

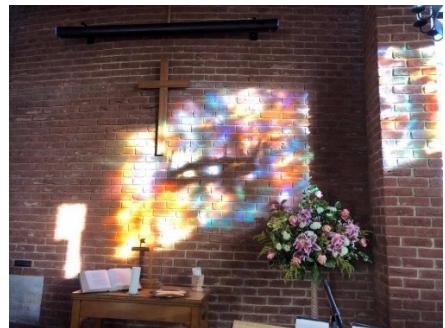
TWENTY TWENTY-FIVE

A year in the life of Goffs Oak Methodist Church



Twenty twenty-five turned out to be a year of major change, although we didn't realise it at the time! The church continues to utilize a hybrid of attendance,

On its website, the church lists several links to other organisations which enables church members and the public to access them. When possible, the church broadcasts its Sunday Services, in real time, on YouTube. The recordings are then uploaded to the church Facebook page. The church also has a WhatsApp page which has become an excellent medium to share information, exchange views and post photographs of events. Prayer meetings meet on Zoom every Tuesday at 10.00, and a Bible Study group meets on specific Wednesday evenings.



A Message from our minister: The Revd Papa Bona Owusu.



“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” – Ephesians 4:16

As we reflect on the year gone by, we see the many ways God has been at work among us. It has been a year of both sorrow and joy, of remembrance and celebration, of faithful service and hopeful anticipation.

We give thanks for the lives of Bryan and Ron, two beloved members of our fellowship who have gone to be with the Lord. Their friendship, faith, and service remain part of the foundation upon which we continue to build. We remember them with gratitude and commend them to God's eternal care.

Alongside our grief, we rejoice in moments of new life and joy. We celebrated the wedding of Robert and Anne, a reminder of love's enduring gift. We welcomed children into the family of faith through baptism, rejoicing that God continues to renew and sustain His people.

This year has also been marked by our ongoing commitment to community engagement. We have not shied away from serving, listening, and sharing Christ's love with those around us. As we look to the future, we pray and hope to plan strategies to nurture both numerical and spiritual growth, so that our fellowship may flourish and our witness may be strengthened.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our leadership team and every member of the church community. Your prayers, service, generosity, and fellowship have been the heartbeat of our ministry. Truly, we are blessed to walk together in faith and love.

As we turn the page into a new year, may we continue to walk together in faith, hope, and love. Let us hold fast to the vision of Christ who makes all things new, trusting that the seeds planted this year will bear fruit in the year to come.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and

in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” – *Ephesians 3:20–21*



Community Hub

With thanks to David's continuing hard work, we continue to have a healthy list of lettings to local groups, organisations and charities creating the church as the 'hub' of the community. We have lost some groups during the year however these have been replaced by others. If you wish to use the hall, the contact details are at the end of this review.

Wednesdays are now dedicated to community groups. Christina is responsible for the Food Pantry, a much-needed presence in the Goffs Oak Community. This could not run without the help of her many volunteers. The food pantry is proceeded by a Wednesday lunch, which dovetails nicely with the church sponsored coffee morning from 9.30. All are welcome.

Quiz Nights – The calm before the storm!

At 6 o'clock in the evening the church hall is quiet and peaceful, tables and chairs out – everything ready! Then within 30 minutes the hall is a cacophony of movement, noise and general fun – the quiz night had started! Our family quiz nights were very well supported very successful and enjoyed by all, raising over £500 per night, for essential equipment needed by the church. Jacqui, Alison, David and the team held two quizzes in April and September providing a very varied range of family questions. The team also provided much anticipated, excellent Ploughman's supper. This was augmented by the Rangers producing very tasty cakes and biscuits to sell in aid of their upcoming expeditions.

Special services



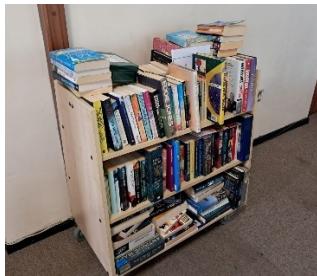
During the year the church held a number of special services starting with Covenant Sunday at the beginning of January. Other special services include Easter in April, Harvest in September, gift service in November and of course Christmas. The church also welcomed Rev'd Tom Lilley from St James church in a 'preacher swap'.

The church also held some breakfast services during the year. Several of the gentlemen of the church provided a buffet breakfast for those attending, food included continental options as well as cooked options (an excuse for some to have a cooked breakfast without feeling guilty!). These were well attended and enjoyed by all, one member asked if the cooks could come every week!

In addition to the church special services, several groups also had their special celebration days, for example the Guide association holding their 'World Thinking Day' service in February, and the World Day of Prayer in March. The Guide Association also held several church parades for all their sections.

Book Club

This is really a mobile bookcase/trolley. These can be purchased for 50p. Its home is in the vestibule although this can be moved, as needed, around the church building.



Circuit recognition

The Holiday Club has been held for many years with many dedicated church members running the weeklong extravaganza. In recent years a number of mums have also started to assist, easing the workload on the few dedicated organisers.

In December of this year the dedication of these members was recognized with awards from the circuit.

The pictures show Jacqui, Alison and Barbara receiving their awards, with Maureen accepting one on behalf of Bryan.





Easter

This is a major celebration for the church (not just for the easter bunny!). With special services in the run-up to Easter Sunday celebrating Lent, Psalm Sunday, Good Friday culminating in Easter Sunday service.

In 2026 Easter is early April so Lent starts on 18th February 2026, though children will enjoy pancake day the day before!

Charity coffee mornings

The first of these was in mid-May, which was very well attended and, along with the sale of goods raised £325. Our MacMillian Coffee Morning in October provided £275 for the charity.

Outreach

The church has continued with the distribution of leaflets to most of Goffs Oak. The idea is to keep those who live in Goffs Oak up to date with church events, inviting all to come and visit the church. It is planned to increase the scope of distribution to parts of Cuffley in 2026. Our thanks go to Nigel and Laim who bear the brunt of the delivery and David for the design!

Community Choir

A choir for the community has started with its first public appearance in June at the Community Day. Since then they have held regular meetings. They are new and are looking for additional members, details are on the church website and at the end of this review.

Community Day

In June the church supported the Goffs Oak Community Association in its Community Day. The next page shows some of the highlights of the day.





Our gardens

Again the 1st Goffs Oak Rainbows tended the ‘thank you garden’ at the Wesley Close side of the church providing a lovely splash of colour during the summer. Goffs Oak primary school also came to show off their gardening skills by establishing a Mediterranean themed garden at the back of the church – The back of the church suffers from direct sunlight for most of the day so their garden had to compensate for this as well as reflected sun from the large white wall. During the summer months please take a wander around to see the gardens.



Holiday Club

Jungle Jamboree

Goffs Oak held it's 33rd Holiday Club this year. Over the years we have seen many children come through our doors and this year we had 25 children and 5 young helpers, as well as plenty of adult helpers including our front person, Isata, and other

helpers from the circuit.

The theme was 'Jungle Jamboree' and the children were divided into 4 groups, from youngest to oldest, monkeys, elephants, tigers and toucans. We had Bible stories, songs, games, challenges, drama, puppet show, crafts, exercises, jokes, prayers, refreshments, quizzes, testimonies and lots of fun. Our Bible stories were all parables of Jesus. We covered The Great Banquet, The Good Samaritan, The Prodigal Son, The Lost Sheep and The Talents. Stories I'm sure you all know well. Each day Isata gave a theme illustration, which included one day asking a child to put their hand in a bowl filled with a bright blue jelly and baked bean mixture to pick up a penny or a pound from the bottom, the point being God values us all equally, whether we're a penny or a pound. All the children left each morning with smiles on their faces and telling their parents about what they had been doing, which shows how engaged they were in the activities. We all know how difficult it is to get children to tell you anything!

I always say that the Goffs Oak congregation are wonderful in their support of this annual outreach, with everyone taking part in some way, even if all they can do is show an interest and pray for us. We thank Isata, Sally, Sandra and Helen from the circuit for their continued support and of course the team who start work on bringing it together each year.





Gone home:

We have, unfortunately, lost two members of the congregation in the past year, who were very much at the heart of our church family.

Bryan King

Here are extracts from Bryn's Eulogy:

Bryan was renowned for his sense of humour, and his leading role in the Holiday Club. He was also the editor of Acorns and a dedicated member of the steward team of the church.

Bryan was a true Londoner (North, not South) although born in Berkhamsted (due to his mother being evacuated there during the war). His school era, based in Hornsey, was full of laughter, fun, sport and music. Bryan and others started a band called the Ethnic Shuffle Orchestra, with Bryan on the washboard

He started as a reporter in 1962, for Furnishing World Magazine, but he was able to brighten things up with a pun or two... 'sofa-so good?'. He then worked in advertising, until deciding to become a teacher, his true calling, eventually becoming head teacher. On retirement he turned to supply teaching at Woodside and Flamsteed End Schools. He loved teaching and inspiring kids, leading assemblies and going on countless school trips. He also said that becoming a parent helped him with being a teacher, finding a deeper meaning and understanding in educating children.

He met Maureen in Muswell Hill and was married for over 53 years.

He loved his swimming group, meeting very early in the morning three times a week to swim lengths for the last 25 years, closely followed closely by coffee and cake. He made Christmas cakes every year, starting in September, with an incredible amount of brandy!.

And of course, it would be impossible to talk about Bryan's life and not celebrate the 68 years he spent as a member of Alexandra Park Cricket & Football Club - over the last 10 years of those as President His cricketing exploits did stretch beyond Alexandra Park, when

in 2010 he was invited to join the England over 70's team for a tour to Barbados, a dream come true, his most recent accolade, last September, was winners of the County Cricket championships for Middlesex over 70s. His sporting life also included football where he played for Barnet Football Club for a short time.



Ron Kenway:

Here are extracts from Ken's Eulogy:

Ron was also a great character and had a passionate interest in vintage buses and trains as well as being an accomplished painter.

Ron was born near Alexandra Palace in 1936. The family soon moving to Bowes Park.

As the second world war was in full swing in 1941, Ron's dad decided to evacuate the family to Standon in Hertfordshire. On moving back Ron went to Trinity Grammar School, Wood Green. during this time that Ron also became a student at Hornsey School of Art.

Ron and Sheila met in 1959, marrying in August 1962.

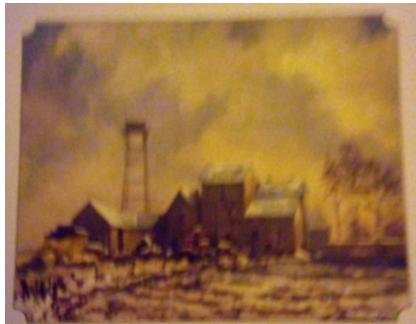
His gardening hobby resulted in an allotment, producing many vegetables and flowers. Ron also became an active member of Hertford Art Society, showing his painting in many exhibitions

At the tender age of 57, Ron retired, and he and Sheila moved to Somerset, allowing Ron more time for local history, gardening and painting, including being a member of the South Petherton and Crewkerne Art Clubs.

In 2020, Ron and Sheila oved back to Hertfordshire where they settled in Goffs Oak spending a happy 5 years with extended family and many friends, including the church community and members of the Hertfordshire Arts Society. Ron also continued to grow the vegetables he loved.

“We'll miss Ron's quiet presence, always on the go, cleaning cups and sharing the washing up.” Was a sentiment quoted on many cards of condolence.

The painting shown is one of Ron's many excellent examples of his talent as a painter.



It can be said of both Bryan and Ron that they had a ‘A life well lived and full of love’.

Several members of the congregation have also lost family members and close friends during the year.

To all those who remain, the church offers its condolences and support.

Remembrance Sunday

The church again led the commemoration in Goffs Oak, by holding a special service in the church, followed by a joint celebration with St James Church at the war memorial. In addition to both congregations joining together we were joined by the youth organisations Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and rangers, as well as Beavers, cubs, scouts and explorers, in addition members from the Comrades. Other dignitaries included Lewis Cocking (our MP) together with other council representatives.

The event was organised between the church and the Community Association.



Christmas Party & Nativity Service

A very successful Christmas party was followed by a carol and nativity performed by the youngsters. During the afternoon the party even experienced a VIP visitor – an early visit from Father Christmas. The children then put on a nativity play for the adults during the nativity service.



Carols by Torchlight on a cold and windy December evening!

About 120 local people, including representatives from the two Goffs Oak churches, braved the weather and gathered for our traditional 'Carols by Torchlight' event. Papa and Rev'd Tom Lilley from St James conducted proceedings, with the Potters Bar Town Band providing their usual fantastic brass accompaniment.

After finishing our singing at the village Christmas tree, we walked a few yards to perform at the Goffs Oak Inn. Carols were sung and enjoyed by staff and customers who were delighted to listen to the band and singers and showing their appreciation. Everybody then went back to the church for an impromptu sing along led by the Potters Bar Brass Band.



Church Improvements

As you will all be aware at the start of the year we extended the floor replacement program. Last year we replaced the main hall floor and entrance with a new floor. This year we upgraded the kitchen corridor floor. An improvement that has gone

down with users of the building. It is now much easier for users to clean up various spills. The work took a week to complete as doors had to be trimmed and rehung. The church would like to thank Alroy Carpets of Crews Hill for the hard work in replacing the floor.

Other jobs during the year included repairing toilets, painting walls, repainting the outside back wall (something that many users of the church do not see but is a major concern to our neighbours in Wesley Close).

A church steward's job is never done! I would like to extend a huge thank you to all those who have helped in various ways.

OUR FUTURE:

Our position today is very much as a community hub that aims to connect and support local people and in doing so display an active and living faith. We have hundreds of people through the doors of our church each week, taking part in activities from guides, baby ballet, judo and karate through to brass bands, WI, the Food Pantry, Cocaine Anonymous and Pilates — and much more. Attendances at Sunday services are growing and we are hoping for more young members to attend Sunday Club.

We have good reason to be optimistic about 2026, but we must not take our foot off the pedal. Our new year resolution must be to find ways of continuing the wonderful work already being done and to attract more people to share the good news..... It's up to us!

Life-changing events

The church is part of the community and is here for all, whether those experiencing life-changing events such as Births, Marriages and Deaths, or just want a home for a short or longer period. Please use one of the contact numbers or visit our website.

We are here for you!

A message from our editor:

I would like to thank you all for your patience with this review, all your contributions, ideas and help. I have very large and difficult shoes to fill and appreciate both Brian and Maureen's guidance in compiling this review.

A plea for next year:

Please take pictures and send them to me, of all we get up to within the church, our outreach program and the various users of the church so they can be included in next year's review,

Contact details:

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