

Methodist Newsletter  
October 2024

Action for  
Children

# With thanks

## Dear friends,

We hope this year has been kind to you. It has been a busy year at Action for Children as we continue to help as many vulnerable children, young people and families as we can.

We launched Faith Space – an online meeting for Methodists and other church supporters to hear updates from Action for Children, and connect with other churches, communities and individuals. It's a place for this special group of supporters to inspire each other and strengthen our connection to help us create more safe and happy childhoods.

September saw the launch of our *A Place to Call Home* campaign, calling on UK governments to take immediate action to reform children's social care. You can read more about this in the following pages.

With plans likely underway for Christmas in your church, we've included a worship outline for you to use in your Christmas services. We hope it's helpful for you in planning your special season of worship.

And our Secret Santa campaign returns for 2024 to help vulnerable children feel the magic of Christmas. It's easy to think that poverty happens elsewhere. But it's affecting children in your community. For many, Christmas is just another day of empty cupboards, putting on an extra jumper to keep warm and wondering why their friend got presents and they didn't.

Simply donate and you could give a vulnerable child the essentials of warm clothes, a hot meal, or a special present just for them. They'll know Santa has remembered them - but they won't know that Santa is you.

Thank you so much for all the incredible ways that you support Action for Children. We wish you a joyful Christmas and New Year.



**Katie Cartwright**  
Head of Relationship Fundraising



**Karis Kolawole**  
Faith Partnerships Lead

## Join our **Faith Space**

We've launched Action for Children's Faith Space - a quarterly online meeting for our faith supporters from the Methodist community and other churches. It's a designated space and time for our incredible faith supporters to hear more about the huge difference they're making, and build inspiring connections with others.

By joining Faith Space, you'll hear updates from us about our passionate frontline staff, and the amazing children we support. You'll hear more about how to get involved, and you'll connect and inspire each other - all to help create more safe and happy childhoods.

We'd love for you to join us.  
Sign up here:  
[forms.office.com/e/y2701CkN5e](https://forms.office.com/e/y2701CkN5e)

## **Sister Eluned Williams – remembering a life devoted to children**



Sister Eluned Williams MBE, who passed away in this year, was one of our last Methodist-ordained 'Sisters of the Children'.

The National Children's Home (NCH) Sisterhood was founded in 1878, for women dedicated to the care of children in the homes they ran. NCH was to eventually become Action for Children.

She devoted her career to children and remained a staunch ambassador for Action for Children throughout her life. We're so thankful for the incredible difference Sister Eluned made.

# Our Methodist **stars**



**Thank you again for another year of incredible fundraising. Here's just a few examples...**



★ **Huddersfield Methodist Circuit** held their annual sponsored walk, with 38 walkers following a five-mile route along the Huddersfield narrow canal. They raised an amazing £2,600. Thanks to everyone who got involved.



A beautiful evening of 'Floral Delights' was held by **Salisbury Methodist Support Group**, with a floral demonstration, stories, music and colour - all raising £766. What an inspiring idea for a fundraiser!



**Plymouth Support Group** held a 'Step Out for Children' walk, and despite the atrocious weather, still raised a fantastic £1,400! Here's organiser Sylvia Hamley ready to face the elements!



Thanks to **Bromsgrove Methodist Church** for their recent event featuring strawberry cream tea and other activities. They raised an incredible £2,585.



**Doreen Lovett** celebrated her 90th birthday with a party at church for friends and family. The church choir entertained everyone with songs chosen by Doreen and then all enjoyed a wonderful tea party with lots of fun and laughter. In place of presents, Doreen requested donations to Action for Children and was delighted with the outcome, raising an incredible £553.75!



Members of **Manchester and Stockport Methodist Church** held their annual bucket collection at Macclesfield train station in July raising £166. Steve Oliver - District Advocate for Manchester and Stockport, and event organiser - said, "The collectors did wonderfully well - starting at 7am till 7pm and smiled all day."



**Redhill & Reigate Support Group** held a garden and coffee morning event on the 22 June raising £385 to support Action for Children.



**Planning your next fundraising event? We're here to help! Take a look at the contact sheet included in this pack, and get in touch.**

# Be a **Secret Santa** for a vulnerable child



**The magic of Christmas begins in childhood. Hanging stockings. Sharing festive food. Presents under the tree. It's a time for children to feel loved and make memories that last a lifetime.**

But for vulnerable children across the UK, Christmas is anything but magical. No stockings. No presents. No festive food – maybe no food at all. Their first memories of Christmas could be going to bed hungry, being too cold to sleep and losing all hope when Santa doesn't come.

But you could help change that. Your gift could help a vulnerable child feel the magic of Christmas.

Lorraine, an Action for Children support worker in Worcestershire, is very aware of how hard the festive season is for the families she supports.

“Christmas is supposed to be the most wonderful time of year, but for many of our families it's the worst. Many are at breaking point. The continued rising costs of living means families are struggling to afford the basics, and presents or a Christmas dinner are totally out of reach. It's heart-breaking.”

That's why each Christmas, Lorraine and her team host a Santa's Grotto for hundreds of local children.

“The kids meet Santa and get to choose any present they like. The children's faces when they realise they can choose a gift is just magical. They look up at you in total disbelief, saying, “can I really have anything?” The parents tell us their children look forward to it - it's the highlight of their Christmas.”

For struggling families who can't make it to the Christmas grotto with their children, Lorraine and her team arrange bags of gifts and games to be delivered to their homes. They also include wrapping paper, so the parents can wrap the presents and add a tag from them or Father Christmas.

“It means they're included in the present-giving and helps them to get into the Christmas spirit, too. And we also give each family a board game so they can have fun together.”

Childhood is short. We don't have long to make magical memories. That's why we need your support now.

Simply donate to our Secret Santa campaign, and you could be supporting vital services like Lorraine's. Just £5 could buy a little teddy bear to comfort a child. And £40 could pay for breakfast, lunch, snacks and a hot dinner for a child for a week. A child will know Santa has remembered them – but they won't know that Santa is you.



**Be a Secret Santa  
and you could help  
a vulnerable child  
feel the magic of  
Christmas.**

Find out more:  
**[iamsanta.org.uk](http://iamsanta.org.uk)** →



# A Place to Call Home

Throughout September, we've been running our *A Place to Call Home* campaign, calling on UK governments to commit to giving children in care what every child needs.



Every 15 minutes, a child goes into care in the UK.

They've already faced huge challenges in their young lives. Challenges no child deserves. And now they're in care, the world can see them differently.

That just isn't right.

Because they're a child, like any other. A child that deserves to feel safe and loved, in a place they can call home.

That's why our campaign calls on UK governments to take immediate action on children's social care, so children in care get the high-quality homes, love, and support they need to thrive.

Our *A Place to Call Home* report highlights what home means to children in care, and what needs to change to make sure more children have that feeling of belonging, happiness and love.

And that's the message we took out onto the streets too, raising awareness with our very own house covered in the feelings of home care-experienced people shared with us.

You can read more about the campaign and ways you can support, here: [actionforchildren.uk/APlaceToCallHome](https://actionforchildren.uk/APlaceToCallHome)

The **difference** you made

In 2023/24 we helped...

687,755\*

children, young people and families through **372** services across the UK.

And your incredible support helped raise a life-changing **£17.2 million**.

## Where your money goes

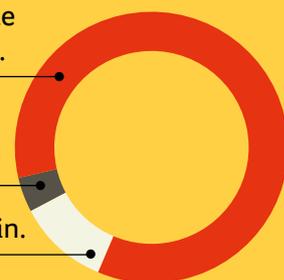
In **2023/24 85p in every £1** was used to create safe and happy childhoods. The remainder was invested in fundraising and admin costs to run the charity.

## For every £1 we spend:

**85p** helps children, young people and families.

**4p** on fundraising.

**11p** on admin.



## Staying in touch

As a valued supporter, we would love to send you regular updates about our work – including heartfelt stories, exciting events, and information about how you can continue to support vulnerable children and young people in the UK.

You can change your preferences at any time by calling **0300 123 2112** or emailing [ask.us@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:ask.us@actionforchildren.org.uk). For more information on how we keep your data safe please read our Privacy Policy at [actionforchildren.org.uk/privacy](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/privacy).