when our Leipzig friends visited us, Leao and I did a double act on pilgrimage. On the table on the dais, Leao kindly laid out the sketch cards I had sent him over the years, surrounded by books on pilgrimage and Jesus. I gave a demonstration on how to read a limerick - not so easy since I could not read my own hand writing. Leao held a short Q&A session. I told how I walked from London to Santiago - Newhaven to Dieppe ferry, West side of France, North side of Spain to Santiago where they speak Portugese. The walk took about three months.

In Europe many St James churches are on pilgrimages to Santiago. In Belgium James becomes Jacob. The St Jacob churches in Brugge, Gent and Antwerp all talked about the pilgrimage - these photos are from Gent where the pilgrimage was featured.

Robert Mitchell



Shell symbol of St James



Looking East in Sint-Jacobskerk, Gent



Map of pilgrimages in Spain and Portugal

WINTER NIGHT SHELTER AT KING'S CROSS

On Thursday 6th November, Kings Cross Methodist Church opened its doors for the Winter Night Shelter season. Every Thursday night until 26th March, Kings Cross will welcome 16 guests who will be able to enjoy a hot meal, an evening of companionship, a shower, a warm bed for the night and breakfast in the morning.

By week 4 of the Night Shelter, places for guests were filling up quickly. Once again, many of our guests are refugees and asylum seekers who are looking for a place of safety. The good news is that already, two guests have been moved on to more permanent accommodation. This year we have volunteers signed up from Hinde Street and all three congregations at Kings Cross, but there are still plenty of volunteer slots that need filling (especially for the breakfast shift).

The night shelter is run in collaboration with the homeless charity C4WS but they cannot open our doors without a team of willing volunteers. On each Thursday night we require the following volunteers:

A team of 4 front of house volunteers from 6.30-9.45pm to help set up the beds and refreshments etc, and then chat with the guests and play board games with them.

A team of 2 people from 6.30-9.30pm to help prepare and serve the evening meal.

Two overnight volunteers. From 9.45pm-7.15am



(Volunteers sleep separately from the guests and are there in case of emergency. They are not expected to remain awake overnight.)

A team of 2 people from 7.00-9.00am on Friday morning to prepare and serve breakfast.

If you would like to find out about volunteering opportunities for this exciting and rewarding ministry, we would love to hear from you. Full training will be given.

For further information please contact Deacon Tessa Bennett.

tessa.bennett@kxmc.org.uk

Tessa Bennett and Cathy Slater

MICROPLASTICS

We all know that it is important to reduce our reliance and use of plastics but it's all gone rather quiet in the media. Microplastics are just as harmful and are hidden in many everyday items.

Microplastics are small plastic particles that come from the degradation of plastics and are even included in some household items as beads. Microplastics are now present in all ecosystems (atmosphere, soil, seas and oceans) and in many organisms (fish, birds, domestic animals and humans). Because of their high resistance to degradation, microplastics persist for a long time in the environment. No solution has yet been found to remove them from the environment, and as the global overconsumption of plastic worsens then so does the accumulation of these particles in our environment. The result is already being felt in the deaths and changing behaviour of animals.

The human body is widely contaminated by microplastics. They have been found in the gut, brain, liver, kidney, blood, semen, breast milk, placentas and bone marrow. Human exposure to microplastics causes intestinal inflammation and liver metabolic disorders, but it is not yet known whether this leads to serious diseases in humans. Research is ongoing.

The most common plastic found in the sea is polyethylene, which is used in plastic bags and food and drink packaging. Clothes made of synthetic fibres, such as polyester and acrylic, produce microplastics when washed or put in waste. Some cosmetics and toothpastes

include microplastic beads. Heating food in plastic containers can cause release of microplastics and hot drinks in plastic cups can do the same.

So what can I do about it?

Here are some simple swaps you could do to reduce your 'microplastic footprint':

Replace plastic with wooden chopping boards

Replace non-stick with stainless steel pans

Replace plastic with glass containers

Replace tea bags with loose tea

Replace disposable drink cups with reusable cups

Replace bottled water with tap water

Replace synthetic fibres with natural fibres.

Check toothpaste does not contain crystals

Check skin exfoliators do not contain beads

Gillian Brooks



IS BRITAIN (STILL) A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY?

When asked whether Britain is (still) a Christian nation, some people respond quickly and confidently with yes, while others may answer no, with the reasons for both responses varying wildly. Some might be unaware of or misunderstand the Biblical influences on the country's unwritten constitution, which is mainly based on Common Law and shaped by Christian values and biblical teachings.

For instance, the Act of Supremacy enacted by Parliament in 1534 established the monarchy as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, indicating a definitive separation from the Roman Catholic Church. The authority of the monarchy in this role is regarded as divinely bestowed.

Furthermore, numerous references within both the Old and New Testaments support the contemporary concept of the Duty of Care towards others. For instance, they encompass the obligation to prevent fires from reaching a neighbour's property (Exodus 22:6), the requirement to construct a parapet on flat roofs to prevent falls (Deuteronomy 22:8), and the broader notion of risk management as depicted in Proverbs 14:4. These principles are embodied in Jesus' commandment to 'Love thy neighbour as yourself'. How does a Christian exemplify this commandment in daily life? Do we observe indications of Christianity being practiced publicly? Would you regard the country as Christian?

A few years ago, my wife and I hosted relatives from abroad who had resided here long before I contemplated applying for a government scholarship that subsequently brought me to this country. These visitors, during their residence in Britain, encountered numerous challenges such as racism, working multiple

jobs to meet financial needs, participating in numerous meetings with teachers concerning their children's substandard academic performance, and behavioural issues. Some received disapproving glances at church if they were permitted to enter and worship initially; or, if allowed, they were excluded from roles due to perceived inadequacy to perform any task, regardless of simplicity. Despite these adversities, church attendance remained robust throughout their time in London. Many maintained loyalty to mainstream churches, while others joined Pentecostal or charismatic congregations. One concern expressed by these visitors was the decreasing attendance in predominantly mainstream Protestant churches.

While all measurement matrices indicate a noticeable decline, I have consistently maintained that this is balanced by a substantial increase in participation at emerging Pentecostal churches. Whenever I read newspaper reports claiming that the number of Christian believers is decreasing based on church attendance figures, I wonder whether these statistics include attendance at the newer congregations. Usually, these churches remain invisible to the media and are considered unworthy of being included in research data for various reasons, including leadership, training, and doctrinal practices. These churches are often seen as fringe and are not considered when discussing important issues until a scandal involving one of their leaders emerges. Yet, they provide spiritual comfort and pastoral care to their congregations despite their supposed imperfections, as measured by the orthodoxies of what a church should look like.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that over 90% of members in Pentecostal and charismatic churches are not recent converts, even among Gen Z. Instead, they are individuals who have



become estranged for various reasons, such as worship styles, from the churches where they were baptised or from their family's long-standing religious ties. This suggests that the total number of believers has not declined but has instead transitioned to newer Pentecostal Christian denominations.

Multiple reasons for estrangement may exist, including disconnection within familial relationships within a church congregation or broader social and economic issues, as well as biblically ingrained beliefs from birth that are perceived to be undermined by twenty-first-century interpretations of the Bible.

Nevertheless, I believe that if individuals who have transitioned to various Christian denominations continue to uphold the fundamental principles of the faith—the birth, crucifixion, death, and resurrection as documented in the Gospels and preached by St. Paul—the number of adherents has probably remained steady. Even if there is a decline in church attendance, it is likely not significant enough to warrant the concern often expressed by the media or critics of Christianity.

After church services at Hinde Street, my wife and I would often visit families in South London. As we drove through Oval on those Sundays, we would notice many young people of African and Caribbean heritage, along with a smaller number of White young people. Traditionally, based on stereotypical assumptions (the effect

of acculturation in my case) about young Black individuals, we presumed they had just ended an all-night rave.

One Sunday afternoon, I stopped at the traffic lights and asked a youth what they had been doing. I was thrilled to hear that they had just finished a church service. There were hundreds of them, and they gather at Oval cricket grounds every Sunday.

My daughter, with whom I often debated about church attendance, invited me to her church last year in Croydon. I was struck by the congregation—over 400 young people gathered in that auditorium, including African and Caribbean youths, some in sixth form, others working, some at university, and a few recently qualified in various professions. A few months ago, my niece got married in Maidenhead; she is a doctor and Registrar at a London hospital, and her husband, also a medical professional, has worked for the World Health Organisation. I was amazed during the wedding service; the church was filled with medical professionals—many White and Black, African, Caribbean, and White British, representing the 'Zen' generation. Most identified as Pentecostals or Evangelicals. The wedding was held in an Anglican church, officiated by an Anglican priest. Although I didn't recognise the hymns, they were familiar and appreciated by the young congregation; older attendees like myself felt a bit lost. These personal

observations give me hope about our faith. The main point is that most of these young people were raised in environments where the Bible was accessible. They had been baptised and confirmed; however, over time, some may have become disinterested or lost faith in the traditional or mainstream church or worship format. Still, they have remained faithful through alternative means or have joined other communities where they find spiritual fulfilment through Christ.

The Methodist Church hosts 3Generate, an annual weekend event designed for young children and young adults to gather, learn, and nurture their spiritual growth. It offers a platform for sharing ideas, gaining insights, and exchanging experiences. The programme also allows youth to lead worship in their own unique style. As part of a mainstream Protestant denomination, 3Generate aims to foster the development of the next generation of Methodist Christians. Similar youth initiatives are thought to exist in other denominations.

In some Methodist congregations, young people are encouraged to participate in worship activities, such as leading prayers and reading Scripture. I have seen services where young individuals are invited to share their understanding and interpretations of biblical passages to foster participation and engagement within the church community.

Whether Britain is ‘still’ a Christian country remains a relevant question we should continue asking. I live in a part of London with many Muslims, and every Friday I see streams of people in long robes heading to the mosques. Shops owned by Muslims are closed until the shopkeepers return from prayers. In shops with more than two staff members, they take turns to attend prayers. I am constantly impressed by their dedication to worship on Fridays. Attending prayers is considered essential. On evenings of any day, including Sundays, young people are taken to mosques for tuition or lessons. Therefore, when individuals of a particular political persuasion or ideology claim that Muslims are

taking over London, for example, I respond by saying that our churches are open on Sundays, but many people who identify as Christians do not attend, so why criticise or condemn others who show a commitment to their faith? Why criticise Muslims who demonstrate their adherence to their religion publicly, with rituals and patterns that are unmistakably Islamic? Whether in Britain, Africa, the United States, or anywhere else, you can recognise who they are by their dress, rituals, holy days, and moral duties. However, as one would reasonably expect, they are not perfect because they are human beings.

Some Christians are often described as having a relational faith with God. People may assert, ‘My faith is between me and God. A recent article in ‘Anglican Ink’ mentioned ‘incognito Christians. Although the writer David Roseberry was mainly discussing Anglicans, his comments are also relevant to believers from other denominations.

‘Incognito Christians’ are frequently characterised as being relational, reserved, and reluctant to defend their beliefs. In a world permeated by confusion, uncertainty, and subjective interpretations of truth and fact, ambiguity in faith is not practical. Many Muslims lack comprehensive knowledge of the language employed to communicate their faith, like some Christians who are unfamiliar with the entirety of the Bible. Nevertheless, Muslims understand their religion’s core doctrines and expectations and uphold them steadfastly.

The Gen Z Christian generation values certainty and tends to worship in environments with well-defined religious beliefs. While they can argue, debate, and express strong opinions, especially on modern issues, having clear convictions is crucial for their participation and continued membership in a church.

Throughout history, divisions within Christianity have persisted over doctrine and practice, even within individual churches, and this is likely to continue. Recent upheavals in the Anglican Church, which have received widespread media coverage on issues such

as the ordination of women, gay clergy, and civil partnerships—topics that have affected other denominations but have not attracted similar media attention—have influenced the global church, especially in Britain. Despite its diversity, Christianity’s core beliefs as recorded in the Gospels and preached by St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15:14) have remained constant and unchanged.

The Christian faith in Britain faces challenges regarding its relevance, influence, and presence within society. It now competes with other religions for space in the public sphere. Secularists oppose social policies rooted in Christian values. Indeed, on issues related to caring for the vulnerable and where Christian principles are evident, secularists often argue that individuals of any faith or none could carry out the charitable acts of kindness performed by Christians. I am usually pleased when people show kindness and do good deeds, even if they attribute these actions to secular motives rather than religious conviction. Since ‘man’ is created in the image of God, it is not surprising that there is an innate capacity for goodness, reflecting God’s indwelling presence within the human mind.

For those who answer, ‘Is Britain still a Christian country?’ affirmatively, their response isn’t solely because they attend church, understand the Bible, believe in core Christian doctrines through Jesus Christ, or identify as Christians due to tradition or personal conviction. Instead, it is also mainly due to the actions of the church regarding community support and individual engagement.

Have you ever wondered why many people gather at churches during major national, regional, or local crises, even when a clergy member is present?

Is Britain still regarded as a Christian country? While Christian principles heavily influence its unwritten constitution, the church’s role in public life continues to be significant, unlike the dis-aggregated, varied beliefs of individuals who might answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the question. Secularists and others who claim Britain is not religious advocate for a society where religious

organisations, including the church, have no say in public affairs. Some argue that society should depend on science and reason for addressing public issues and that belief in a Christian God or any deity should be confined to private life.

Having lived in Britain significantly longer than in my country of birth, I can confidently state that Britain is indeed a Christian nation. I have participated in and led numerous organisational activities where the line between secular and religious elements often blurs. This phenomenon seems familiar among many British individuals, with religion and secular life frequently intertwined. Still, the role of the Christian faith in society is evident even if not acknowledged or well-articulated.

Sam Walker



WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE



On 4 October 2025, over 80 brothers and sisters from our Cantonese, Mandarin, and International congregations—joined by cherished friends from Hinde Street Methodist Church—walked together for an inspiring and joyful day: the King’s Cross Methodist Church Redevelopment Fundraising Walkathon.

Our church family, spanning lively children, devoted youth, active adults, and faithful elders, walked side by side, united by a shared faith and a collective vision for the future.

The walkathon was more than a fundraiser; it was a powerful expression of our church’s unity, diversity, and commitment to one another—across generations, languages, and cultures. Blessed with beautiful weather, each step was marked by fellowship, prayer, laughter, and songs of hope that echoed our community’s enduring spirit.

Why Redevelop King’s Cross Methodist Church?

King’s Cross Methodist Church has served the local community since its foundation in the 1820s. Over the last two centuries, it has become a living symbol of faith, welcome, and transformation amid the changing city. About 50 years ago, the church pioneered ministries in Cantonese and Mandarin in London, providing a spiritual home for migrants from Asia and nurturing a truly international and multi-generational congregation. Alongside vibrant worship, our church has offered vital social support—accommodation for students, care for the homeless, outreach to the vulnerable, and community spaces fostering healing and belonging.

However, the ageing church building, constructed nearly 200 years ago with multiple additions over the decades, now requires significant modernisation. Essential repairs are needed to address wear and structural limitations. The current layout and facilities fall short of inclusive accessibility standards, making it difficult for all members of our diverse congregation and community to fully participate and feel welcome. It also limits our ability to expand ministries, student accommodation, and community outreach that are vital to our mission. At the same time, the redevelopment of King’s Cross into one of the most connected areas in the UK presents a unique opportunity for us to renew our witness — not merely as a local congregation but as a Methodist presence with national reach and purpose.

Our Vision: “Rebuild our Church, Renew our Minds, and Transform the Community”

Guided by the heartfelt slogan “Rebuild our Church, Renew our Minds, and Transform the Community,” our redevelopment project seeks holistic renewal—



encompassing the physical, spiritual, and social dimensions of our church life.

Our vision is to create not just a building, but a renewed “home away from home” where faith, hope, and love thrive. We want our church to remain a beacon of welcome on one of London’s busiest transport crossroads—a place that nurtures spiritual growth and social transformation for generations.

The proposed redevelopment plan, developed and approved unanimously by Camden Council earlier this year, aims to:

- Modernise and reconfigure the interior to create flexible, uplifting worship and community spaces that serve a broad range of needs.
- Enhance accessibility with step-free access, ensuring full participation by elders, people with disabilities, families with young children, and visitors from all backgrounds.
- Expand and upgrade student accommodation to offer safe, welcoming housing supporting young people’s academic and spiritual growth.
- Open a street-facing café and reception area to welcome not only church members but the wider local community, fostering connection and hospitality.
- Incorporate sustainable design principles and energy-efficient technologies, demonstrating our commitment to environmental stewardship.
- Provide improved community spaces that can be used for social outreach, recovery groups, and other ministries reflecting the church’s

longstanding mission to serve the vulnerable and marginalised.

Reflections on Unity, Hope, and Love

The walkathon was a tangible reminder of the unity that defines King’s Cross Methodist Church. Despite our different languages, cultures, and ages, we gathered as one family equally committed to the mission Christ calls us to. Walking together, we embodied the love and hope that the redevelopment represents—not just bricks and mortar, but a shared calling to rebuild, renew, and transform.

Our church’s diversity reflects God’s kingdom, where every voice and every story enriches the community. The walkathon brought this to life, as conversations bridged languages, songs lifted spirits, and laughter blended across generations. We walked not just to build a physical space but to strengthen the spiritual bonds that unite us as Christ’s body in this vibrant city.

How to Support This Journey

This redevelopment project is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, but it cannot succeed without the generous participation of our church family and public supporters. Every donation, no matter the size, brings us closer to turning this vision into reality.

You can support our redevelopment in several meaningful ways:

Give financially: Donations help fund

construction, accessibility upgrades, and facility improvements. Visit <https://www.kxmc.org/giving> to give safely and securely online.

Pray: Spiritual support strengthens the whole project. Pray for the successful completion of building works, the safety of workers, and the flourishing of the future church community.

Volunteer: Opportunities to help with fundraising events, outreach, communications, and administration are vital to sustain progress.

Spread the word: Sharing the church's vision within your networks helps connect more people to this historic mission.

Together, by grace and determination, we can rebuild a church that welcomes all, nurture minds renewed by God's truth, and transform the broader King's Cross community.



Looking Ahead

As the redevelopment proceeds, we anticipate many more exciting phases. We pray that our renewed building will serve as a beacon of faith and hope across London, inviting everyone to experience God's love and restorative power.

Thank you to all who walked, donated, prayed, and encouraged us. Your partnership roots us deeply as we journey forward. May God bless our united steps and our shared future at King's Cross Methodist Church.

***"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."
— 1 Thessalonians 5:11***

Diana Wong, King's Cross Methodist Church
Redevelopment Steering Group member



A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE BLACK PRESENCE IN BRITAIN

African people and people of African descent have lived in Britain for hundreds of years. In 1601, 'the great Number of negroes and blackamoors' in England were the subject of a royal proclamation. Trade with Africa shifted from buying commodities to buying and selling African people. The slave trade and slave-grown sugar in the Caribbean made some British families very wealthy. Africans were torn from their Motherland. The majority of Black slaves were sent to North America, South America, and the Caribbean, but some also came to Britain.

African writers condemned the evils of the slave trade. Ignatius Sancho (1729-1780) lived in Britain from 1731, married Anne, an African Caribbean, and had six children. Ottobah Cugoana (1757-c1780) from Ghana and Olaudah Equiano (1745-1797) from Nigeria also wrote and spoke out against the enslavement of African people.



Olaudah Equiano

Black men and women are found throughout Britain. They appear in portrait paintings; owning Black servants was a status symbol for wealthy White people. Samuel Pepys's diary from 1669 mentions Doll, his Black servant. Samuel Johnson, who compiled the first English dictionary, employed Francis Barber from Jamaica as his servant in the 1770s and 1780s.

International trade brought hundreds of Black sailors to British ports every year. When the USA gained independence in the 1770s, Blacks moved to Canada and Britain. Thousands of sailors were left unemployed. London's 'Black Poor' were sent to Africa, founding Freetown, Sierra Leone in the 1790s. Black people challenged the way British society was run: William Davidson was hanged in London in 1820 for his part in the Cato Street conspiracy to assassinate government ministers. Also from Jamaica was Robert Wedderburn, who wrote 'The horrors of slavery' in 1824 and spent two years in Dorchester Prison for libel. Both men had been in Britain from their teens.

Thomas Freeman, born in England in 1809, worked in gardening and was promoted to oversee an Ipswich estate. He travelled to Ghana and later Nigeria as a Methodist Missionary. In Cornish towns from the 1800s, Joseph Emidy performed violin recitals and started a family. This African was buried in Truro in 1835.

William Cuffay was born in Chatham, Kent. His mother was an English woman from Gillingham, Kent. His father was enslaved in St Kitts, a British colony in the Caribbean at the time. He took part in the first mass working-

class movement, the Chartists. He was exiled to Australia when the Chartist movement was broken up. He was mentioned by the author William Thackeray, whose novel *Vanity Fair* also mentions a black West Indian heiress.

Mary Seacole, a Jamaican nurse, retired to London after assisting British soldiers in the Crimean War (1853-56) and seeing her autobiography published in 1857. She died in London in 1881 and is buried in Kensal Green cemetery in West London.

American anti-slavery protesters frequently visited Britain. In the 1890s, Ida Wells from Tennessee toured Britain. Anti-lynching campaigns caused many liberals to forget that Britain restricted rights in Africa and the Caribbean. Students from the Caribbean and Africa also attended British universities, colleges, and private schools. Since there were no medical or law schools in the Black empire, most Blacks had to study abroad, nearly all in Britain. These students mostly came from the small, wealthy business sector, but they experienced the same racist attitudes as poorer Black people in Britain.

The first African to qualify as a doctor in Britain was Africanus Beale Horton (1834-1883), who studied in Scotland.



SURGEON-MAJOR J. A. B. HORTON, M.D., F.R.G.S.
An African Doctor on the Army Medical Staff
Born 1834; Died Oct. 15, 1883

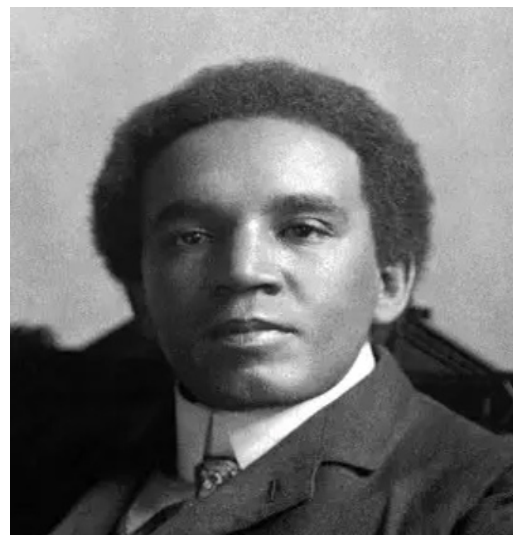
An Army officer and author of “*West African Countries and Peoples*” in 1868, his daughter Nannette was educated in Sierra Leone, England, and Germany. She married an Englishman and raised her family in Tooting and Clapham in the 1900s. She died in 1924.

A Jamaican who qualified in medicine in Edinburgh was Theophilus Scholes. He worked in Africa before settling in London, where he authored four books between 1899 and 1908. Dr. Scholes was consulted by many generations of younger Black people, and he lived into the 1930s. During this period, he met Kenya’s future leader, Jomo Kenyatta.

John Jacob Thomas of Trinidad authored two books and died in London in 1889. Henry Sylvester Williams, also from Trinidad, was a lawyer in London. He organised the Pan African conference of 1900 in Manchester and edited the Pan African magazine. He was elected to the council of Marylebone in 1907.

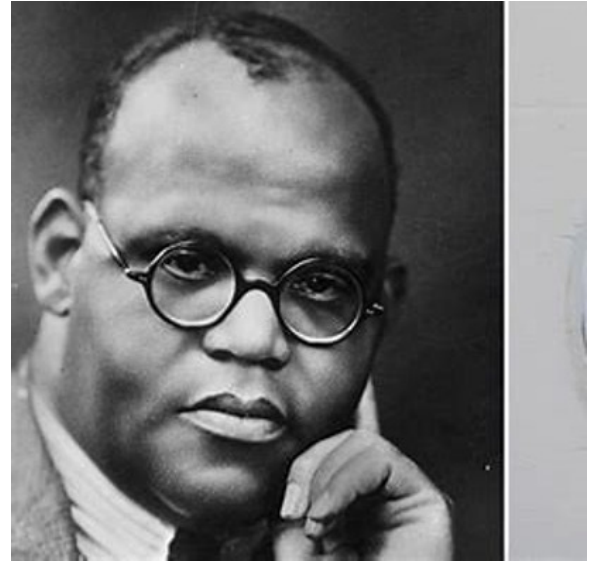
John Richard Archer was born in Liverpool in 1863 and was proud that his father was from Barbados. He was elected to Battersea council in 1909 and served as Mayor from 1913 to 1914. Additionally, he participated in the Pan African conference in 1900.

Another well-known Black figure born in Britain was composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912).



Samuel Coleridge Taylor

Born in Holborn, London, and raised in Croydon, he studied at the Royal College of Music. He gained lasting fame with his 'The Song of Hiawatha' for choir and orchestra, composed between 1898 and 1900. One of his friends was John Alcindor (1873-1924), a Trinidadian student at Edinburgh University who settled in London after qualifying as a doctor in 1899; he was referred to as The Black Doctor of Paddington. Dr Alcindor led the African Progress Union of London following John Archer's resignation in 1921. That Union advocated for Black rights worldwide and defended Black individuals. After racial riots in 1919, and in the courts of Liverpool, a Guyanese lawyer and Oxford graduate, Edward Nelson, successfully defended Africans charged with rioting. Nelson was also a Parish councillor in Cheshire. He died in Manchester in 1940.



Harold Moody

Throughout the centuries, hundreds of Black men and women worked as servants and labourers; these were the common employment roles of the time. Black women are often seen as anonymous figures in recollections of country life publications such as *Swallows and Amazons*, written by Arthur Ransome in the 1900s, or *Cider with Rosie* by Laurie Lee in Gloucestershire.

Most Black people in Britain rarely received recognition, even when participating in public events. In sports, James Peters, born in Manchester (1880-1953), represented England in rugby multiple times between 1906 and 1908; Marshall Taylor from America won cycling races against British and European champions around 1902; in 1907, Andrew Jephtha from South Africa claimed a world boxing title in London. Len Johnson, also from Manchester, made a living from boxing during the 1920s and 1930s. Randolph Turpin from Leamington Spa was a world boxing champion in the 1940s. Jack London, whose parents hailed from Guyana, competed for Britain in the 1928 Olympics, earning silver and bronze medals.

It is notable that the role played by Septimus Severus, the Black Roman Emperor stationed in York who defeated invading Barbarians at Hadrian's Wall, is largely forgotten, as is the work of Black philanthropists like Harold Moody, who lived in Camberwell, London. He founded The League of Coloured Peoples in 1931 to combat racial discrimination and inequality. Despite being refused a hospital appointment, even as a doctor, he was compelled to establish his own practice in Camberwell. Many others have made significant contributions to the advancement of humankind, and all efforts should be made to recognise these individuals and their collective achievements in serving communities. This presents a challenge to both current and future generations of Black and White people.

This article was written by Jeff Green, a prolific researcher and writer of Black British History and Sam Walker, former Director, Black Cultural Archives. It was first published in 1993 in an in-house magazine of the Black Cultural Archives.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black History month was founded by Dr Carter G Woodson in 1926.

He was an American historian, author and journalist. Dr Woodson was also the founder of the Association for the study of African American Life and History. He was one of the first people to study the history of Black African Diaspora in the USA. He believed that education and increasing professional contacts among Black and White people could reduce racism, and he promoted the study of African American history for that purpose. He later promoted Negro History Week in Washington D.C and later it became Black History Month in the USA.

It was celebrated in the month of February; Dr Woodson explained that he chose February in memory of Fredrick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln who were born in that month.

Dr Woodson was born in 1875 to enslaved parents. He grew up in Virginia, and worked as a farm laborer, and attended school in a one room school house. During the civil war, his father helped Union soldiers after escaping from his owner, by leading them to Confederate supply station and warehouse to raid the army supplies. After the war they moved to West Virginia

where they bought a small farm. Dr Woodson was unable to attend school regularly as he had to work the farm. However, months of instructions from his uncles who were taught to read, and his quest for knowledge he was able to understand most subjects.

At age seventeen Dr Woodson moved to Huntington West Virginia, where he hoped to attend Douglas High School, a school for African Americans. Dr Woodson worked in the coal mines; as a result he had little time for education. However, when he was twenty in 1895 Dr Woodson attended Douglas High School where he obtained his high school diploma in 1897. After his graduation he worked as a teacher in Winona, West Virginia. In 1900 Dr Woodson became the principal of Douglas High School where he started his academic career.

From 1901 to 1903 Dr Woodson attended Berea College in Kentucky, where he obtained a bachelors degree in literature. From late 1903 until 1907, he worked as a school supervisor in the Philippines. This had recently become an American territory. He later attended Chicago University, where he obtained an MA, titled "The German Policy of France in the War on Austrian Succession"

and BA in 1908.

Dr Woodson was a member of the first Black professional fraternity. He completed his PhD in history at Harvard University in 1912; and was the second African American to earn a doctorate. His dissertation was based on research he did in the Library of Congress while he was teaching at a high school in Washington D.C. After earning his doctorate he continued teaching in public schools because no university was willing to employ him. Dr Woodson eventually became the principal of the all Black Armstrong Manual Training School in Washington DC. And later joined the faculty at Howard University as a professor; He was the Dean for the College of Art and Science department.

Dr Woodson felt that The American History Association was not interested in Black History. He was convinced that he had no future in a white dominated historical profession, and to work as a black historian would require an instruction that would make it possible for black people to study history. Dr Woodson did not have the finances to



Dr Carter G Woodson

finance a new instructional structure himself, and he turned to institutions such as the Carnegie, Julius Rosendale and the Rockefeller Foundations for the founding. In 1915 he was instrumental in promoting the history of African American in schools and colleges.

Dr Woodson was a teacher; he worked at historically black colleges such as Howard and West Virginia State University. He was recognised as the Father of Black History; In 1916 Dr Woodson began publications of *The Journal of Negro History*. Due to loss of support from foundations and two World Wars, the magazine was renamed the *Journal of African American History*. Dr Woodson went on to publish several books and papers.

He was instrumental in promoting African American History and culture. Dr Woodson was also recognized for his efforts to promoting and preserving the history of

African American life and study. He was also a Civil Rights advocate. And a life member of the National Association of the advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Dr Woodson believed in his self reliance racial respect, these are values he shared with Marcus Garvey a Jamaican activist. He became a regular for columnist for Garvey's weekly news paper *Negro World*.

Dr Woodson died of a heart attack in April 1950, he was aged seventy five. He was said to be a prominent historian and educator who played a significant role in writing promoting and promoting the history of the African Diaspora.

Jan Francis

FAREWELL CHRIS ROLES

Very sadly, Chris Roles died this year after a short illness. There was a funeral service in Winchester in June, and a Thanksgiving service at Hinde Street in July. At both events Chris Roles' life of service in many Christian institutions, national and international was celebrated. Rather than write a biographical obituary for Cross-currents, we are reproducing the article written in 2009 when Hinde Street said Farewell to the family.

Farewell Roles

Most of the church community will know that Chris, Penny, Oliver, Samuel and Miranda Roles left London for a new life in Winchester in the early summer. Chris and Penny contributed richly to the church and circuit since the time they both moved to London in 1984 and 1985 respectively having known each other from their recent university life. They both originally lived in the church communities and, as has been known to happen before, in due course they set up their own community! Chris and Penny married at Hinde St and their three children were all christened here (there were great parties afterwards!) We shall miss the children almost as much as we are missing their parents.

Where to start to try and summarise all that Chris and Penny have given to the church which they served with such distinction? Penny's involvement with the Junior Church and the communities was characterised



Chris Roles with Miriam Cantor and Brenda Woods at a Church weekend in the 1980's

by great sensitivity, insight and sheer common sense. Chris' contribution to worship through preaching, his membership of circuit committee, GP and Social Work committee, the musical life of the church, the North London Class (the list could go on) was all carried out with impressive dedication, a depth and breadth of ability and admirable efficiency. This is all the more impressive as Chris was also simultaneously building a distinguished career (as was Penny) and was so fully involved in his family life.

How did you do it all Chris and Penny? The hole you have left is enormous. We thank you for all you have given. Our loss is Winchester's gain! We envy them as we send you our grateful thanks, our love and every good wish.

Helen Martyn

FAREWELL MARGARET WALKER

Margaret Walker died on 22 September 2025, at the age of 89. I am indebted to her husband Derek for the following snapshot of her life.

She came to be a member at Hinde Street via Kingsway, which she began attending in her teens or early twenties. She was brought up in Lee, south London, where her father was a local preacher, but was attracted by Donald Soper's style of worship. She was a librarian by profession and worked for some time at the London School of Economics. At Kingsway she ran a bookstall on Sunday mornings to raise funds for the Mission. She was well known in the Kingsway community particularly to Kath and Madge Humphreys and the Bibbs.

Margaret met Derek at Kingsway in 1961, and they were married by Lord Soper in February 1963 - a life-long marriage which lasted for 62 years.

When Kingsway merged with Hinde Street, Margaret was a regular attender at what was then the 10am communion service which was conducted by Lord Soper until his death. In recent years Margaret became less mobile and unable to get to church. She was a member of Margaret Swarbrick's class and Margaret recalls meeting her by chance on a course at the National Gallery.

Margaret had no surviving close relatives.

Margaret always retained a great affection for the life at Kingsway but she was, as everyone would acknowledge, a very private person whose faith was largely known to God alone. May she be welcomed into the fellowship of those who have died in Christ.

Gordon Slater



