



Wesley Methodist Church Weeke

# Wesley Somborne Link

## One Church on two sites

12th June 2026



King's Somborne Methodist Church

### Refugee Week: Our Story, Our Song of Welcome

(Publication date 02 June 2026)

*The Revd Richard Andrew, President of the Methodist Conference, and Matthew Forsyth, Vice-President, offer this reflection for Refugee Week*

The theme for our presidential year, "Our Story, Our Song," feels very timely in relation to Refugee Week. (Monday, 15 June to Sunday, 21 June, with World Refugee Day on Saturday, 20 June.) One strand of our theme focuses on those whose stories are missing from our narratives. But, when you do talk to a refugee, you hear stories of the pain and the sorrow of displacement. Behind the headlines are very human stories: a parent seeking safety for their child, a young person escaping violence, a family torn apart by war or persecution. Some are displaced by conflict, others by political oppression or discrimination. Increasingly, climate change is also forcing communities from their homes as floods, drought and environmental crises reshape entire regions. As voices are raised against migrants, we are reminded of our Methodist calling, of our story, which should give us the confidence to offer an alternative to the hostility being generated by many in the debate about refugees.

When you listen to stories of dangerous journeys at the hands of criminals, you realise that it is very doubtful that anyone would become a refugee by choice. However, it is these people, those who are among the most vulnerable in our society, who are being singled out as those we are told we should fear the most.

Take a glance at newspaper headlines and social media, and you will see refugees and migrants being blamed for sexual offences and knife crimes, for housing shortages, low wages, poor employment opportunities and often for just "not being British enough."

Sharing and hearing stories is one powerful way to counter some of the misinformation and misunderstanding that is so widespread in relation to refugees. So often, transformation does not result from angry debates but begins with an encounter. When people meet, when stories are shared, when we understand one another as human, as an individual, something changes. When people become friends, when there is trust and understanding, communities grow and fear falls away. Our communities are enriched by those who have arrived here seeking refuge, those who long to belong and contribute to our society.

Luton does not apologise for its diversity. During a presidential visit to the town last autumn, and specifically to the interfaith charity Grassroots, we heard from many faith leaders in the community about their concerns regarding the rhetoric around migrants and refugees. But the ongoing "stop the boats" protests and the raising of union flags that has taken place across the country could not intimidate the people of Luton. Luton has a shared sense of purpose, a shared sense of belonging. Here, faith leaders expressed their solidarity in the face of this indirect aggression. The town's response was a community walk with people from different ages, backgrounds, faiths and no faith, walking together in solidarity saying, 'This is who we are. We're a community that comes together'.

Such community courage is going to be vital in the months, and maybe years, ahead. In some places anti-migrant protests have become aggressive and even violent, in other cases personal, with abuse and threats on social media.

The Methodist Church in Epsom found itself at the centre of protests when an allegation of a rape in its church grounds caused an eruption of anger after police were unable to release information regarding the background of any alleged offenders. The protesters were of the belief that migrants may be involved. Even the words of our minister there, Revd Catherine Hutton, words intended to calm and reassure the community, became used against her on social media.

Article continued on the next page.

On Sunday 14th June at 10.30am, the Service will be led by Revd Rachael Hawkins  
On Sunday 21st June at 10.30am the Service will be led by Revd Peter Rayson  
These services will be live streamed, the link to which can be found via the Wesley Website at:  
[www.wesleychurch.org.uk](http://www.wesleychurch.org.uk)

While there are legitimate discussions to be had about migration policy, at present the 'debate' is too often led by voices that trade in fear, half-truths, resentment and the scapegoating of anyone seen as being 'the other'. As Christians, committed to truth and commanded to welcome the stranger, we need to call this out. The assumption that refugees will be a 'drain' on the British economy is a prejudiced assumption as ultimately migrants and refugees provide a total benefit to the UK economy, boosting the income from tax revenues and providing much needed labour. This can be particularly helpful in business sectors where we have a skills shortage.

Some claim that those who arrive here should seek refuge in the first safe country they arrive in. The vast majority of the world's refugees do indeed claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. Only a tiny number of those refugees who arrive in Europe reach the United Kingdom. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees [global trends report for 2024](#), stated that there are 31.0 million refugees worldwide, excluding Palestinians. 67% were hosted in neighbouring countries. That year a total of 84,231 asylum case claims were made in the United Kingdom. In the [European Union](#) a total of 997,350 people claimed asylum.

Those who do not attempt to seek asylum before reaching the UK are often seeking to rejoin their families and communities who are already here.

We need to challenge narratives that dehumanise. Sometimes it may be the government we have to challenge as with the tone and content of the Home Secretary's announcement on asylum policy reform last November, that risked deepening the fractures in our communities rather than healing them. The arguments in the debate on how to "restore order and control to our borders" and deter people from seeking asylum in the UK was not well presented.

The Methodist Church, through the Joint Public Issues Team, have worked to highlight unjust policies. In March this year, more than 800 faith leaders, including us on behalf of the Methodists, signed a joint letter to the Home Secretary expressing concern about the proposals and the suspension of refugee family reunion. The refugee family reunion scheme used to allow people granted refugee status in the UK to apply for their immediate family members to join them. The government abruptly suspended this scheme last September and now proposes a much more restrictive approach.

Sometimes the support we can offer refugees may be practical, creating spaces of welcome in our churches where, through conversation, through shared meals, strangers become friends. We can offer clothes, toiletries and advice but we can listen and share the stories that disarm through empathy and understanding. There are organisations in nearly every community working alongside refugees and asylum seekers who we can support.

Many Methodist churches are already part of the Church of Sanctuary movement, committing to learning about migration, embedding welcome in their worship and community life, and actively supporting refugees. Becoming a Church of Sanctuary is a powerful witness.

Sometimes our support may be personal, not just the befriending of a refugee, but more awkwardly, we may need to find ways to challenge a friend or family member who is repeating the assumptions and misapprehensions peddled by others.

Seeking asylum is a human right. Anyone fleeing persecution, conflict, or human rights abuses has a right to seek protection in another country. According to the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, [at least 79.5 million people](#) around the world have been forced to flee their homes. We must be courageous in tackling the causes of the global refugee situation.

Some leave their homes due to fears of persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or political opinion. In other parts of the world conflict makes daily life almost impossible with infrastructure being destroyed and millions forced to leave their homes.

Weather events and environmental conditions are made worse with global heating, contributing to multiple and overlapping crises increasing poverty and straining previously good relations between communities which creates conditions for conflict and further forced displacement.

Our Methodist calling to seek justice compels us to tackle these factors that are driving displacement. With our global partners – charities and churches - we can contribute to work for peace and development and to tackle the climate emergency. And in this country, we should continue to call for people to be treated with decency by a fairer and more compassionate asylum system, an end to hostile environment policies and for a humane approach to those seeking sanctuary.

**Dates for Your Diary:**

11th June: Mini-Marvels (9.00—11.00am)

11th June: Together Thursday 2.30—4.30pm

14th June: Service of Holy Communion led by Revd Rachael Hawkins at Wesley 10.30am

14th June: Service of Holy Communion led by Revd Catherine Bowstead at King's Somborne 10.30am

**16th June: Circuit Children and Youth Leaders Meeting on Zoom 7.00-8.00pm**

18th June: Mini-Marvels (9.00—11.00am)

19th June: Friday Fun Club (5.00-6.30pm)

19th June: Feel Good Friday (7.00-9.00pm)

21st June: Service led by Revd Peter Raysom at Wesley 10.30am

21st June: Messy Church at King's Somborne (3.00-5.00pm)

25th June: Mini-Marvels (9.00—11.00am)

25th June: Together Thursday 2.30—4.30pm

**27th June: Café Wesley in aid of Brickworks (10.00am-12 noon) and Lego Church (10.00am—11.30am)**

28th June: ReFresh Service led by Dr Mike Wood at Wesley 10.30am

28th June: Service led by Mrs Sandra Timms at King's Somborne 10.30am

**30th June: Worship and Fellowship Working Group Meeting at Wesley 7.30pm**

Coffee Morning  
and  
Sale  
Epworth Hall  
Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> June  
from  
10.00am - 12 noon  
Raffle-Cakes-Plants-  
Books-Jigsaws-and more  
In aid of  
Jane Scarth House  
Please come and support this worthy  
cause

The next edition of the WSL will be on Friday 26th June, we will need any items for inclusion to be sent to Paul and Brenda, by Wednesday 24th June 2026.

Email: [brenda.yarrien@btinternet.com](mailto:brenda.yarrien@btinternet.com) or by phone on 01794389153.

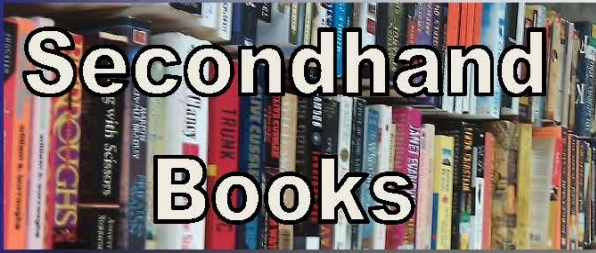
The next Café Wesley is raising money for Brickworks



**Cards**



**Drop in  
for a  
chat**



**Secondhand  
Books**



**Secondhand  
Jigsaws**

**4th Saturday  
every month  
10:00 - 12:00**

**create a  
scene  
challenge**



**LEGO  
CHURCH**

**Bacon roll**



Our annual celebration of Churches Together, to include the formal AGM, will take place at Wesley Methodist church, Fromond Road, Weeke on Thursday 9th July at 7.30pm. I will have a poster for you soon but if you can start publicising it now we would appreciate it. There will be an opportunity to hear about and pray for the work of Churches Together.

Other activities that we have been asked to let you know about:

Saturday 20th June 5.30pm - a service of celebration and commissioning for Winchester City Chaplaincy, at the Cathedral. This will be part of their choral evensong, with a drinks reception afterwards. It is open to everyone but please contact Carol Bailey if you want to attend, so they have some idea of the numbers. Her email address is on the attached invitation.

Tuesday 7th July 7.45am - National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast. This takes place in Westminster Hall but is livestreamed to enable anyone to attend. The organisers suggest you can sign up to join them online individually, or consider whether you could organise a local event for members of your church or for local church and civic leaders to watch the Breakfast and to pray together. It is a great opportunity to pray for our parliament, government and politics and to reflect upon the relevance of the Christian faith to our public life. Their theme this year is 'Hope for the future' and the main speaker is Clare Williams-Sarpong, founder of Real Questions and an Associate Speaker at OCCA, the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics.

See their website Prayer Breakfast – Christians in Parliament, for more details and to sign up for the livestream

Nick Woodford at Hope Church has pulled together a list of places you can go in Winchester to get food or support, for people they come into contact with. He is happy for this to be shared - and would also be grateful to know about anything he has missed, or anything that needs correcting on the list. I have attached two versions of the list, one is an A3 poster, the other has the list twice on A4 size so it can be cut into 2 A5 leaflets. Contact Nick for further information on [Nick.Woodford@hopewinchester.org](mailto:Nick.Woodford@hopewinchester.org)

If you want to keep up to date with what Winchester Street and School Pastors are doing, please follow their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064515296029> and consider linking it from your church Facebook page

If you have any free events coming up that you would like us to publicise please let me know so that I can include it on these mailings. Also, if you have a church Facebook or Instagram page I would be happy to follow that from the Churches Together in Winchester account.

Hope to see some of you at our celebration in July,

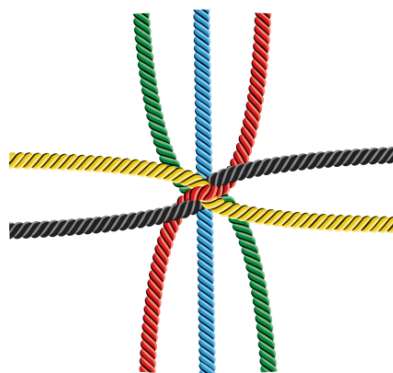
Kirsty

Kirsty Robinson

Secretary and Communications Co-ordinator

Churches Together in Winchester

[www.ctwin.org.uk](http://www.ctwin.org.uk)



Dear All

Please find below an invitation to the Winchester City Chaplaincy Service of Celebration and Commissioning as part of the Choral Evensong on Saturday, 20 June at 5.30pm. This will be followed by a drinks reception.

Blessings

Carol

Carol Bailey, Trustee, on behalf of Jon Faulkner, Chairman



# INVITATION

to a Celebration &  
Commissioning of  
Winchester City Chaplaincy

on Saturday, 20 June 2026  
at 5.30pm Choral Evensong  
in Winchester Cathedral

RSVP to: Carol Bailey  
[carol.bothbaileys@gmail.com](mailto:carol.bothbaileys@gmail.com)

# food & support across winchester

Whether you need a hot meal, fresh food, a warm space, or someone to listen — here's where to find help throughout the week.

WHAT'S ON OFFER  Drop-in & café  Food parcels  Breakfast  Hot meal

## monday

6 PLACES

-  **Drop-in café • 10am – 12pm**  
New Life Church, Stanmore
-  **Food hub • 10am – 12pm**  
Winchester Vineyard Church
-  **Food hub • 10am – 12.30pm**  
Badger Farm Community Centre
-  **Soup & roll • 11.30am – 2pm**  
St Mary's, Kings Worthy
-  **Drop-in café • 1 – 2.30pm**  
Warm Welcome Café, Hope Church
-  **Drop-in evening • from 7.30pm**  
All Nations Café, Hope Church

## tuesday

4 PLACES

-  **Food hub • 10am – 3pm**  
Penton Place, Milland Road
-  **Lunch (£4) • 12 noon**  
Salvation Army, High Street  
*Open from 10.30am*
-  **Drop-in café • 2 – 4pm**  
Salvation Army Hall — Renew Café
-  **Free meal • 5 – 6.30pm**  
St Paul's Church

## wednesday

8 PLACES

-  **Breakfast • 9 – 11am**  
St Peter's Church
-  **Coffee, cake & bible study • 10.30am – 12pm**  
Hope Church
-  **Drinks & games • 10am – 12pm**  
Winchester Baptist Church
-  **Food hub • 10am – 12pm**  
St Gregory's Church, Alresford
-  **Lunch • 12.30pm**  
St Barnabas, Weeke  
*Open from 11am*

## thursday

6 PLACES

-  **Drinks & activities • 10.30am – 12pm**  
Pick & Mix, Hope Church
-  **Food hub • 10am – 12pm**  
Winchester Vineyard Church
-  **Food hub • 10am – 12.30pm**  
St Barnabas Church, Weeke
-  **Drop-in café • 2 – 4pm**  
Salvation Army Hall — Renew Café
-  **Social, tea & coffee • 2.30 – 4.30pm**  
Wesley Methodist
-  **Hot meal & warm welcome • 6.15 – 8pm**  
Hope Street Café, Hope Church

## friday

8 PLACES

-  **Coffee morning (£1) • 9.30 – 11.30am**  
Salvation Army, High Street
-  **Revive Café • 9.30am – 12pm**  
St Mark's Church, Oliver's Battery
-  **Food hub • 10am – 3pm**  
Penton Place, Milland Road
-  **Pies & Puds**  
St Peter's Church  
*Times vary — ask at the church*
-  **Drop-in**  
Level 10  
*Times vary — ask for details*

## saturday

2 PLACES

-  **Breakfast (£2) • 9 – 11am**  
Winchester Baptist Church
-  **Hot breakfast • 9 – 11am**  
Trinity  
*For rough sleepers*

## sunday

2 PLACES

-  **Bacon butties • 8 – 9.30am**  
Hope Church
-  **Hot breakfast • 9 – 11am**  
Trinity  
*For rough sleepers*

OPEN EVERY WEEKDAY

## unit 12, winnall

Free community fridge & food pantry — take what you need, no questions, no booking.

 Community fridge — free

 Pantry shop — £6

DAY CENTRE

## trinity winchester

Mon – Fri, 8.30am – 4pm

A warm, dry space with showers, laundry, and support during the day. Weekend hot breakfast (Sat & Sun, 9 – 11am) is for **rough sleepers only**.

## Caring for our planet - Wilder gardens Open events

Steve and Jane, Wilder Gardens champions, who had a stall at the recent Caring for our Planet eco event, are opening their garden in Chandlers Ford for charity on 21 and 28 June, 2-5pm, as part of the National Garden Scheme. Refreshment sales will be in aid of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. It's a medium sized suburban garden designed for nature with native flowers and shrubs, and maintained for the ecosystem. Meadow and flowering lawn, hedgerows, dragonfly ponds, bee hotels, and log piles. Nature corner and self guided tour available. It is a garden for those curious about our native nature and wilder gardening. Well behaved children welcome (but note there's no play area). Find more details here:

<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/47197/pines-corner-wildlife-garden>

Weather permitting we'll have the chance to see moths, pond creatures (under the microscope) and the contents of bee hotels. Self-guided tour and opportunity to find out about mini meadow management including the tools they use. It would be a good event to support for any who would like to know more about gardening for wildlife - or would just like to support by visiting, having a cup of tea and eating cake!



## **Winchester Samaritans Appeal**

**Samaritans (Winchester & District Branch) is a team of 130 local volunteers providing confidential, 24/7 emotional support to anyone experiencing distress, despair, or suicidal thoughts. In April Winchester Samaritans took almost 2000 calls. This year they are 50 years old.**

**While part of the national charity, the Winchester branch is independently funded, delivering vital support through telephone and community outreach services across the local area. Their mission is simple but critical: to improve mental wellbeing and help reduce suicide.**

**Only one in three people who die by suicide had contact with specialist mental health services in the year before their death. Demand for support is rising, while frontline services are under increasing pressure. Waiting lists for counselling and talking therapies can exceed three months, leaving many people without help when they need it most.**

**They have a new campaign to raise £50,000 to support them to:**

**Expand and enhance their premises to increase service capacity.**

**Maintain essential reserves to ensure continuity of support.**

**Future-proof the branch to meet rising local demand.**

**They understand that this is a challenging financial climate for many people. Your support—whatever the level—will make a real and immediate difference to people in our community. They ask you to consider support giving a donation via**

**<https://www.justgiving.com/charity/Winchestersamaritans> Please give your newsletters name as a reference.**

**Thank you**

## A prayer for refugees

Prayer by Ashkan Rezaei, Lancaster

I am many things –  
Iranian, an asylum seeker,  
a person with disabilities,  
a husband,  
a charity founder,  
a journalist,  
a community activist –  
though at my core,  
I am simply a person  
who wants to help others  
live independent  
and fulfilling lives.

Loving God,

You know all our hardships and especially for those who have to flee war and injustice.

You don't give up on us, even when we let you down.

Thank you for all those people who welcome us, as strangers, into their lives.

Thank you for kindness and hospitality.

Thank you for new homes and new friends.

We ask you to take care of all the loved ones we have left behind. Amen

(Taken from the Methodist Website June 2026)

## Refugee Life

D G O V E R N M E N T M U L Y S A  
N D G W U O A R T A M U A R T A A  
O E S A D V T E P A C S E R E H X  
I E T E S R U F T B S S C A R E D  
T M J W F U R U V S S G C U M E N  
U P O E A A A G B X E F L F R U C  
C A U C Y R L E S N L Q J U A S J  
E T R N T L D E W D E G T I F E I  
S H N E O K I C E J M R K L P K W  
R Y E L V T S C T A O B E O Y O S  
E W Y O O W A X A T H E H P E G Z  
P X Z I S L S D N A Y T R E V O P  
T V V V P G T Q Y T E F A S V P T  
Q T R S J W E O G Z J W N U H L Q  
Q X I H A O R E T A M I L C X D X  
L D N Z M C A M P S N W V U M B E  
H Z F O R N U N O I S S A P M O C

natural disaster  
displaced  
journey  
refugee  
escape  
hope

persecution  
violence  
empathy  
scared  
asylum  
flee

compassion  
homeless  
torture  
trauma  
camps  
war

government  
poverty  
climate  
safety  
boat