



Methodist Church Spring Synod Report

Thank you for the wonderful support from our friends within the Methodist Church, your tremendous dedication to Methodist Homes (MHA) and your overwhelming support of our mission, vision and values has again supported our vital work in helping people to live later life well.

Changes at MHA

2023 was another challenging year with the cost-of-living crisis, inflation, massive increases in energy costs and a shortage of workers across the care sector.

The biggest changes were announced in May 2023 following a strategic review of MHA's services. The decision was made to sell ten care homes, place Auchlochan Garden Village in Scotland and its two associated care homes, into administration and sell the charity's three remaining retirement living schemes in Scotland. Since the announcement, Hafan y Waun in Aberystwyth has transferred to the local authority. The sale of eight homes is proceeding well and should be completed by spring. Sadly, the buyer for the tenth home, Cedar Lawn in Stratford upon Avon, withdrew and in January, MHA had to make the difficult decision to close the home.

Revd Crispian Acher

In August 2023, we were shocked by the unexpected and very sudden death of our Head of Chaplaincy South, Crispian Acher, who at that time had just taken on the role of Acting Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality. Crispian was a much loved and respected member of staff throughout MHA and beyond and is greatly missed.

Celebrating MHA's 80th anniversary

The 80th-anniversary service held at Wesley Church, Harrogate on 23 September was a joyful occasion, and it was wonderful to be joined by so many friends from the Methodist Church. President of Conference Revd Gill Newton preached an inspiring sermon, encouraging us to look back with thanksgiving, and to continue forwards in confidence, knowing that God is good, loving and faithful.

Finding Nana

The children's book, "Finding Nana" was championed by Crispian Acher up until his untimely death in August, and now becomes his legacy. It was developed in recognition

that it can be daunting for children when a loved one moves into a care home and seeks to address the anxieties that such young people may have when preparing to visit a friend or relative for the first time. The story has been written by author Jenni Bacon following visits to an MHA home and is illustrated by Sophie Parmenter. It has been published in partnership with Methodist Publishing and BRF. It is now available to order and will be formally launched in February 2024.

MHA Sunday

In 2023, MHA Sunday was themed around our intergenerational work, reflecting on 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, and how we need one another for our wellbeing. Through your generous support, we have raised approximately £160k through MHA Sunday activities and other support from faith communities.

This year, our MHA Sunday will be themed around Mark 4:30-32, the parable of the mustard seed, as we reflect on how the seemingly small act of making a regular telephone call has a big impact in our telephone befriending service. In this year's video, we meet Dot and Grace, who were matched through this service, and witness them meeting face to face for the first time. MHA Sunday is held on 9 June 2024, but you are welcome to hold your service on any date that fits with your calendar of activities.

Our dedicated web page has free downloadable resources including an order of service (available in English and Welsh), the video, sermon notes and a fully worked sermon; everything you need to plan your service. You can also order Gift Aid envelopes for your church or circuit. To find all of this, visit mha.org.uk/Sunday.

Thank you for all your support. In faith and kindness, we are stronger together.