

Methodist Newsletter  
February 2024

Action for  
Children

# So grateful

**Dear friends,**

Welcome to our first mailing of 2024! We always love writing to you – our Methodist supporters – with updates on our work and to recognise you all, as such a beloved part of the Action for Children family.

We want to say a massive thank you, once again, for another 12 months of incredibly generous support. The depth of commitment shown year after year by you all continues to amaze us. And it's no exaggeration to say that countless vulnerable children, young people and families, across over 150 years of vital support, will have had a better chance of a safe and happy childhood thanks to everything the Methodist community has done and continue to do for Action for Children. What an incredible example of Jesus' love in action.

In this year's mailing, you'll find Dan's story – a moving and inspirational example of the difference you help us make. And you can also read about just some of our Methodist Stars on page 3.

That's as well as a summary of our sparkling Starry Night gala back in November, and of the amazing difference our Secret Santas made. We know that Christmas is an expensive and busy time of the year for most. And that the cost of living crisis continues to affect many people. So if you were able to support the campaign this year, we're so grateful.

So as we now look towards Lent, we invite you to Count your Blessings with us for 40 days. You'll find our calendar included in this mailing – more copies are available to download at [actionforchildren.org.uk/countyourblessings](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/countyourblessings). We hope this will offer a positive boost to each day, and, if you're able to, help you to use this important and reflective time of the year to support our vulnerable children and families.

Thank you, once again. And wishing you a happy and blessed Lent,



**Katie Cartwright**  
Head of Regional Fundraising



**Karis Kolawole**  
Faith Partnerships Lead



We're welcoming Karis back after maternity leave. And we hope you join us in saying a massive thank you to Anna McCrum, who covered her role.

# Dan's story



**Born in Uganda, Dan was found abandoned at the roadside when he was less than two years old. He spent the next few years at an orphanage before being adopted when he was five, and brought to England to live with his adoptive mother in Gloucestershire.**

When Dan was 18 his adoptive mother passed away and he moved into Action for Children's Kingfishers, a supported housing project for young people with disabilities.

He told us:

*“I was scared and nervous when I arrived at Kingfishers. I just felt lost. Losing my mum suddenly and then moving in here – it was all going quickly, and I just didn't know how to deal with everything. Everyone was lovely when I moved in. Lisa and Steve and all the staff were so kind.”*

Dan, who has a sensory processing disorder, now has weekly counselling sessions to help him work through early childhood trauma and is learning essential life skills to help him live independently.

He says that the staff and young people at Kingfishers are like family now and he finds joy in dancing, training in the gym and hopes one day to work as a personal trainer or filmmaker.

*“I'm a lot more relaxed since I've been here and that's down to the support of everyone here. It really has been like having a new family.”*



**Ticking off your to-do list this new year? Having an up to date will is important, no matter your age or stage of life. Find out about leaving a gift in your will to Action for Children by scanning this QR code.**



# Our Methodist stars

Here's just some of the incredible members of the community who have gone above and beyond to raise money for Action for Children.

**David Stabler** from **Newcastle Methodist Circuit** joined team Action for Children in the Great North Run for his 37th year and raised nearly £3,000. Thank you, David, for your amazing support over so many years.



Thank you to our friends at **Goring-by-the-Sea Methodist Church** who raised £555 in November at their coffee morning. Lots of people turned out for the event despite the changeable weather, tempted by the delicious sausage sandwiches on offer! We're so grateful for the church's year-round kindness and generosity.

For the last 10 years **Sheila Files** at **Keswick Methodist Church** has organised a Christmas Tree Festival. 2023 was the 10th year of the event. And since 1990, along with fundraising from refreshments, ticket sales, entry fees and church donations, they've raised a staggering £35,443. Thank you, Sheila, for the incredible difference you've helped to make to vulnerable children.

**Plymouth Support Group** held a Ukelele Concert in September at Methodist Central Hall, raising a fantastic £478. The group have been supporting Action for Children for over 30 years and have collectively raised over £200,000 in that time. You're superstars! Thank you so much.

Thank you to members of **Ludham Methodist Church**, who held their annual sale in aid of Action for Children in November. The event raised over £900 and was made even more special this year, as it also celebrated the memory of a dear friend, Gillian Abel who passed away in early November. Gillian was a treasured supporter of Action for Children for many years, raising over £22,000 to help the most vulnerable children and families in South East England. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen.



**Mary and all at Cheam Methodist Church** held a special Action for Children and Gift Service in December. They collected Argos Vouchers to be donated to our Haydock Short Breaks service shortly after.





# Starry Night



In November, Action for Children's very first Starry Night gala took place at the stunning Grade II listed Battersea Arts Centre, in London. With special guests including Kate Thornton and Alison Hammond, it was an extraordinary evening of theatre and heartwarming moments.



Our Young Carers Aloud Choir, mentored by Charlotte Church, wowed the audience with their incredibly moving performance. And the next day, the choir joined Alison once again with Dermot O'Leary to perform on ITV's *This Morning*. Young people from Action for Children's Employability Service in Scotland put their hospitality skills into practice, as they supported our events team with the logistics on the night.

It really was a night to remember, raising an incredible **£153,000** to help give more children the safe and happy childhood they deserve.

# Be a Secret Santa

for a vulnerable child



## The difference our Secret Santas made

Thousands of wonderful people became Secret Santas at Christmas to bring happiness, warmth and safety to vulnerable children. If you were one of them, thank you so much.

Our Secret Santas have currently raised over **£1 million** for children and young people (with donations still coming in).

*“It breaks my heart knowing there are children out there when the most celebrated time of the year is just another day to them. Such a fantastic cause and knowing that I may have put a smile on a child's face is the reason I donated.”*

Alison, Secret Santa

## Banking funds raised

The closure of many local HSBC branches has made paying in your funds raised more challenging, particularly sending cash to us. We've worked hard with HSBC to find a solution, and you can now pay funds into your local Post Office®. They'll pass your funds on to us, safely and securely.



For more information, and to see the different ways your kind donations can reach us, please visit: [actionforchildren.org.uk/support-us/fundraise-with-us/do-your-own-fundraising/contact-your-local-fundraiser/](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/support-us/fundraise-with-us/do-your-own-fundraising/contact-your-local-fundraiser/)