

# ***In-touch***

No 109

March – May 2026



***The magazine for the Ealing Trinity Circuit***



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# From the Superintendent

*By Rev Steve Day*

Dear friends,

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January, I was privileged to attend a service of thanksgiving to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the United Nations General Assembly at Methodist Central Hall Westminster.

The United Nations (UN) was formed in the aftermath of World War Two, bringing together former enemies to seek another way of living together in the world. This video (<https://youtu.be/w3bWJrvRgJA>) records the first session of the UN General Assembly, which began on 10 January 1946. We heard how “The church moved out and the world moved in” as the congregation of Methodist Central Hall Westminster left the building to worship elsewhere to enable preparations for the UN General Assembly. It was a profoundly significant and gracious gesture.

In his homily, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, former Archbishop of Westminster, said<sup>1</sup>:

As we look back on 1946, let us honour those who gathered in this Hall. They were not superheroes cloaked in invincibility, but ordinary souls burdened by the extraordinary grief of families torn asunder, cities reduced to rubble, a world that had lost faith in its own goodness. Yet here, in this Methodist sanctuary – a beacon of the Gospel’s call to justice and mercy – they dared to envision something greater. The United Nations was no abstract treaty; it was a covenant, etched in the memory of the horrors of the Holocaust, the firebombing of Dresden, Coventry and Tokyo, the atomic clouds over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It declared, with quiet defiance, that vengeance yields only ashes, while diplomacy ploughs the soil for renewal. They pledged ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’ (Preamble of the Charter). One delegate later wrote of kneeling here in prayer, whispering for wisdom beyond borders.

He acknowledged the challenges today, in which “The very idea of nations working with trust, purpose, accountability and patience feels, at times, like a whisper against the clamour of nationalism and protective isolation.” In response to the challenges of achieving peace with justice in our time, he offered:

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<sup>1</sup> The homily can be watched via this link: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=901418498952487> or read here: <https://rcdow.org.uk/cardinal/homilies/80th-anniversary-of-the-united-nations/>

We pray for peace, which is always the work of God; for dialogue and cooperation between nations for the common good, the good from which no one is excluded; for the renewal of our international institutions so that national and international power may be used in the cause of a lasting peace based on justice, on respect for the dignity of every person, and on compassion for the poorest in our midst. Then we shall all breathe more easily and readily give praise to God.

May the God of all nations bless these endeavours, unite our wills and guide us so that dialogue may prevail and peace be our common inheritance.

In this period of Lent, it may be helpful for us to ponder Cardinal Nichols' words about the UN and reflect on the value of dialogue which seeks peace with justice, not just at the national and international levels, but also at the local community and personal levels.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steven", with a horizontal line underneath.

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## **King's Hall Fire**

You will probably already be aware of the tragic fire which took place at King's Hall Methodist Church in Southall on the night of Sunday 22 February.

I went to Southall with trepidation early the next morning, not sure what I would find. While it is very sad that any part of the King's Hall building has been damaged, I was relieved that only the central part was affected. We are very grateful to the fire crews who tackled the fire and prevented it from reaching the rotunda and façade.

The building is being surveyed soon and this should help us to assess what happens to the damaged part of the building.

Your prayers for the King's Hall congregation as they come to terms with the shock of the fire would be most welcome.

## **From the Circuit Meeting**

A Circuit Meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, hosted by Hanwell Methodist Church.

### **Opening Devotions**

Rev Steve Day welcomed those present and opened the meeting with a reading from Isaiah 11.

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### **Building a vision for our future together**

The Circuit continues work on the process of discerning a shared vision for the future. A small “Guide Team”, with representation from across the Circuit, will review the draft listening framework before it is issued more widely, with the aim of ensuring the process is proportionate and manageable for all churches. Churches are being encouraged to reflect on their strengths, challenges and opportunities as part of a listening phase that will inform the next stage of planning. External support from the District and Learning Network is assisting this process. Alongside this, several members will attend training in Faith-Rooted Community Organising at Cliff College, with the aim of strengthening engagement with local communities.

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### **Property Matters**

#### **King’s Hall**

Work continues on exploring options for the future of King’s Hall. Initial conversations have taken place with Ealing Council’s planning officers to understand what may be acceptable in principle, while maintaining the balance between retaining heritage elements and introducing new development. The Circuit is continuing to work with professional advisers as part of the pre-application process, with the aim of establishing a scheme that is both financially viable and capable of securing planning support while maintaining a meaningful Methodist presence on the site.

The meeting passed five resolutions to support the next stage of this work, the first of which commits the Circuit to proceeding with the preparation of a pre-application for the redevelopment and to seek clear, focused feedback from Ealing Council’s planning officers on the acceptability of the proposals, so that

any emerging scheme reflects planning guidance and has the best possible chance of progressing.

Secondly, the meeting agreed to appoint Wainwrights Architects to develop the emerging proposals and support the project through the early design and planning stages.

The Circuit also agreed to apply to the District Advance Fund for £25,000 to support the pre-application stage of the redevelopment, helping to cover professional fees and preparatory work needed before submitting a planning application.

Fourthly, the meeting agreed to seek designation of the King's Hall project as a Replacement Project under Connexional property provisions. This would allow funds from the sale of the Costons Avenue manse (see below) to be retained locally and used towards the redevelopment.

The final resolution approved the allocation of £4,200 for professional support to assist the Circuit in progressing the project through the pre-application stage.

### **Pitshanger Methodist Church**

Several organisations have recently expressed interest in either leasing or purchasing the building. These include a Montessori nursery, a Christian church seeking to establish a local hub, and a Middle Eastern Orthodox congregation interested in purchasing the property should the Circuit decide to sell. A small group has been delegated to continue discussions with interested parties and assess proposals as they develop. The meeting also considered whether to appoint Rapleys to market the building more widely, and a decision will be made by the next meeting in March.

### **Costons Avenue (Vacant Manse)**

The property sale is now complete and keys have been exchanged. The Circuit intends to use some of the proceeds of the sale to fund the King's Hall redevelopment project.

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### **Safeguarding and EDI**

Foundation Module safeguarding training took place in January, with a further session planned in April. Churches were reminded of the importance of ensuring that all relevant officers and volunteers remain up to date with their safeguarding

training and DBS checks. The meeting noted the continuing challenges around access to Advanced Module safeguarding training. The Circuit will continue to engage with the District regarding future training provision. Churches were thanked for their ongoing diligence in maintaining safeguarding standards and supporting those who undertake these important roles.

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### **Local Preachers & Worship Leaders**

One Local Preacher remains on trial and continues to progress through the required stages of training and assessment.

Two Worship Leaders are currently in training and are beginning to gain experience in leading worship within their local churches under appropriate supervision.

Liv Kaszewska, a student Local Preacher attached to Methodist Central Hall Westminster, will on occasion accompany Phil Male, her supervisor, when leading worship within the Circuit as part of her training.

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### **Circuit Treasurer**

The meeting was reminded that the role of Circuit Treasurer becomes vacant at the end of the Connexional year, and no nominations have yet been received. If no-one is appointed the responsibilities of the role will default to the Superintendent, which will impact Rev Steve's capacity to perform his other duties. It is therefore vital for the smooth running of the Circuit that a new Treasurer is appointed.

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### **Student Minister Placement**

The meeting welcomed the news that Aqeela Tanveer will join the Circuit as a student minister from January 2026 until summer 2027. She will work approximately 20 hours per week as part of her ministerial formation.

Her placement will provide opportunities to gain experience across a range of Circuit activities, including worship, pastoral work and church governance. Members were encouraged to welcome Aqeela and support her development during her time in the Circuit.

[See page 8 for an introduction to Aqeela]

# Ealing Animals Fair



## Hanwell Methodist Church

Church Road, London, W7 1DJ

**Saturday 7th March 2026**  
**10:30am - 4:00pm**

Gifts | Handicrafts | Bargains  
Great guest speakers  
Animal charities  
Live music!



Now in its  
47th year

admission  
**FREE**



[www.ealinganimalsfair.london](http://www.ealinganimalsfair.london)

*There are no animals for sale at the Fair*

# Ivy Emery's 100th Birthday Party

*By Jane Bennett, Northolt*

Ivy has been a member of Northolt Church for many, many years and has held various roles at church. She was persuaded to come to church by a friend and later she committed her life to Christ. On 10th January, Ivy celebrated her 100th Birthday at Sweetcroft Care Home in Uxbridge where she is now a resident. She had two celebrations – first a special lunch with all the residents, and then Northolt Church and her closest friends were invited to celebrate with her.

Some of our congregation and Ivy's friends attended for an afternoon of happiness, laughter and tributes. The staff at 'Sweetcroft' had kept our visit a secret from Ivy, so after we had all assembled they brought her to us, while we sang, 'For she's a jolly good fellow'. Ivy was of course very surprised and touched by the welcome she received. She chatted to her guests whilst some drank champagne and we tucked into the food provided by the staff.

Ivy received gifts and 49 cards, but her special gift was her 100th Birthday Card from the King Charles and Queen Camilla! Two of the staff dressed up as crusaders bringing the card to Ivy! Ivy was overwhelmed and we could tell how precious this was to Ivy to receive this. Ivy was born in the same year as the late Queen Elizabeth II. We had a special cake brought in by Ivy's friends and sang Happy Birthday.

We were all honoured to be with Ivy who means so much to us at Northolt Church. Ivy is still walking around with her walker and her brain is as sharp as ever! We know that she prays for us all regularly by name and she still has the most positive, encouraging outlook on life. Her Christian faith is evident in all she says and does and she is a source of inspiration to us all.



May God continue to bless Ivy and may she know God holding her close.

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*For those of you who use Facebook there are plenty of videos and photos of Ivy's celebrations - just search for 'Sweetcroft Residential Care Home'. The posts are dated 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January.*

## Introduction

*By Aqeela Tanveer*

I am Aqeela Tanveer, a second-year Methodist Ordinand (Student Minister) studying at Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, and I feel deeply grateful to be placed within the Ealing Trinity Circuit for the next eighteen months as part of my formation journey in the Circuit-based Learning Pathway (CBLP).



I am originally from Pakistan, settled in the United Kingdom since 2009, and living in Slough within the Thames Valley Circuit. My journey across cultures has shaped my faith in profound ways, giving me a deeper appreciation of the diversity of God's people and the richness of the Church's witness in different contexts. This continues to inform my understanding of ministry as inclusive, compassionate, and attentive to the varied stories people carry.

The Circuit-Based Learning Pathway is a vital part of ministerial formation within the Methodist Church. It enables learning not only through academic study, but through active participation in the life, worship, and mission of the circuit. Within this shared life, theology becomes lived experience, and vocation is nurtured through service, reflection, and relationship.

My sense of calling to ordained ministry has grown through prayer, discernment, and a deep desire to serve God and His people. I hold onto the words of Scripture: "Here I am. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8), as a simple yet profound expression of my response to God's call. I understand this vocation as a faithful response to God's grace, a commitment to walk alongside others, to listen well, and to participate in God's transforming work in the world. I come with a willingness to learn, to be shaped, and to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Alongside this calling, I am a wife to a loving husband and a mother of three children. My family life has been central to my formation, teaching me patience, resilience, and the importance of faithful presence. These experiences continue to shape my ministry as relational and grounded in everyday life.

It is a great privilege to be part of the Ealing Trinity Circuit. I am thankful for the opportunity to learn from experienced ministers, dedicated leaders, and welcoming congregations. I look forward to growing in fellowship, deepening in understanding, and serving alongside you all in the months ahead. I enter this season with gratitude and openness, trusting in God's guidance in all things.

# HANWELL METHODIST CHURCH

Church Road, Hanwell, London, W7 1DJ

The 11th

# GREAT Easter Egg Hunt



**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026**  
**2:00pm to 4:30pm**

**For all the family**  
**Admission FREE**

- † **Hunt the Easter eggs**
- † **Children's assorted crafts**
- † **Homemade Cake stall**



Parents are responsible  
for their own children

Tea, coffee and homemade  
cakes are available for  
exhausted parents!

*For more information about our Church and the events  
we have planned, please visit our Church website  
[hanwellmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://hanwellmethodistchurch.org.uk)*

## **A Prayer for Spring**

Creator God,  
As the earth awakens from the stillness of winter,  
we give thanks for the quiet miracle of new life.  
You breathe warmth into the air,  
colour into the fields,  
and hope into the hearts of Your people.

Where the ground once lay bare,  
new shoots begin to rise.  
Where branches seemed lifeless,  
buds now promise blossom and fruit.  
In these gentle signs of renewal  
teach us again the faithfulness of Your creation.

Renew our hearts as You renew the earth.  
Where our spirits have grown tired,  
restore our strength.  
Where our faith has grown uncertain,  
plant within us fresh trust in Your goodness.

Help us to notice the beauty around us,  
the returning birdsong,  
the lengthening light of evening,  
the quiet persistence of growing things.

Holy Spirit,  
stir within us the same new life  
that moves through field and forest.  
Open our eyes to the needs of our neighbours  
and make us ready to share kindness and generosity.

May our lives bear the fruit of Your grace  
and reflect the beauty of Your love.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

## **A Prayer for Easter**

Risen Lord Jesus,  
On this Easter morning  
we rejoice in the victory of Your resurrection.  
The stone has been rolled away,  
the grave is empty,  
and death itself has been overcome.

Where the world expected silence,  
Your life has broken forth.  
Where sorrow seemed final,  
Your joy has begun.

Living Christ,  
speak Your word of hope into our hearts today.  
Where we carry fear, bring courage.  
Where we feel lost, lead us into new life.  
Where grief still lingers,  
remind us that Your love is stronger than death.

God of resurrection,  
You are always at work bringing life from what seemed finished,  
light from what seemed dark,  
and hope from what seemed beyond repair.

Help us to recognise the signs of Your new creation  
in acts of mercy,  
in quiet forgiveness,  
in the courage to begin again.

Holy Spirit,  
fill us with the joy of Easter faith.  
Send us out as witnesses to Your life-giving grace,  
so that our words and actions  
may carry the good news of the risen Christ.

God of life,  
keep us walking in the light of resurrection hope  
until the day when all creation  
shares fully in Your victory.  
Amen.

**THE METHODIST CHURCH**  
**Ealing Trinity Circuit (35/24)**

**Quarterly Plan (No. 115)**

1<sup>st</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026

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**Chair of the District**

Rev Faith Nyota	07450407496
London District Office	faith.nyota@methodist.org.uk
Methodist Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London	
SW1H 9NH	

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**Circuit Ministers**

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c/o Circuit Office	revstephenday@ealingtrinity.org.uk
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W13 9PR	
Rev Sue Male (Deputy Superintendent)	07852 497070
	revsuemale@gmail.com
Rev Ajay Singh	07484 542876
	ajay@ealingtrinity.org.uk
Rev Kip Bennett (Supernumerary)	07745 144107
	kipbennett8389@yahoo.com
Rev Margaret Dudley (Supernumerary)	07506 741503
	margaret.dudley@methodist.org.uk

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**Circuit Officers**

**Circuit Stewards:**

Fleur Hatherall, Jane Horwich, Karen Whitehouse

**Circuit Treasurer:**

Stephen Sears treasurer@ealingtrinity.org.uk

**Circuit Manager:**

Andy Brierley 07484542877  
office@ealingtrinity.org.uk

## **Circuit Local Preachers**

1998 Phil Male  
1998 Keji Phillips  
2000 Christina Tom-Johnson  
2001 Gulzar Malik  
2002 Esther Ackah  
2018 Rekha Cheriyan  
Alex Anteyi

*For reasons of privacy, contact details for Local Preachers, Worship Leaders, visiting preachers and Circuit officers have been removed from the plan included in the printed edition of In-touch.*

*Not taking appointments at present*

## **Local Preachers 'On Trial'**

Fiona Dunn

## **Local Preachers 'On Note'**

## **Worship Leaders**

(3) Donney Samuel  
(3) Win Thompson  
(4) Ray Garnett  
(4) Cynthia Grant  
(6) Kathleen Loveridge  
(7) Jane Bennett  
(7) Lorna Bailey

## **Visiting Preachers**

Rev John Swarbrick

In order to avoid inconvenience or disappointment, special arrangements or requests for services should be sent in writing to Rev Steve Day as soon as decided upon, and in any case not later than the date shown below.

**Closing date for next plan: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

## **Healing Service at Greenford**

*By Elizabeth Burke, Greenford Methodist Church*

On Sunday 21 September, Greenford held their first Healing Service in over a year. It was well attended and I found the whole service very moving. The service was held on the United Nations International Day of Peace.

In his call to worship, Rev Steve Day spoke about the International Day of Peace. With so many countries in conflict and so many people suffering, I felt this was the perfect day for the healing service be held on.

The healing ministry consisted of the following:

- The congregation could come up for personal prayer with Christina and Marcia
- Rev Steve would anoint congregation members who came to him
- There were tea lights
- There was a tree, at the back of the church, where the congregation could come and fill out a tag and then hang it on the tree.
- The congregation could sit in their seats and read the leaflet which was given to them before the service started.

During the healing ministry several hymns were played. Rev Steve had prepared a small booklet, given out before the service, and shown below this article. It had a simple prayer on the front and Bible passages, two of which were our Bible readings for the day. I found my favourite Bible passage in the booklet, John 14:2; I also enjoyed reading 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

At the end of the healing ministry, the tree was brought forward and Rev Steve said a concluding prayer.

At the end of the service, I felt very peaceful and had a sense of calmness. I was thankful to have attended this service and look forward to our next healing service.

At our recent church council meeting, feedback was given about the service:

- Have one person at the Communion rail and one sitting near the organ as there was a queue
- Consent for peoples' names to be read out at a service from the prayer sheet
- All other 'stations' at the service were good.

Below is the Healing Service Booklet:

The Lord gives strength to his people and blesses them with peace.

(Psalm 29:11)

May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being – spirit, soul, and body – free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 5:23)

So then, we must always aim at those things that bring peace and that help strengthen one another.

(Romans 14:19)

Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together.

(Ephesians 4:3)





## A Simple Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

**St. Francis**

The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised. Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me.

You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim. I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live.

(Psalm 23)

So then, my friends, how dear you are to me and how I miss you! How happy you make me, and how proud I am of you! This, dear friends, is how you should stand firm in your life in the Lord.

Euodia and Syntyche, please, I beg you, try to agree as sisters in the Lord. And you too, my faithful partner, I want you to help these women; for they have worked hard with me to spread the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers, whose names are in God's book of the living.

May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!

Show a gentle attitude toward everyone. The Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honourable.

Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

(Philippians 4:1-9)

'Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid.'

(John 14:27)

The peace that Christ gives is to guide you in the decisions you make; for it is to this peace that God has called you together in the one body. And be thankful.

(Colossians 3:15)

And now, my friends, goodbye! Strive for perfection; listen to my appeals; agree with one another; live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

(2 Corinthians 13:11)

When I lie down, I go to sleep in peace; you alone, O Lord, keep me perfectly safe.

(Psalm 4:8)

Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody.

(Romans 12:18)



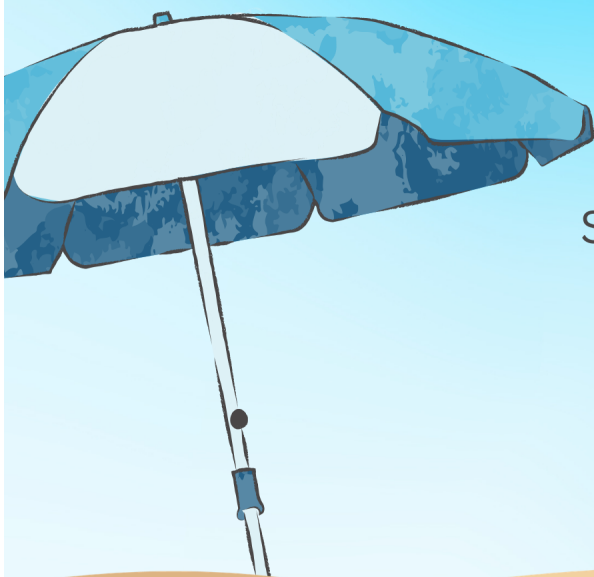
# DAY TRIP TO MARGATE

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August**

**£15 PER PERSON**

**All proceeds to HEARTLINK charity at Ealing  
Hospital**

Coaches depart  
Ealing Town Hall and  
Southall Police Station **8:30am**  
Leave Margate **17:30**



**Contact George Lafford by 31st July  
07845 403367**

## **‘Hidden’ Venice – the Ghetto**

*By Gerald Barton, Kingsdown*

Of all the cities I have visited across Europe, Venice is the most fascinating – a city truly like no other. When I first visited the city back in 1978, I had little conception of what it was like. In fact, I assumed it would be rather like other cities with an ‘old’ part (where I expected the canals to be) and much larger newer parts (where I expected I would be staying). However, emerging from Santa Lucia railway station I found myself standing by the Grand Canal which stretched away before me in the kind



**The Grand Canal from the Accademia bridge**

of vista seen in classic paintings – ‘instant Canaletto’ as I described it to myself. Only then did I begin to realise how fundamentally different Venice is from all other cities in Europe.



**Rubbish collection day in Murano**

Venice is built on a series of 118 islands reclaimed from the lagoon and mostly connected together by around 438 bridges. Transport is by water or foot. Everything moves around by barge, even the regular rubbish collections.

Final delivery of goods is by hand barrow pulled laboriously up and down the steps on the bridges. There is no wheeled transport, motor or otherwise, at all, not even bicycles. If you’ve never been there, it can be difficult to get your mind around the idea of a city without wheels, one that depends solely on boats, barges and walking.

This is what gives the city its fascination. Not surprisingly, it draws thousands of tourists spread throughout the seasons of the year but at the same time remains a living city albeit with a gradually diminishing population.

At its peak in the 1600's, around 200,000 people lived in the city. Now, it's more like 50,000. Now most Venetians, about 170,000 in all, live on 'terra firma' across the causeway on the mainland.

Most tourists congregate only in certain areas of the city, especially in and around the Piazza San Marco with its great basilica and bell tower and in the streets and alleys leading away to the Rialto and Accademia bridges. Start moving away from those main areas and the streets and alleys become noticeably quieter. Just wandering around the less visited areas is fascinating in itself.

On the north side of the Grand Canal in the Cannaregio 'sestiere' of the city is the Jewish ghetto. If you didn't know, you could just wander through without realising (I suspect I may have done that on previous visits to Venice) although the Wall of Memory commemorating Venetian victims of the Holocaust in the Campo Ghetto Nuovo now makes it a bit more obvious.

The ghetto first came into being in around 1516 when Jews were constrained to live in a defined area which had once been used for foundries. In the Venetian dialect 'geto' (pronounced with a soft 'g') means 'foundry'. However, Jews of Germanic origin could only pronounce 'geto' with a hard 'g' and the word became 'ghetto' as we have it today. The original area was known as the 'Ghetto Nuovo' (new ghetto) as it had been the newest of the foundry areas. Later expansion included the older foundry area, known as the Ghetto Vecchio (old ghetto, 1541) and the Ghetto Nuovissimo (newest ghetto, 1633). So, the oldest part of the ghetto is the 'new ghetto' followed by the 'old ghetto' and then the 'newest ghetto'. Confused? Not surprising.

The ghetto was closed off by gates at night and guarded by Christian sentries, which the Jews had to finance. Jews were allowed out by day but had to wear distinguishing caps or badges. They were only permitted to practice certain trades – money lending, trading in second hand goods and medicine. In fact, the only Jews allowed at night were those who practised medicine.

To cope with overcrowding, buildings were allowed to be taller than in the rest of the city but only by one third. Consequently, ceilings were often lower in order to fit in more floors and more living space, up to six or seven stories in all. Jews, however, were not allowed to own property themselves so all accommodation was rented.

And so, life went on thus for several centuries. However, the gates to the ghetto were torn down in 1797 on the instructions of Napoleon although it was only in 1866 that Jews were granted equal status with their fellow citizens. At its peak, the ghetto housed about 5,000 people. Now there are around 500 Jews spread

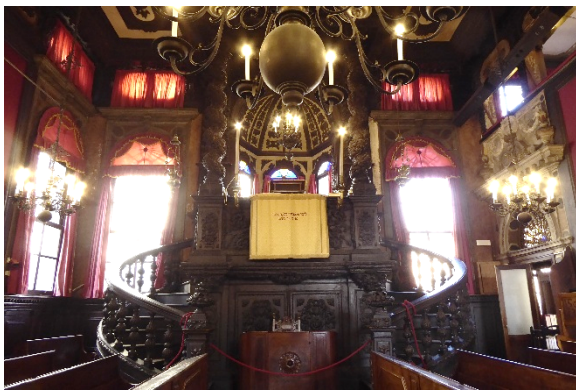
around the city although the ghetto remains the centre of Jewish cultural and religious life.

Each wave of Jewish immigrants founded its own synagogue, thus preserving the distinctive rites of each group. At one time, there were five synagogues in the Ghetto, two of which, the Scola Levantina and the Scola Spagnola remain in use today. From the outside you wouldn't notice these synagogues as they were all incorporated into buildings with other uses as well. What they all had in common was that they were on the top floors as there had to be nothing between the synagogue and heaven.

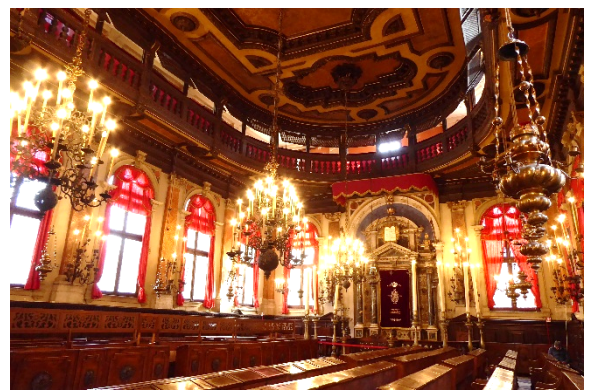


**Scola Levantina exterior. The bay window is the main 'give away'**

The two remaining synagogues are the most lavish of the five. One is used in Summer because it's cooler and the other in Winter because it's warmer. Well, that's practical.



**Scola Levantina (1538)**



**Scola Spagnola (later 16<sup>th</sup> century)**

It was inevitable that Venice's Jewish population would not escape the effects of what we might now describe as the more extreme effects of 'othering' in the antisemitic laws and consequent privations forced on them by Mussolini's fascist regime. However, worse was to come following the Italian surrender and declaration of war on Germany in 1943. In that year and in 1944 a total of about 200 hundred Jews were deported from Venice to Nazi death camps. These events are memorialized in a series of reliefs by Arbat Blatas depicting aspects of the deportations set in a corner of the Campo



**"The Last Train"**

Ghetto Nuovo. The names and ages of all those deported are recorded on a second memorial nearby entitled 'The Last Train'.

Wandering around the Ghetto and elsewhere in Venice there are other reminders of the deportations – 'Stolpersteine' – in English 'stumbling blocks'. These are 10cm concrete cubes set into pavements outside the last known residence where deported people lived. Each bears a brass plate with the details of a person, who they were, their dates of birth, arrest and death etc. These cubes are part of an artistic project started by the German artist Gunter Demnig in 1992 to commemorate people who fell victim to Nazi terror. Placed in various cities across Europe, these 'Stolpersteine' mostly record Jewish victims, but also others as well, for example Sinti, Romani, homosexuals, disabled people, Jehovah's Witnesses etc.



Stolperstein from a group of six listing members of the Levi family – Vittorina, Silvana Alda, Angelo, Leonella, Lina and Mario all arrested on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1943, the eldest aged 17 and the youngest, Mario (shown left) just 3. All were murdered – five in Auschwitz and one in Bergen-Belsen during February 1944 with one date, that for the eldest, Vittorina, unknown.

Venice is a most beautiful and fascinating city and just wandering around is a delight. However, the memorials in the Campo Ghetto Nuovo and the Stolpersteine serve to remind us that the ugliest of things can happen in the most beautiful of places. Down the centuries Jewish people have been subjected to various forms of 'othering' culminating in the Nazi Holocaust. 'Othering' still goes on in many if not most parts of the world including here in the UK when particular groups, whoever they may be, are marginalised, vilified and oppressed. 'Othering' as we have seen can lead to particularly nasty ends – we should learn from past horrors.

In all, I have visited Venice about seven times, my last visit being in November 2025, about 21 years after my sixth visit. Maybe I will visit Venice again, but I'd better not leave it quite so long the next time around.

*All photographs ©Gerald Barton*

# IRIS AXON CONCERT SERIES

at Acton Hill Church

**SUNDAY 3 MAY**

**Kyle Hutchings - Piano**

**SUNDAY 7 JUNE**

**Trio Taliesin**



# KING'S HALL REDEVELOPMENT



## COMMUNITY MEETING

\*\*\* DATE CHANGE \*\*\*

THURSDAY 30 APRIL  
4-5.30 PM

Join us to learn about the vision for this  
much-loved building

SOUTHALL COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OFFICES  
TOWN HALL, 1 HIGH STREET, SOUTHALL, UB1 3HA.

## Forthcoming Events around the Circuit

### March

7th Sat 10:30am **Ealing Animals Fair**  
Hanwell Methodist Church  
*FREE ENTRY*  
(See page 6 for details)

21st Sat 2 - 4pm **Great Easter Egg Hunt**  
Hanwell Methodist Church  
*FREE for all the family*  
(See page 9 for details)

### April

19th Sun 4pm **Iris Axon Concert Series**  
Halcyon Quartet  
Acton Hill Church  
*Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children £2*

30th Thurs 4pm **King's Hall Redevelopment Community Meeting**  
Southall Community Alliance Offices  
(See page 25 for details)

### May

3rd Sun 4pm **Iris Axon Concert Series**  
Kyle Hutchings, Piano  
Acton Hill Church  
*Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children £2*

### June

7th Sun 4pm **Iris Axon Concert Series**  
Trio Taliesin  
Acton Hill Church  
*Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children £2*

Articles for 'In-touch' Issue No 110 (June - August 2026) should be sent by email headed 'In-touch' to the Editor, at [office@ealingtrinity.org.uk](mailto:office@ealingtrinity.org.uk)

**Deadline for next issue: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026**