

The Drive Methodist Church

Eastern Avenue Ilford IG13PP

Newsletter

JANUARY 2023



Minister Reverend Mmasape Zihle

mmasape.zihle@methodist.org

www.drive-methodist.church

Church Mission Statement of The Drive Methodist Church

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

Message from Mmasape

Dear church family and friends

What a fantastic end we had to 2022! Thank you to all who organised, led and participated in our Advent and Christmas celebrations: from the Circuit Advent Carols, Nativity Services, various carols singing and the Christmas Service. All these brought families and friends from near and far.

Let me begin by wishing you all a Happy New Year!

It is only by grace that we stand at the threshold of this new beginning. A chance to do things differently and to effect positive change. None of us can claim to know what the year ahead holds for us, but we can by faith and hope step into it boldly, as we trust God for what is and what will be in 2023.

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
Isaiah 43.19 The above verse is at the centre of our circuit vision to live out our Methodist calling as we serve, learn, care, worship and

make disciples.

Doing all these in a unified way as churches across the circuit. Each using their strengths for the good of all and the glory of God.

I urge all of us to seek and support those things that unite us. All who perceive this “will know we are Christians by our love.”

This is my last article for 4 months, as I begin my sabbatical at the beginning of February. A gist of the church to its ministers to rest. The other circuit ministers will be available for all pastoral needs that may arise.

I pray for God’s blessing on you all, trusting that nothing will happen that God will not see us through.

May our Almighty God renew your minds and strengthen your hearts as you seek to faithfully serve him at the start of and throughout 2023.

Yours in service

Mmasape



Help and Support is available

Are you struggling to manage?

Are you worried about providing
for yourself or your family?

Do you know of someone who needs help and support?

Contact: Reverend Mmasape who will help you and provide
confidential support. mmasape.zihle@methodist.church

LIVE STREAMING OF SERVICES

Our Church now has its own YouTube channel to which we are live streaming our services. You can access the channel by clicking on the YouTube button on the Home page of our Church website (lower RH side) or via YouTube itself by searching **@drive-methodist-ilford** You can then add and save this to your YouTube subscriptions.

Jeremy



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

**Wishing you all
a very Happy New Year.**

Hilary Stevens

It was with much sadness that on 27th November we learned of the death of our friend Hilary. I'm conscious that Hilary was a fan of simplicity and would not have appreciated unnecessary fuss. However, her friends have written thoughts and tributes which you will find in this edition.

Brian Taylor

After a long awaited operation for a pacemaker, Brian was left with the complication of a collapsed lung, and needed to be readmitted to hospital. I understand that Brian is now recovering at home. We send our prayers and best wishes for Brian and Kathleen.

Rev Mmasape

As she prepares for her sabbatical, we wish Mmasape physical, mental, spiritual rest and refreshment. We pray that God will guide her studies and keep her safe.

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS are:

Phelo Zihle on 6th

Matthew Foster on 9th

Happy Birthday to you,

Happy Birthday to you,

Happy Birthday to you both

Happy Birthday to you.

Happy Birthday to you,

to Jesus be true.

May Gods richest blessings be poured out on you.



Thank you to:

-) *Mike Seviour for maintaining the church website*
-) *The prayer group who ensure we have a daily prayer.*
-) *Andrew and our wonderful choir and chorale*
-) *All who maintain our church premises*
-) *The refreshment team*
-) *Our church stewards*

NATIVITY and TOY Service— Behind the scenes

Well another unique Nativity Play took place on 11th December at The Drive. Jo and Michelle worked hard to rehearse our actorsherding chickens comes to mind!

Sandra and I took the easy option behind the scenes and gathered the props together. It is interesting that apart from the obvious, each Nativity performance requires differing props; on this occasion - a gift box for baby Jesus, a crutch for the leper, sunglasses and hats for the three shifty looking Wise Men, a fire for the shepherds to sit around and for a change, a decent looking sheep. We have in the past always struggled to find realistic sized sheep....but not in 2022! We now have an almost life size sheep thanks to Sandra, who in true Blue Peter style, armed with wire coat hangers and pillow stuffing, converted a sheep Onesie outfit into the magnificent Sandra the Sheep! Who, following the Nativity, took her place in the pews and joined the congregation for the Christmas services.

Castingnow there's a thing! You might have noticed that almost all our previous Nativity cast have grown like beanstalks and didn't particularly want to be dressed as angels and shepherds. But..... there appeared to be willing older members of the congregation who didn't mind popping on a tea towel headdress or in the case of the dodgy Wise men, a trilby and sunglasses!

And what about the Centurion, looking magnificent as he also distributed the hymn books. Now, our limited nativity wardrobe dept was dearly stretched, so we reached out to the Loughton Christian Drama Resource Centre who came up trumps with one or two essential items.

The inclusion of the witness of Mary Magdalene, the bride, tax collector, servant, Roman centurion, and the leper was inspirational and meaningful.

I raided my wardrobe and my fabric stash, Sandra and Tahlia used their skills to craft much needed accessories and Diane printed the scripts for the cast members.

I loved that the adult shepherds cared enough that they looked like real shepherds. Of course there was the usual last minute panic and casting.....just like the Old Vic. Thank goodness the football pitch was frozen and allowed Isiah to be our Joseph alongside our splendid Mary, Emily.

Regardless of any fuss or missing cast members, it told the wonderful story of how Christ Jesus was born to save us. **Well done everyone!**

By they way, if you bought a watch from one of the Wise Men and it doesn't work the Drive Methodist Church cannot be held responsible . You should have got a receipt!

Lorraine

The Servant's Tale

Yes that's me. The Servant. I like to think I'm a good servant too. For years I have been carrying out my daily duties quietly and hopefully efficiently. My master, the Roman Centurion, is a good master too. Recently, when I became very ill, he asked a man to heal me. And this man did! (What faith my master had!)

Anyway, this morning as I am sweeping the floor, my master beckons me and says we should go to a place called Bethlehem and offer our thanks to this man. Should we take a gift I ask him but we couldn't think of a suitable one. After all, this man had given me my life back. What on earth could we give in return? So we hoped our thanks would be enough and we set off.

After some time we arrive at Bethlehem. There is definitely something going on here. There are so many people (Young People and older) gathered round what looks like an old stable. As we get nearer I see what I believe to be an Angel and two others, their voices carrying over the people, singing a beautiful song. The crowd is so big but we manage to work our way inside. I see The Innkeeper, who I presume owns the stable, with a gift of a lovely soft blanket. There are Shepherds here with their sheep and they have brought a lamb.

Kneeling down in front I am surprised to see Three Wise Men. I think to myself what a good idea to wear sunglasses – that star above is so bright! As we move further inside I see the wise men are offering gifts as well. Oh dear, I knew we should have brought something.

Then all of a sudden I hear loud voices, one at a time. Over to the left is a lady, dressed in a white shawl. She says she is a bride and was saying thank you.

Apparently at her wedding they had run out of wine and this man had changed whole jars of water into wine. Now THAT I approve of ; I smile to myself. I'm relieved to see she hasn't brought a gift although I think a nice bottle of red might have gone down well. Anyway she finishes speaking and immediately someone else on the other side of the stable starts giving thanks. It turns out this person is a Leper, although like me they have been healed by this man.

My master whispers it is now our turn. So we edge forward and we both say thank you. As soon as we finish speaking other people call out saying thank you – two women called Mary Magdalene and Martha, a tax collector called Matthew and then a friend of this man called John.

None of these people have brought gifts – like us they couldn't think of anything suitable either.

More and more people are gathering now. Smiling and singing loudly. It's like a big party!

And then it seems to me the noise is gradually dying down and there is almost a quiet hush as I see right there in the middle of all this jollity is a couple whose names someone tells me are Mary and Joseph. They look so young and Mary is holding a baby, Jesus. And then it hits me! Suddenly the truth comes to me in that exact moment I see this baby. Of course, **HE** is the reason we are here, **HE** is the man we are all thanking, **HE** is the person we are having the party for!

Wow, the noise is growing again and the singing is getting louder...and higher! I think to myself how lucky I am to be here joining in this celebration with everyone.

It **IS** a very special day.

Diane Foster



Nativity 2022

Thank you to everyone who took part in the "Whole Church Nativity". There were many people who put the props and costumes together, organised the script, played the music and threw themselves whole heartedly into their roles. Well done and thank you.

Jo

Thank you also to you Jo.LB

A Child's Prayer for Ukraine

Loving God, we pray for peace in Ukraine.
Help keep people safe and protect them from
being hurt.

Please care for children separated from their
families,

Please help people who have had to leave their homes.

We pray for love and peace, everywhere.

In the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace,

Amen



A Prayer For Refugees

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became
a refugee and had no place to call his own;

look with mercy on those who today are
fleeing from danger, homeless and hungry.

Bless those who work to bring them relief;

inspire generosity and compassion in all our
hearts;

guide the nations of the world towards that
day when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of
justice and of peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

WINTER WALKS

The Forgotten Gardens of

Easton Lodge Dunmow

I wholeheartedly recommend this charming peaceful and unpretentious garden to wander around. It's about a 30min drive from Redbridge.

Here's some information from them, should you wish to visit the beautiful snowdrops.

The new season starts with snowdrops in the Gardens. We plan to be open for two Sunday Snowdrop Open Days, on 12 and 19 February 2023, weather and ground conditions permitting.

The Gardens will be open from 11.00 to 4.00, last entry 3.00. Snowdrops in the green available to purchase and there will be a plant stall. Other stalls tbc.

Our volunteers will provide hot and cold refreshments, including bacon, cheese or hummus rolls, homemade soup and homemade cakes.

Tickets will be available in advance through Trybooking.com or on the gate from 12.00pm.

What3words for the entrance to the car park is **saying.losses.spurled**

In the event that the Trust has to cancel the Open Day, advance tickets will be refunded.

The Gardens will also be open for two Snowdrop Thursdays, on 16 and 23 February, subject to the weather conditions being OK!



2023 – A Golden Year for The Drive

2023 marks the 50th anniversary of The Drive Methodist Church – the combining of the old Cranbrook Park and Eastern Avenue churches on the Eastern Avenue site in 1973.

Cranbrook Park began life as a Wesleyan Methodist Church on the corner of The Drive and Clarendon Gardens in 1904, while Eastern Avenue United Methodist church was opened in 1928. Because of this history, we always have three different anniversaries to celebrate!

***AJT** Thank you for the reminder Andrew. It would be good to hear some memories of this time. LB*

Providing a Warm Space

The Co-op and Crowdfunder have teamed up to help community organisations navigate the cost of living crisis to provide vital services this winter.

Are you welcoming people into a warm space in your community, or wanting to extend existing activities or services to support more people?

Eligible community groups **could get up to £3,000** to continue or extend vital services.

CHRISTMAS PAST— recollections from Janet Brunnen.

I have been going back in time to Christmas's as a child. When I was little we had a stocking on Christmas Eve; a white mesh net stocking. There was always a tangerine and a walnut in the toe of the stocking.

Other presents were pencils, crayons, a magic painting book, and maybe a pencil case. One year my Nan gave me a very pretty blue tin, decorated with pink flowers. Inside were assorted biscuits. I thought it was wonderful. I still have the tin to this day.

Mum bought me a book called Christmas at Timothy's and I've still got it! We didn't have many presents as there was little money and choice.

I used to make paper chains with paste made from flour and water to hold them together. I also collected green leaves and glued glitter on them.

In the late forties, early fifties when rationing was still in place ,we couldn't get real Christmas trees but mum had a small silver artificial one.

Turkeys weren't available and so we had chicken for Christmas dinner. At tea time it was cold meat and pickle as Nan used to make pickled red cabbage, fruit cake and trifle.

On Christmas Day I think there was my Mum and Dad, Nan, me and my two sisters and my Aunt and Uncle.

My Dad was one of fourteen and Mum was an only child and on Boxing Day Aunts and Uncles came to tea.more trifle, cake, celery, cold meat, pickles and bread and butter.

Mum used to make my sister Mary and I do a little play. We sang “ its dark in the earth today, said one little bulb to the other” I recall that we were dressed in green crepe paper costumes. The song was from the Carrie Bonner Sunday School book.

And here is Janet and Marys Christmas party piece.....

*“ It’s rather dark in the earth today,”
said one little bulb to the other,
“But I thought that I felt a sunbeam’s ray.
We must strive and grow ‘til we find our way!”
and they nestled close to each other.
They struggled and strived by day and by night,
‘til two little snowdrops in green and white
rose out of the darkness and into the light;
and softly kissed one another.*

— **Where Are The Snowdrops? by Annie Matheson.**

Thank you Janet for sharing your special Christmas memories.. LB

HILARY STEVENS

Funeral arrangements for Hilary Stevens

A service to celebrate Hilary's life will be held at The Drive Methodist Church on Thursday 5th January at 11.30am.

Following the service, refreshments will be served in the Parlour.

This will be followed by the committal on 6th January



TRIBUTES TO HILARY

Janet's memories of HILARY

I've known Hilary since she was 10 yrs old as she was the same age as my sister Mary. They both went to Redbridge school , then on to Beal Grammar School for girls which was in Ley street, Ilford at the time. Mary introduced Hilary to the church and the choir in the fifties. At the time, Hilary and her parents lived in Redbridge Lane East until they moved sometime in the fifties to Wanstead.

When Hilary left school she worked in a solicitors office, before moving on to work at Barking Hospital, where I think she was a medical secretary.

Hilary was a quiet person who liked her own company; living alone after her parents died. She loved animals and especially her pet tortoiseshell cat Lucy. She also fed the foxes and hedgehogs who visited her garden.

Hilary was very committed to the church and sang alto in the choir. She also served on many committees and was a committed Pastoral Visitor.

Hilary wrote wonderful inspirational prayers. We loved her and shall miss her as she was a kind and considerate lady, going about her duties quietly and efficiently.

Janet Brunnen

Our friend Hilary

I have a picture of Hilary holding me as a baby, so I have known Hilary all my life. I feel that she has never changed. Always a cheery word, a smile, and a unique ability to show her quiet but strong support for people at home, and around the world, who were in need.

Hilary also had wonderful sense of humour and would often tell us funny stories about her ride to church on the 66 or 145 bus route.

She was a good friend to my parents and to me, my family and my brother, Nick. Hilary was my parent's pastoral leader and gave me and my family great strength when my parents became ill. Something I will always be grateful for. I remember Hilary coming round for tea and her sitting in my parent's garden and admiring my father's dahlias. She also adored our black cat, Raffles.

As I'm sure lots of us are aware, Hilary loved animals. She had many cats, who she would often rescue from cat sanctuaries and give them a wonderful second chance at life. Hilary would be so pleased that her neighbour, Siobhan, has kindly adopted "Lucy" and will be looking after her for the

foreseeable future. Hilary also had another good neighbour, Fiona. They would often pass the time of day together and were neighbours and friends for many years.

I shall miss Hilary dearly, especially at our choir practices. She knew her Methodist hymns and tunes well and had a wonderful alto voice. She would often laugh that the alto line only had one or two monotonous notes to sing, but without Hilary and Michelle singing those notes, the music would not have been so harmonious and joyous.

Over the years Hilary has written many wonderful, heartfelt prayers and I'm sure all of us have been uplifted and blessed by them at some point in our lives. I feel truly lucky that Hilary was part of my church family, an anchor in stormy times, a calm reassuring voice, a fellow cat lover and a wonderful, supportive friend.

Thank you, Hilary, for all you have done at The Drive Methodist Church and for all the lives you have touched through your prayers, friendship, and true Methodist spirit. We know you are now at peace and resting with God in Glory, and with all those family and friends who have gone before you.

Jo



Hilary

Since I have attended the Drive Church, Hilary has been there.

We exercise our dog Flo on the green areas in Wanstead and often we would see Hilary who would be delighted to see Flo and make a fuss of her. Frequently Hilary would be with or waiting for her long term friend Fiona with whom she walked.

Although I knew Hilary for many years, what I knew about her was limited. What was obvious was her steadfast strong Christian faith, her love of wildlife, particularly the birds and animals that visited her garden, and her concern for the world, all of which was reflected in the wonderful prayers she wrote.

I was always struck by the thoughtful but easy conversational tone of the beautiful prayers she wrote; their simplicity always made me feel as though she was speaking the thoughts I couldn't put into words.

I have been the Pastoral Secretary for a few years now and Hilary was a long standing and most dedicated Pastoral Visitor. She had the ability to relate with a compassionate understanding to people of all ages.

She rarely accepted church flowers but she always commented on them; noticing their colour or variety. All of which reflects Hilary's deep love of nature. Rest well Hilary. **Lorraine**

Elsie's memory of Hilary—told by Ruth

Elsie told me this some years ago, when she was in her 80s and her eyesight was good enough for her to be completely independent.

One day Elsie saw Hilary at church and had the following conversation:

Elsie: Hilary, I'm coming for an appointment this week at the clinic where you work.

Hilary: Really, are you sure?

Elsie: Yes, and said the name of the building

Hilary: Yes, that's the building but who are you coming to see?

Elsie: She said the name and asked why Hilary was so puzzled?

Hilary: Well, I somehow didn't think it would be my clinic because I work in sexual health!

Elsie told me they both roared with laughter.

Ruth

HILARY STEVENS

My earliest memories of Hilary were as a JMA collector in my extreme youth. She was one of my regular contributors! (I still have the medal somewhere...)

And I don't remember a time when Hilary wasn't singing in the choir. Others won't mind me saying that she was a mainstay of the alto section, with her music-reading ability and confident singing voice.

Hilary was fiercely independent. She continued working well past retirement age. To my knowledge, she never applied for a bus pass, despite travelling to work and everywhere else by bus – she would always have a story about the interesting people and incidents she'd come across on her bus travels. It was only in later years that she would accept a lift home from choir practice. She had a soft spot for Anglican worship, and was a regular visitor to Christchurch, Wanstead and St John's, Stratford, as well as our neighbours at St Andrew's.

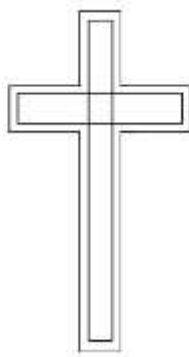
Hilary could be very direct – she would let me know if she didn't think my socks matched the shirt I was wearing! But she was equally supportive and generous with her praise, often enjoying and asking about the organ music at the end of a service. She was very open to new music in church, and was often more familiar than me with recent worship songs, because of her visits to other churches.

Hilary was essentially a private person. We all knew her, but in many ways we probably didn't. I never knew how old she was. She did let us in on some of her views, for example she was definitely not a royalist! But her character showed through best in the many prayers that she wrote, which were more conversations with God, often very specific to the news at the time they were written.

We've continued to hear her voice throughout December in the prayers that she prepared to share on the WhatsApp group, finishing just before Christmas with a beautifully concise reminder of Jesus as the light of the world.

It's still difficult to believe that I won't see her standing at the bus stop on the Eastern Avenue, and that she won't be waiting in the choir vestry to criticise my choice of socks. We will miss her.

Andrew Taylor



Jan's thoughts of Hilary

I remember my last conversation with Hilary at the back of the Church, the last time she was there. She talked about the foxes and hedgehogs in her garden in a way that pointed to her God, the Creator of all things. Thank you Hilary for your conversations and the many helpful prayers you contributed to the services I led.

Jan Pearson

Oli's thoughts

Hilary became a face I passed by on a Sunday at church to say 'Good morning' to, a face with a name I knew with warmth. How, with a beautiful card she sent to me with the words 'thinking of you and hoping you get better soon' when I broke my collar bone.

I was going through a lot at the time and that card was very touching for me at the time.

I knew her by face , but not by name. I had to ask Jo who Hilary was. From that day I always remembered the name to the face and made an effort to know her more.

A quietly spoken, kind, caring and thoughtful person.

Oli

Hilary– from Liz

She has been my good and special friend for many years. I first met her when we both worked in Stratford.

What a kind and caring person she was. I loved her and I will miss her.

Liz

Memories of Hilary

It was a great shock to hear of Hilary's sudden passing. For me Hilary had been someone at The Drive who had always been there. From the first time I attended a service in 1982, Hilary was there. When I joined the choir in 1986, she was already there, a committed and loyal choir member. She had a lovely strong alto voice and we missed her very much at our recent Carol Service.

Hilary was always prepared to take on any task within the church. When I became a steward for the first time in the early 90s, Hilary was already there on the team. She went on to become the senior steward and remained so, very efficiently, for some years. She had also been the secretary for The Church Life and Finance Committees. In recent years she agreed to join the steward's team again. Since assisting Michelle with the senior steward's role, I knew I could always count on Hilary to be happy to read service lessons. And she wasn't bothered which reading – "just tell me on the day" she used to say to me. She was also happy to volunteer to steward at weddings and

funerals.

And of course we all know of Hilary's beautiful prayer writing through which her Christian faith shone. Whenever she was on vestry duty, she would always write her own prayer to read in the vestry for the preacher and choir before the service began. Her words always hit the right note. In fact when Stephen Normanton was our minister, he would ask Hilary to repeat the prayer in church so that the congregation could hear it as well. Many times she had taken part in a service leading her own prayers of intercessions. She was modest about receiving praise for her prayer writing. When I worked at MCH and the annual Methodist Prayer Handbook was being put together, I always used to suggest to Hilary that she submit a prayer but she used to shrug and shake her head and never did.

Hilary was a very generous person and I was always grateful for her support of our annual JMA Beetle Drive to which she always gave a donation and enjoyed taking part in. I will miss her at the planned event for 2023.

Hilary was not one for modern technology and never owned a mobile phone or computer. She did however have a television. Chatting to her recently while we were stewarding at a wedding, the conversation turned to TV programmes and in particular Strictly Come Dancing which she loved to watch. The new series had just started and we had a great time discussing the potential



dancing abilities of the celebrity contestants. Earlier this year, when Jeremy asked her if we were to hold a slides evening on a Saturday in November, would she attend? She immediately said sorry but no because Strictly will be on! I also know that she was an avid fan of Masterchef. I tried calling her one evening but gave up when there was no answer. About half an hour later she phoned me back and apologised for not answering and said “you obviously don’t watch Masterchef!” which had been on when I called!

I shall always remember Hilary as a loyal, committed, faithful member of our church who was always there. She was a lovely, true Christian lady and will be greatly missed.

Diane Foster

Being a disciple of the Christ means to learn from Him and to stay close to Him. These two imperatives are the very core of true discipleship. These two requirements were essential for Christ’s disciples then — and likewise are necessary for followers of Christ today.

Bible Reading Group



The Bible Reading Group will meet on **6th January** at 11:00am at Jan and John's. We will be discuss Luke chapters 1-6 followed by refreshments.

We will also meet on Friday **27th January** at 11.00am at Jan and John's. we will discuss Luke chapters 7-13 followed by refreshments.

Best wishes, Jan and John

DISTRICT SAFEGUARDING NEWS

Following the recent resignation of DSO Becky Skinner, there is some progress.

Our New Safeguarding Team

We're delighted to inform you that we now have a new District Safeguarding Officer and a new(ish) Assistant District Safeguarding Officer. Join us in giving a huge warm welcome to Claire DeStefano and Rachael Pielow. Both will be joining us in their new roles in January. Contact details will be shared in the new year.

THE SATURDAY LUNCH

This months Saturday Lunch will be on

7th January at 12.30pm.

The lunch will cost £4



We will be serving Home Made Soup and Bacon/Cheese Rolls.

Please message or call Lorraine 07929973430 or

Ruth 07780852858

Why not bring a friend?

CHARITY GIVING during December

Money raised from the Christmas Extravaganza

Donated to: Red Cross Yemen Appeal £193.13

Contributions from the Toy Service :

Toys donated to the South Woodford Food Bank

Money donated to the Redbridge Food Bank
£ 304.50

Carol Service collection: donated to Shelter
£170.11

My Tribute to Hilary

It was with great sadness that I heard the news of Hilary's death.

For as long as I can remember she was always at church fulfilling her duties with care and concern. Such was her diligence that she would quietly step in to undertake any task that would appear to be needed last minute. She was a valued member of the choir and in recent months we occasionally managed to have a brief chat before making our way home.

There was never time for an in depth conversation and I rather think that she preferred it that way but she never failed to ask after my family or praise my efforts at flower arranging. I wonder if she knew how much confidence she instilled in me over the years? I used to thank her profusely.

Hilary was gifted in her ability to write the most beautiful prayers, one of which was posted on, The Drive Together on the 1st December.

The prayer Hilary wrote clearly indicated her thoughts about 'people who look to God as a last resort when all else fails.' I wonder if Hilary in a quiet moment whilst on door duty, gathered the words of her prayer and finished it when she arrived home? Perhaps we should read that prayer a few times and act upon her words. What a fitting tribute it would be to her memory if we: 'so live our lives that Jesus may be seen on the streets where we live.'

Thank you Hilary.
May you rest in peace.

Anne Dellow

My Fellow Alto, Hilary

I knew Hilary for over 20 years - I can't believe it was so long. We were Stewards together and I sang with her in the choir for very many years. Hilary and I were Altos which is why you would have seen us sitting together in the choir. Hilary was very knowledgeable about music; she probably knew all the hymns in the old Hymns and Psalms book and her conversations with Andrew about music and the notes would often lose me! However, Hilary never minded when I would lean in to listen to her sing and I enjoyed working with her to conquer our part in the music.

We often shared a laugh in choir but Hilary also thought a lot about the beautiful words we were singing and would comment on them. She wrote beautiful prayers which we heard in church sometimes and which really spoke to our everyday lives as Christians.

It has been strange attending choir and singing in the carol service without Hilary, she was such a stalwart of the choir. I will miss her helpful presence and the rustle of her getting out another Strepsil! But I know that if at all possible she is singing with us and cheering the choir on, hitting every note in our Christmas descants.

Michelle

*Lord, as we start downhill to the end of the year the
darkness of winter closes around us.*

*Sunlight, moonlight, the lights in our living room at
the press of a switch that we often fail to
appreciate.*

*Jesus said he was the light of the world, and you
want us to be the light of the world too.*

*Forgive us that we sometime bring more darkness
than light.*

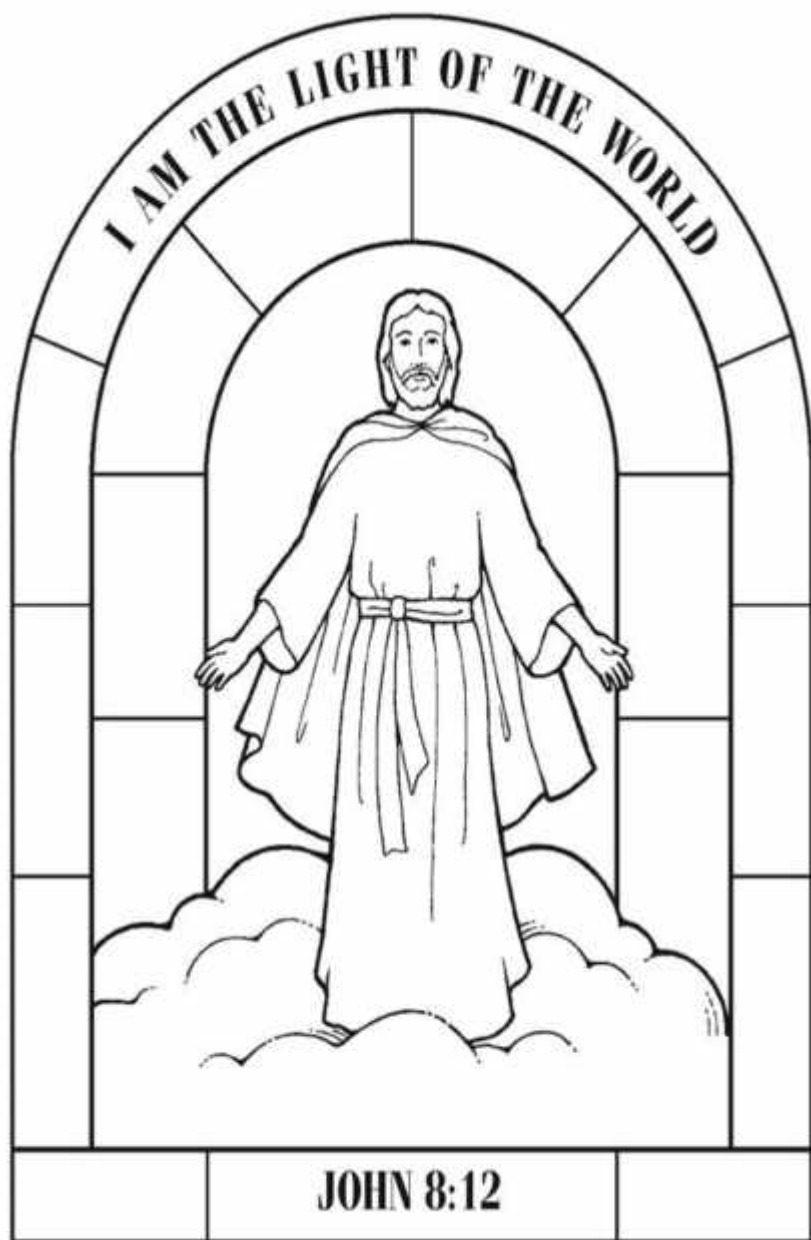
*If we are to be the light of the world, we need to
immerse ourselves in your light, so it overflows
through us to others.*

*May we be diligent in our prayers and Bible
reading.*

*May we drink deeply of your living water that your
light may shine through us to all we meet this
week.*

Amen

Hilary Stevens



News from Redbridge

Our Christmas Tree collection is back.

Once the festivities are over, we'll collect real Christmas trees, for FREE, for recycling at a composting site.

To ensure collection:

- Leave your tree at the boundary of your property by 6am, Mon 9 Jan
- Remove all decorations
- Ensure your tree is clearly visible



We'll be collecting between Jan 9 –20.

Alternatively, you can take your tree to Chigwell Road Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Before you discard of your Christmas tree consider our top tips to be truly sustainable:

) A tree in a pot can be kept alive outdoors all year, to be brought back in and decorated again next Christmas!

) A rooted tree can be planted in your garden. If you don't have space, ask around. A local community growing group may have space for your tree.

) If you have the means, you can shred your tree and compost or use as mulch around your garden.

Consider renting a tree for next year!

ADMIRAL NURSE HELPLINE

The free, confidential Admiral Nurse helpline service offers information, advice and support with any aspect of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. Our helpline is open Mon—Fri 9am—9pm. Sat and Sun 9am—5pm; every day except 25th December. Tel: 0800 888 6678

Free Food

Well done to Morrisons— in a collaboration with Heinz beans, Morrisons are providing anyone who in need with a free meal. They need only to 'ask for Henry' (no questions asked) at the counter in their café. This will continue as long as stocks last.

Free Sanitary products

Also, if you are in need or struggling for sanitary products go to Morrisons customer service kiosk (Next to Timpsons) and ask for a package that 'SANDY has left for you'. You will then be given a FREE discreet envelope with what you need no questions asked.

New Year News from

The Religious Education Resources Project

My Dear Friends

The New Year is upon us and we now have a time to think about resolutions and expectations for the months ahead. It is also a time of reflection of the year now passed and an opportunity to learn from what has been achieved.

Before Christmas I was able to complete face to face sessions in Fullwood Primary, a school visit to Ilford Methodist and 3 visits by children to Goodmayes Methodist Church. One of these visits was specifically for children with special needs from Barley Lane Primary and was a very successful start for this new initiative. This makes the RERP the only local faith group providing these tailor- made visits for special needs children which have been identified as a focus in the new RE curriculum.

There were disappointments too as the icy weather called a halt to the planned school concert at Barkingside Methodist. In addition a church visit and separate in-school assemblies cancelled last minute by a school due to their own disorganization. However much I would like there to be no hiccups it is clear that relationships with schools are complex and ever changing.

Within schools the early spring term now approaching is a time to press ahead with the curriculum and a great deal of the year's learning happens within this term. I already have in-school visits booked and some church visits too. I hope they will go ahead according to plan. It has been encouraging that some of the appointments which were unable to go ahead last year have now been rebooked and I am looking forward to them.

Many thanks for your continued support and prayers.

God Bless

Carol Dawson (Circuit Religious Ed Resources Project)

Thank you Carol for the insight you are able to offer the many children you come into contact with through the project.LB

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY - CAP

Do you need help with debt?

Ilford Debt Centre:

Debt Coach

Call 0800 328 0006



Homemade
GIFTS MADE EASY

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL FOODBANKS

Helping Local People in Crisis

**WILL
YOU
BRING
A TIN
TO
CHURCH
EACH
SUNDAY ?**



**IF WE ALL BRING JUST ONE ITEM WE WILL HAVE
25—30 ITEMS TO DONATE EACH WEEK.**

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2023— 22ND JANUARY

THE YEAR OF THE RABBIT

The Chinese New Year 2023 falls on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023, and celebrations culminate with the Lantern Festival on February 5th, 2023.

Celebrations last up to 16 days, but only the first 7 days are considered a public holiday (January 22nd–January 29th, 2023).

Chinese New Year marks the transition between zodiac signs: 2023 is the Year of the Rabbit; 2022 was the Year of the Tiger.

JAN 14TH–21ST

Little Year

Preparations for the new year begin on January 14th, 2023, and last until New Years Eve.

JANUARY 22ND–FEB 1ST

Spring Festival

Chinese New Year officially begins on January 22nd, 2023, and ends on February 1st.

FEB 2ND–5TH

Lantern Festival

Preparations begin the 2nd, and the Lantern Festival is held on February 5th.



Giving gifts to loved ones is an important part of celebrating the Chinese New Year.

It is a time to come together with family to celebrate the end of the previous year and the start of the new year, with gift-giving being one of the many traditions followed during this

time. Senior family members will give gifts to younger members of the family, younger members will give gifts to them in return, and hosts may also be given gifts as a thank you for holding the celebrations.

Red Packets

Red packets, also known as hongbao, are one of the most well-known Chinese New Year gifts. Monetary gifts are placed in red envelopes to be given to family, friends and colleagues, though traditionally they were given from the older generation to the younger generation.

New, clean and crisp banknotes are given to carry blessings, prosperity and good luck for the year ahead. The red envelopes are given and received using both hands, and it is courteous not to open them in the presence of the present-giver.

With the advent of the internet era, sending red packets online has become a modern New Year's custom during the Spring Festival.

CARERS UK

Information advice and support for people who are looking after a friend or family member.

Advice line: 0808 808 7777

Disability Rights UK Information and advice on a wide range of issues for disabled people.

Disabled Students Helpline: 0800 328 5050

Personal Budgets Helpline: 0300 555 152

24-hour National Domestic Violence A national service for women experiencing domestic violence or others calling on their behalf.

Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Refuge - Help for Teenage Girls

Information and advice on violence against teenage girls and young women.

Helpline: 0808 2000 247 Advice line: 0808 801 0660

Men's advice line Free advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse .

Helpline: 0808 801 0327

AL-ANON Helpline: 020 7403 0888 (10am-10pm) For families affected by alcohol abuse

Samaritans. To talk about anything that is upsetting you, you can contact Samaritans 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can call 116 123 (free from any phone), email jo@samaritans.org

SANeline. If you're experiencing a mental health problem or supporting someone else, you can call **SANeline on 0300 304 7000** (4.30pm–10.30pm every day).

ChildLine

Free confidential service to help young people under 19 with any issue they are going through.

Helpline: 0800 1111

Family Lives (previously known as Parent line)

Offers information, advice, guidance and support on any aspect of parenting and family life, including bullying.

Helpline: 0808 800 2222

The Mix

The Mix's Crisis Messenger text service 24/7 and open to anyone aged 25 or under living in the UK. If you're in crisis and need to talk, text **THEMIX to 85258**.

Webchat and Helpline service for free and confidential information and help on a wide range of issues for 13 to 25 year olds. All issues.

A BLESSING

*May God's blessings shower upon you
and bestow upon each of you a bright,
healthy and peaceful new year.*

*God of all time,
help us enter the New Year quietly,
thoughtful of who we are to ourselves
and to others, mindful that our steps
make an impact and our words carry
power.*

May we walk gently.

Amen

CHURCH DIARY FOR January 2023

**1st January 11.15am - Sunday Worship -
Own Arrangement**



**5th January 11.30am Funeral Service for Hilary Stevens.
Led by Reverend Mmasape Zihle**

6th January 11.am Bible Study Group

7th January 12.30pm Saturday Lunch

**8th January 11.15am - Sunday Worship led by- Sharon
Grundy**

**15th January 11.15am - Sunday Worship with HC- led by
Reverend Mmasape Zihle**

**22nd January 11.15am—Sunday Worship—led by
Reverend Mmasape Zihle assisted by TDY**

27th January 11.am Bible Study Group

**29th January 11.15am Sunday Worship—led by Jan
Pearson**

Services every Sunday at 11.15am

Communion Services as announced

Senior Church Stewards:

Michelle Garner , assisted by Diane Foster

Property Steward
Bookings (J Foster)

Jeremy Foster
bookings@drive-methodist.church

Church Council
Secretary:

Priya Inbakumar

Music at The Drive

Andrew Taylor
music@drive-methodist.church

Flower Rota
Secretary:

Anne Dellow

Youth Church
Leader

Jo Wright

Safeguarding:

Lorraine Bendon
safeguarding@drive-methodist.church

JMA Secretary:

Diane Foster

Newsletter Editor:

Lorraine Bendon
newsletter@drive-methodist.church

Pre School:
ly: Mon – Fri 9.15am -12pm

Kay Whiddon
1pm – 3.45pm

Term time on-