


The Methodist Church
in Hackney and Stoke Newington

NEWSLETTER

December 2023

CIRCUIT MINISTERS

Revd Paulo Bessa da Silva (Superintendent) Day off: Monday

Tel: 07736 955 808 paulobessa4@gmail.com

Revd John Sakutombo (Hospital Chaplain)

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CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATOR/PA to the SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs Helen Cornick Day off: Thursday

Tel: 07736 972 202 handsnmethodist@gmail.com

CIRCUIT PASTORAL and COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKER

Miss Abena Adofo

Tel: 07875 011 003 handscommunityoutreach@gmail.com

CHURCH ADDRESSES

Clapton: Downs Road (adj. 105 Downs Rd)
Lower Clapton E5 8DS

Clapton Park: 99 Chatsworth Road E5 0LH

Dalston: 11-13 Richmond Road E8 3HY

Hackney Mare Street: 219 Mare Street E8 3QE

Stoke Newington: 106a High Street N16 7NY

Green Lanes: 132a Green Lanes N16 9BN

CIRCUIT WEBSITE

<https://hackneymethodist.org>

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Reflecting on Our Gratitude and Looking Ahead to 2024

Dear Members of the Hackney and Stoke Newington Circuit,

As we approach Christmas and the end of another impactful year, it's with immense gratitude that I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the church stewards, church council members, circuit stewards, circuit meeting members, circuit staff and all those who have dedicated their time, energy, and unwavering commitment to the Methodist Church within our Circuit. Your steadfast support, prayers and gifts have been the cornerstone of our faith community, enabling us to navigate challenges and celebrate triumphs together throughout 2023. These initial months serving as Superintendent have been times of intense learning for me. I'm grateful to all of you for your patience and love. Your prayers for my ministry and my family have made a significant difference in our lives. I continue to rely on them.

I also want to express my deepest thanks to the local preachers, worship leaders, visiting preachers and every individual who has contributed their talents and dedication to ensure that our Methodist Church remains a beacon of relevance and compassion within our neighbourhoods. Your tireless efforts in fostering spiritual growth and community connection have not gone unnoticed.

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, let's continue to hold firm in our faith in the Lord Jesus and uphold the promises we made when becoming members of the Methodist Church. Together, let's embrace the opportunities and challenges that 2024 may bring, knowing that God's inspiration and protection along with our collective strength and commitment will guide us through the journey ahead.

With heartfelt appreciation, in Christ,

Revd Dr Paulo Bessa da Silva

Superintendent

Hackney and Stoke Newington Circuit, London District.

Looking Back...



Circuit Service in August when Rev Paulo was welcomed as the Superintendent Minister. The service was led by Rev Jongikaya Zihle, chair of the London District. Also showing Carolina Bessa and Abena Adofo.

Clapton Park
Harvest Festival
in September
2023 led by Rev
Shaun Sanders



Circuit WhatsApp group

The circuit has a WhatsApp group which sends out messages to members and friends. If you would like to be included in this group, so that you find out information about what is happening, please contact Helen Cornick, the Circuit Administrator, who will add your details to the group.

CIRCUIT NEWS AND EVENTS

Sunday Worship

Each of the churches in the circuit usually have a service every week. The plan for December to February is on page 11.

If you are not able to come to our church buildings for worship, you can join us on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89083382040> or you can phone from any telephone – dial 0203 481 5237. The meeting ID is 890 8338 2040 followed by # - and then you will need to press # again. To unmute, press *6 and to mute press *6 again. The services are available on YouTube afterwards – details are on the website.

Virtual Coffee and Prayers

Every Wednesday at 10am we have Virtual Coffee and Prayers on Zoom. Join us on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82977408302> or you can phone from any telephone – dial 0203 481 5237. The meeting ID is 829 7740 8302 followed by # - then you will need to press # again. To unmute, press *6 and to mute press *6 again.

Baptism, Confirmation and Church Membership

Please speak to Rev Paulo if you would like to find out more about baptism or confirmation.

Bible Study

We are hoping to have a Lent Study group following the District course: 'Let Justice Flow' – a course written for Lent by Rev Richard Grocott, one of the presbyter ministers from the London District.

Worship Resources for People at Home

Rev Paulo has been preparing material for private prayers – especially for people who are not able to attend worship in our churches on Sundays. If you are housebound and unable to get to church, and would appreciate a copy of these resources to be posted to you, please let either Rev Paulo or Helen Cornick know. Since postage costs are fairly high, please let us know if you don't need to receive this any more. Thank you.

Meetings in the Circuit – Dates for your diary

Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) Meetings

We have CLT Meetings on Tuesdays 9th January, 13th February, and 9th April.

The CLT includes the Ministers, Circuit Stewards, Circuit Meeting Secretary, Circuit Safeguarding Officer and Circuit Administrator (as a non-voting member).

Our Circuit Stewards are:

Sue Millman (Senior Steward), Kwaku Anyemedu (Treasurer), Catherine Hogan, Eric Ayoola and Eunice Whyte.

The Circuit Meeting Secretary is Mandy Baafi.

The Circuit Safeguarding Officer is Cecilia Eze.

Circuit Meetings

We have Circuit Meetings on Tuesday 12th March 2024 and Tuesday 25th June at 7pm (venues to be confirmed). The representatives to the Circuit Meeting from each of our churches and role holders form the trustee body of the Circuit with the Charity Commission.

Leaders of Worship and Local Preachers Meetings

Saturdays 9th March and 1st June at 11am at Dalston Methodist Church, Richmond Road.

Circuit Invitation Committee Meetings

The CIC will arrange meetings as necessary.

Methodist Women in Britain

There are no meetings in our circuit at this time. Sector B and District events will be advertised as they are arranged. The Annual Daffodil Day Spring Festival for Encouragement and Renewal will be held at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster on Saturday 2nd March 2024, gathering at 1.40pm for a 2pm start. You are invited.

Following the 2 years when Helen was the District President for MWiB, she is pleased to say that a bore hole has been dug in a village in the Upper West region of Ghana. Give God thanks that fresh water is able to be supplied to the locals in that area.

Ghanaian Methodist Fellowship in Hackney (GMF)

The Ghanaian Methodist Fellowship (GMF) is an Association of Ghanaian Methodist residents in Britain. We have most of our members worship at local Methodist Churches across Britain. The fellowship is part of Methodist Church Ghana and Britain.

At the centre of our fellowship is the desire to express our faith in many Ghanaian languages and cultures while making every conscious effort to learn and adapt to the British culture. Our worship, events and meetings are usually expressed in English, Fante, Ga and Twi languages.

The fellowship organise variety of events aimed at deepening our Christian faith and discipleship.

Apart from our spiritual life, social and cultural needs are also taken care of.

At the local level we meet once every month ie. 1st Sunday of the Month from 1pm to 2pm usually at Mare Street Methodist Church.

Our membership is open to all Ghanaians within the Hackney and Stoke Newington Methodist Churches.

Sunday 7th January – at Dalston Methodist Church, Richmond Road

Sunday 4th February – at Mare Street

Sunday 3rd March – at Mare Street

Sunday 7th April – at Mare Street

For more information please contact Mina Aidoo via Helen Cornick.

The Listening Place

The Listening Place is currently open for extended hours most Tuesdays 11am – 2pm at Stoke Newington High Street Church, and most Wednesdays 11am – 2pm at Stoke Newington Green Lanes Church. You are welcome to drop in to one of these, and meet and chat with local people. Abena Adofo will be working with the volunteers at The Listening Place to welcome anyone coming in. We are providing a Warm Space

during the opening hours of The Listening Place, offering a warm welcome to those in our community who value this opportunity.

We are grateful to members from the circuit who have offered additional help at The Listening Place in recent weeks. If you are interested in helping to support in this way – especially on Wednesdays, please contact Abena Adofo or Esther Adekunle.

The Listening Place will not be open on Tuesday 26th or Wednesday 27th December nor on Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

The Christmas Table Top Sale on Saturday 25th November raised over £160 for The Listening Place. Thanks to all who helped and came to support this event. The helpers are hoping to have more events in the New Year – including the Party on 16th January for guests at The Listening Place.

Prayers at Stoke Newington High Street

Every Tuesday at 1pm we meet for prayers at High Street Church. It usually lasts for half an hour. You are welcome to share in this time of prayer and fellowship together.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training

Local Preachers and some other office holders within the Methodist Church will also need to carry out EDI training. We are seeking ways to help to facilitate this training.

GDPR

Please be aware that we should not be holding – or passing on – contact details of people within our church congregations unless we have a legitimate reason to do so (Pastoral Visitors/Group leaders/Stewards/Ministers). If you have the details of anyone within the church, please let the Circuit Administrator know. Thank you.

Safeguarding

If you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, or if you believe someone is behaving in a way that causes you concern, please speak in confidence to your church or circuit safeguarding officer, or Rev Paulo.

It is very important that the correct people are informed of any concerns you might have. We have a duty of care to safeguard everyone who comes onto our premises.

Cecilia Eze from Mare Street is the Safeguarding Officer for the Circuit. We are still seeking Safeguarding Officers for some of our churches. If you have safeguarding experience, and would be willing to discuss this further, please speak to Rev Paulo, Cecilia, or to Helen Cornick the circuit administrator.

The Circuit Safeguarding Officer is: Cecilia Eze

The Church Safeguarding Officers are:

Hackney (Mare Street): Cecilia Eze

Stoke Newington: Rose Lall and Esther Adekunle

Dalston and Clapton (including Clapton Park) currently do not have a Church Safeguarding Officer.

The superintendent minister is Rev Paulo Bessa da Silva 07736 955808

The District Safeguarding Officer is Clare De Stefano 07960 877740. The District Assistant Safeguarding Officer is Rachael Pielow 07949 325531. Please contact anyone listed above, or the Circuit Administrator, Helen Cornick 07736 972202, if you have a safeguarding concern.

The safeguarding training, Creating Safer Space needs to be completed by various role holders, including pastoral visitors within the Hackney and Stoke Newington Circuit. If you have already completed the course, please let Helen Cornick know when this was done. There is a Foundation and Advanced module of the course. The training needs to be completed every 4 years.

Warm Spaces

**WE ARE A
WARM
WELCOME
SPACE**



The Listening Place

ADDRESS:
106A Stoke Newington
High Street, N16 7NY
132A Green Lanes, N16
9BN

OPENING HOURS:
Tuesdays 11a.m. to 1p.m.
Wednesdays 11a.m. to
1p.m.



The Listening Place
11am – 2pm
Tuesdays
SN High Street
Wednesdays
SN Green Lanes

Warm Space
11am – 3pm
Tuesdays and Wednesdays
Clapton Park Church,
Chatsworth Road

FREE ENTRY



**WARM
Space**

Space for people to chat, socialise, support, physical activities and play some games. Tea, coffee and refreshments provided.

**Every Tuesday and Wednesday
From 7th December**
Between 11am and 3pm
office.nationalparentsforum@gmail.com
07583 165 389
Clapton Park Methodist Church
89 Chatsworth Road
Hackney London E5 0LH

Shepherd Field Ministry in collaboration
Hackney Methodist Church



**Please note, neither of these will be open on
Tuesday 26th and Wednesday 27th December 2023
or Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd January 2024.**

Plan for December 2023 – February 2024 services at 11am

17th December

Clapton Downs Road: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva including Holy Communion joined by the congregation from Clapton Park

Clapton Park: will join the congregation at Clapton Downs Road

Dalston: Mathilda Small-Byam

Hackney Mare Street: Eva De Costa – including Kofi and Ama offering

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Sue Millman

Stoke Newington High Street: Ernell Watson

Zoom Service preacher: Sue Millman*

24th December

Clapton Downs Road: Icilda Lynch

Clapton Park: Pastor Joycelyn Dankwa

Dalston: Pastor David Gyamfi including Kofi and Ama offering

Hackney Mare Street: Maggie Hamand

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Local Arrangement

Stoke Newington High Street: Rev Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Zoom Service preacher: Helen Cornick*

31st December

Clapton Downs Road: Local Arrangement

Clapton Park: Local Arrangement

Dalston: Rev Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Hackney Mare Street: Local Arrangement

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Pastor Ian Rathbone

Stoke Newington High Street: Local Arrangement

Zoom Service preacher: Local Arrangement*

7th January 2024

Dalston: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva and Rev John Richey – Circuit Covenant Service including Holy Communion

Zoom Service preacher: from Dalston (hopefully)*

14th January

Clapton Downs Road: will join the congregation at Clapton Park Chatsworth Road

Clapton Park: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva joined by the congregation from Clapton Downs Road

Dalston: Ernell Watson

Hackney Mare Street: Sue Millman

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Pastor David Gyamfi

Stoke Newington High Street: Pastor Joycelyn Dankwa

Zoom Service preacher: Sue Millman*

21st January

Clapton Downs Road: Helen Cornick

Clapton Park: Local Arrangement

Dalston: Pastor Local Arrangement

Hackney Mare Street: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva – including Kofi and Ama offering

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Local Arrangement

Stoke Newington High Street: Icilda Lynch

Zoom Service preacher: Helen Cornick*

28th January

Clapton Downs Road: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva joined by the congregation from Clapton Park Chatsworth Road

Clapton Park: will join the congregation at Clapton Downs Road

Dalston: Pastor Ian Rathbone – including Kofi and Ama offering

Hackney Mare Street: Pastor Joycelyn Dankwa

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Mary Campbell

Stoke Newington High Street: Local Arrangement

Zoom Service preacher: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva*

4th February

Clapton Downs Road: Pastor David Gyamfi

Clapton Park: Helen Cornick

Dalston: will join the congregation at Hackney Mare Street

Hackney Mare Street: Rev John Sakutombo - including Holy Communion joined by the congregation from Dalston

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: will join the congregation at High Street

Stoke Newington High Street: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva – including Holy Communion joined by the congregation from Green Lanes

Zoom Service preacher: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva*

11th February

Clapton Downs Road: Local Arrangement

Clapton Park: Sue Millman

Dalston: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva joined by the congregation from Hackney Mare Street

Hackney Mare Street: will join the congregation at Dalston Richmond Road

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Ernell Watson

Stoke Newington High Street: Pastor Ian Rathbone

Zoom Service preacher: Sue Millman*

18th February

Clapton Downs Road: Pastor Ian Rathbone

Clapton Park: Pastor David Gyamfi

Dalston: Icilda Lynch

Hackney Mare Street: Local Arrangement – including Kofi and Ama offering

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Stoke Newington High Street: Rev John Sakutombo

Zoom Service preacher: Helen Cornick*

25th February

Clapton Downs Road: will join the congregation at Clapton Park Chatsworth Road

Clapton Park: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva – including Holy Communion joined by the congregation from Clapton Downs Road

Dalston: Pastor Joycelyn Dankwa – including Kofi and Ama offering

Hackney Mare Street: Mathilda Small-Byam

Stoke Newington Green Lanes: Rev John Richey joined by the congregation from High Street

Stoke Newington High Street: will join the congregation at Green Lanes

Zoom Service preacher: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva*

*Please note, the arrangements for Zoom Services may change

Lectionary Readings

The readings listed first (and in the plan) are the Related set from the Lectionary. If the Continuous set are different, they have been shown below.

Sunday 3rd Dec – 1st Sunday in Advent: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

Sunday 10th Dec – 2nd Sunday in Advent: Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Sunday 17th Dec – 3rd Sunday in Advent: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday 24th Dec 4th Sunday in Advent: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

Monday 25th Dec Christmas Day: Isaiah 62:6-12; Psalm 97; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20

Sunday 31st Dec – 1st Sunday of Christmas: Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 1:22-40

Sunday 7th Jan – 1st Sunday in Ordinary Time: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

Covenant Sunday – Sunday 7th Jan: Exodus 24:3-11; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 12:1-2; Mark 14:22-25; Deuteronomy 29:10-15; John 15:1-10

Sunday 14th Jan – 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6,13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

Sunday 21st Jan – 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Sunday 28th Jan – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

Sunday 4th Feb – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

Sunday 11th Feb – Sunday before Lent: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Sunday 18th Feb – 1st Sunday in Lent: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Sunday 25th Feb – 2nd Sunday in Lent: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

Sunday 3rd Mar – 3rd Sunday in Lent: Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

Sunday 10th Mar – 4th Sunday in Lent: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

Sunday 17th Mar – 5th Sunday in Lent: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33; Psalm 119:9-16

Sunday 24th Mar – Palm Sunday: Mark 11:1-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; John 12:12-16

Sunday 31st Mar – Easter Sunday: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18; Isaiah 25:6-9; Mark 16:1-8

A Letter from Rev Andrew Letby

Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

August 2023

Dear friends in Hackney and
Stoke Newington Circuit

As we begin a new Methodist year and I officially become 'supernumerary', I want to once again thank all the churches, groups and individuals who were so generous as I left Hackney. I was overwhelmed by your loving gestures and kind words.



We are now settling well in a very different place and to a new way of life. We live in a new and developing community just outside the busy seaside town of Scarborough, where we have been made to feel very welcome. Despite promising myself a restful summer I have found myself very busy.



My new garden studio/workshop where I will be upcycling furniture and other items is coming along nicely. Your gifts of money have allowed me to build and equip this to a much better standard than I expected. It is fully insulated against the winter storms which are not far away!

As you know I was working with Co-op as a Member Pioneer, a few hours each week building links in the community. To my surprise I was offered a transfer as soon as we moved, so I am now working in two small towns in East Yorkshire. The Methodist Church in Hornsea have a beautiful building where the worship space is transformed during the week into a hub for community activities and so that has been my starting point in building contacts.

I am also training a guard on the Scarborough North Bay miniature railway. This is a very historic line which offers a journey along the beautiful coastline, hauled by the world's oldest diesel-hydraulic engines.



Built in the 1930s they are disguised as steam engines, but they have always been powered by diesel. I am loving this role which helps people enjoy their holidays and is very therapeutic as the elderly miniature carriages rattle along at a very steady pace.



I feel very blessed and thankful for new life-giving opportunities. I pray God's blessing on you all and look forward to seeing you again in the future.

Yours

Andrew

CHURCH INFORMATION

It is now possible to make your offering to the church at our services. However, if you would prefer to make direct payments to the bank, the details are below. Please use your name as a reference and make a note of the date and amount paid into the account so that this can be allocated to your envelope number. Please contact your church treasurer or Helen Cornick handsnmethodist@gmail.com or 07736 972202 if you need further information about giving to the church.

CLAPTON (Downs Road & Chatsworth Road)

Minister: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Please contact Charlotte Morgan or Eunice Whyte for bank details

Copyright numbers: Downs Road: 1948191 Clapton Park: 1160113

DALSTON (Richmond Road) Minister: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Bank details: Sort Code: 60-12-18 Account Number: 61808849

Copyright CCLi number: 2303319

HACKNEY (Mare Street) Minister: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Bank details: Sort Code: 40-02-06 Account Number: 40015350

Copyright CCLi number: 1277824

STOKE NEWINGTON (High Street and Green Lanes)

Minister: Rev Dr Paulo Bessa Da Silva

Bank details: Sort Code: 40-52-40 Account Number: 00032056

Copyright numbers: High Street: 1305631 Green Lanes: 1305648

Gift Aid

If you pay tax, and you give money to the church, you could probably gift aid your offering at no additional cost to yourself. The church would benefit by getting an additional 25% of what you give. You would need to complete a gift aid declaration form. Speak to your church treasurer or Helen Cornick about this if you are a tax payer. Please consider this additional way of financially supporting the church.

OTHER NEWS

Getting to know you – Abena Adofo – Circuit Community Pastoral and Outreach Worker



Introduction

Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ, My name is Abena Adofo. I am the new Pastoral and Community Outreach Worker for Hackney and Stoke Newington and it's a pleasure to be an official member of the circuit staff team.

I have been in post for just over three months. I am absolutely thrilled to have joined the Hackney and Stoke Newington Circuit. I come with over 15 years in the community and the health and social care sector and over 25 years in the Media and Arts industry, I have enjoyed meeting you all . I'm excited to collaborate with you all, to do outreach in the community and serve the vulnerable in our community and congregation.

More about Abena!

I am a member of Shern Hall Methodist Church in East London. I have held roles as a member of the Praise and Worship team, Sunday school teacher, youth leader for over fifteen years and Secretary of the Ghanaian Fellowship. As part of these roles, I organised and took part in events such as an International evening, Gospel concerts, Christmas, Easter and Black History month concerts, Table top sales, Quiz nights and many other events. I have

organised bible studies for the youth group. I have written plays for various church events and organised the Church annual trips to places such as Littlehampton, Brighton and France. At present I am currently a Steward at Shern Hall Methodist Church.

I have served as a Methodist at my church on a local and regional level. My proudest achievement as a Methodist was my role as President of the Association of Black Methodist Youth (ABMY) for two consecutive years 2008-2010. A major part of my role was to be the face of ABMY and bridge the gap and retrain the black Methodist youth in the Methodist church. I have also served on the District Candidates Committee.

I have organised events such as lectures, concerts, interchurch sports tournaments, activity days, trips, workshops, church services, devised and facilitated the annual residential youth conference attended by over 120 youth from across the UK and much more. I look forward to working on such projects and serving the community with you.

Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." We serve and volunteer confidently, knowing that God has prepared the way for us! God will reward us.

Fun Facts About Abena!

I love to bake.

As a kid I was really into Ballroom dancing.

I am very blessed. I often win raffles and competitions. The best prize I have won is a trip for two to Barcelona and a big box of chocolates on my first day at the Listening Place.

During lockdown I discovered that I am a very good painter.

I am a board game nerd. (I challenge you to a game of Connect 4 or Ludo! I will win).

My dream holiday would be to Zimbabwe to visit the Victoria Falls or a Caribbean Cruise.

Churches Together in Hackney starts to come to life

For the first time in years, there has been a move to bring churches together across the borough of Hackney. It happened at a meeting on July 8 at Mare Street Salvation Army Church, attended by some church ministers, including Rev Paulo and myself, and lay people, all from different denominations.

Music for worship was provided by the Hampden Chapel worship band.

Doral Hayes, Principal Officer for Ecumenical Development and Relations, Churches Together in England, helped to lead the consultation.

She referred to John 15:1-4. First and foremost, remain in Christ. Being connected is central to ecumenical thinking. She pointed out: It's worth noting the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have a deeper connection, remaining with each other, just as we do in Christ. Always remembering John 17:21 – *'that all of them may be one'*.

Discussion in a workshop session focused on how we can work in relationships. Moving forward we need to structure things around relationships and time together and praying together. Praying together would make us community together.

Also linking in with things already working, like the interfaith forum. Worshipping together was agreed an important element. To get together once a month to build relationship through worship. And music may be the way we reach out to young people on the street.

It was suggested we centre things on the Christian calendar: Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost etc.

So, Churches Together in Hackney (CTH) has already organised Windrush75 Thanksgiving service on November 1 at Hampden Chapel attended by the Speaker, civic mayor, of Hackney.

And has also organised the open air carol service on December 4 in the Narrowway.

Next important consultation of all churches is on January 21 at 4pm at Hampden Chapel, Lauriston Road, during the Week of Prayer for Christian

Unity. All are invited. Come and join this exciting new move of God in our area.

Pastor Ian Rathbone, Convenor Hackney Ecumenical Borough Deans Group

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

This will take place between 18th and 25th January 2024, and will be marked by churches in Hackney. The theme is *"You shall love the Lord your God ...and your neighbour as yourself."* (Luke 10:27). Mare Street Methodist Church will be the venue on Saturday 20th January at 6pm. More details will follow.

A Letter from the Hackney Winter Night Shelter

Dear Friends,

After becoming homeless one of our guests, a woman in her 50's, was too scared to sleep on the streets and had been spending her nights in various railway stations. She stayed in our night shelter for three weeks before moving into a place of her own again. But when she arrived she was so exhausted and grateful that, when she saw the warm bed awaiting her, tears of relief welled up in her eyes. No one should have to sleep rough!

This Christmas, if you can spare it, please support our work by making a donation to our [Hackney Night Shelter Christmas Appeal](#) Thank you! Go to <https://www.hwns.org.uk>

And here's a link for more information about other ways you can: [Help the Homeless this Christmas!](#)

This year we've been able to assist **130 homeless people** and **88 of them have moved on into their own longer-term accommodation**. We have only been able to do this thanks to the partnerships with all our supporters and donors. Thank you!

Best wishes, and seasons greetings, from all of the team at the Night Shelter;

Colleen, Ruth, Molly, Jojo, Amanda, Tom, Jason and Mark (and all our volunteers!)

Windrush Generation talk – given by Ernell Watson

Ernell Watson, Hackney Methodist Churches Local Preacher, spoke on November 1 at the Churches Together in Hackney Ecumenical Service, Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Windrush Generation, at Hampden Chapel, Lauriston Road, London E9. She is a member of the Windrush Generation, those who came from the Caribbean between 1948 and 1971 and their succeeding generations

This a shortened form of what she had to say:

“The book of Genesis tells me that I have intrinsic value and worth to God, who created me in His image.

I was born in Barbados, and I was relatively young when I accepted an invitation from the UK government to come to pursue a Nursing career.

After I completed my nurse training, I decided to train as a mid-wife, I completed the first six month of training but consciously decided to change my career path, because I was very concerned about the differential treatment from some Consultant Gynaecologists toward young black mothers.

I gave up my career in nursing to study for the Certificate Qualification in Social Work (QSW). I found greater satisfaction in this career field until my retirement in 2012.

This evening, we are giving thanks to God and celebrating the outstanding contributions the Windrush generation have made to British Society. As we celebrate, may I bring your awareness to the fact that in 2023, many children of the Afro-Caribbean Windrush generation are continuing to be under achievers academically.”

Ernell provided some casework examples of her social work practice with Children and Families.

She went on: “The unfair and unjust treatment of Caribbean children within the education system in Britain led to the growth of Remedial Saturday Schools, by community activists and parents alike, so was the growth of cultural Book Stores such as Beacon Books in Finsbury Park in North London.

Upon reflection, I encourage you to join me in solidarity on the educational disparities our children continue to experience within the British Educational systems.

When the Windrush landed at Tilbury Docks in 1948, those families came with high aspirations for their children's education. But it was not to be, for many there was the feeling of not belonging.

In 1971, Grenadian-born Bernard Coard's Book, "*How the West Indian Child is made educationally sub-normal in the British School System*" was published by New Beacon Books.

Coard said he wrote the book for the West Indian Community in Britain in which he highlighted the institutional racism in the British Educational System, based on his work in the community with children and young people.

Back then Caribbean children were disproportionately misdiagnosed as 'Educationally Subnormal.' They were also disproportionately sent to Educational Sub-Normal (ESN) schools.

The systems working against those children were the construct of the then IQ tests: low expectations in performance in a caucasian controlled education system. This leads to cultural biases, emotional issues, and severe cultural shock, due to sudden removal from an established family environment into an unknown hostile environment.

In 2023, the term Educationally Subnormal has long been erased from our educational system. In the 1990's Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) came into being.

But in 2023 we are still finding a much higher exclusion of Black Caribbean, children of dual heritage such as black Caribbean/Caucasian, in schools.

A former colleague has explained that when the history of these young people was explored, it was found that all of them had a history of school exclusions. Some presented with additional learning deficits, others were mis-diagnosed or had behavioural difficulties.

It was also established that relationships were poor between parents and the school, with the school often labelling the parents as hostile. When the parents' hostile behaviour was unpacked, it was because of the parents own experience of the racism they encountered when at school.

It has been argued that the poor parent/school relationship often is the barrier to why early support to the children, to prevent school exclusion, is not always provided by the school. Hence, children caught in this trap are subjected to exclusions.

The challenge for all of us is - how can we all work together to shift this paradigm?" (Edited by Ian Rathbone)

Useful Websites

You may be interested to have a look at these websites:

www.methodist.org.uk

www.methodistlondon.org.uk

www.allwecan.org.uk

www.jointpublicissues.org.uk

www.hackney.gov.uk

Services for Christmas and the New Year

Service	Date	Time	Church
Circuit Carol Service	Sunday 17 th December 2023	5pm	Stoke Newington High Street
Circuit Christmas Day Service	Monday 25 th December 2023	11am	Hackney Mare Street
Watchnight Service	Sunday 31 st December 2023	10pm	Hackney Mare Street
Watchnight Service	Sunday 31 st December 2023	10pm	Dalston
Circuit Covenant Service	Sunday 7 th January 2024	11am	Dalston

Please let Helen have all notices for the Easter newsletter by Friday 8th March 2024. We produce one for the start of the Methodist year in September, one at Christmas, and one at Easter.