

“There are two things to do about the gospel. Believe it and behave it.”

Susanna Wesley



Epworth Old Rectory

1 Rectory Street, Epworth, North Lincolnshire DN9 1HX
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Opening times:

March, April & October: 10:30am to 3:30pm Tuesday - Saturday & Bank Holiday Mondays

May to September: 10:00am to 4:30pm Tuesday - Saturday & Bank Holiday Mondays



TRANSFORMING the World from the kitchen?

THE STORY OF WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER IN BRITISH METHODISM

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1878 1879 1880 1881 1882 1883 1884 1885 1886 1887 1888 1889 1890 1891 1892 1893 1894 1895 1896 1897 1898 1899 1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906

1883: The Easter Offering was established, asking families to raise 'a penny a head' at Easter to help raise money for the mission fund. Mrs Wiseman also oversaw the commencement of medical work to run alongside the education work.



Key

Women's Work

Girls' League

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women

Women's Fellowship

Women's Network

Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB)

How to find us

By road:

Epworth lies 16 miles east of Doncaster. The M1, A1(M) & M62 all link to the M18.

From junction 5 of the M18, travel on the M180.

From junction 2 of the M180, drive south on the A161 (signposted Gainsborough), after 3 miles you will reach Epworth.

At the Epworth traffic lights turn left and follow the High Street uphill for 1 mile until you reach a high brick wall of the Old Rectory on your left. The visitors carpark is on the left beyond the house.

By rail:

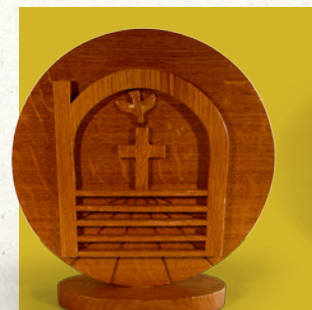
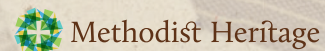
Alight at Doncaster station.

By bus:

Services 291 & 399 to Epworth leave from the bus interchange next to Doncaster station.

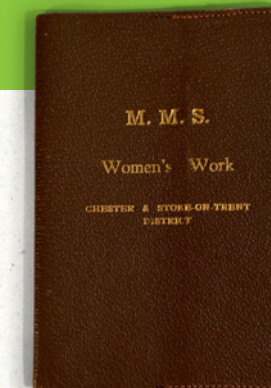
Taxis are available from Doncaster station

For more information about Methodist Heritage
visit www.methodistheritage.org.uk



1849 1850 1851 1852 1853 1854 1855 1856 1857 1858 1859 1860 1861 1862 1863 1864 1865 1866 1867 1868 1869 1870 1871 1872 1873 1874 1875 1876 1877

1858: The Ladies' Committee for the Amelioration of the Condition of Women in Heathen Countries, Female Education etc was established, following a meeting on 20 December. The committee went through several name changes, the most commonly known one being Women's Work.



1859: A paper was approved which set out the Committee's aims to train, equip and finance the sending of women missionaries overseas. The first woman agent of Wesleyan Methodism, Susannah Gooding Beal, was sent abroad to Belize; unfortunately she died within a year after being struck down with yellow fever.


1874: Mrs Caroline Wiseman is appointed as the committee's Secretary after initially declaring that she would not be going as it was simply a clique of London ladies who had decided beforehand what was going to happen and never allowed anyone else the chance to speak! Mrs Wiseman transformed the committee into a modern and effective movement, thereby ensuring its continued success.



1908: Girls' Medical League was established as a temporary junior part of Women's Work to assist with the Jubilee Fund. Girls weren't expected to attend meetings with their mothers but to become JMA collectors.



1923: Helen Kim proposed her idea for a worldwide organisation of Methodist women who wish to make a difference in church and society.



1937: Miss Gwen Ash became the Secretary of Girls' League and remained in post throughout the Second World War. She described it as being unlike most youth groups of the time. It was not run by older people for the young but rather the girls ran it for themselves; organising conferences, study groups, and branch and district committees. She describes how they learned from their mistakes and and gained an excellent training in Christian leadership overall.




1942: The Women's Fellowship of the Methodist Church was formed with the aim "to call women to Christian responsibility in the home, Church and community". It began after Mrs Beta Hornabrook and Dr Colin Roberts formed a group of women to discuss what could be done to train women for leadership, coordinate the work of the various women's meetings around the country, and to meet the social and pastoral needs of women whose lives had been disrupted by war.

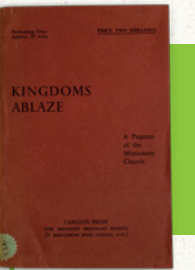
1946: Sister Clare Powers, the first social and moral welfare worker was appointed. Welfare work formed a major part of the outreach work of Women's Fellowship.



1944: The Methodist Conference approved the name and constitution of Women's Fellowship as a branch of the Home Mission Department.

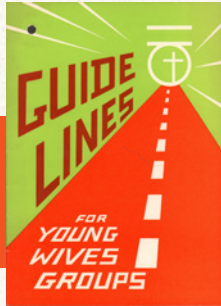


1958: The Centenary of Women's Work is celebrated with a pageant called 'Kingdoms Ablaze' at the Royal Albert Hall on 26 April.



1959: Annesley House opened on Christchurch Road, Streatham, as a hostel for mothers to stay in before and after giving birth.

1965: Women's Fellowship reported to the annual Methodist Conference that "the Young Wives' Group has become one of the outstanding evangelistic agencies of our time. Through these groups many people come from the fringe into the centre of Christian fellowship".



1988: The first annual Network conference was held and the first of many Network exchanges took place between women in Britain and Kenya. This and subsequent exchanges allowed women to share their faith and experiences and learn from each other. Network also marked the beginning of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women.

1994: Network's 'Vision of Peace' day took place in Nottingham, the culmination of a year-long project which asked districts to learn about what another country's vision of peace looked like and what was destructive to that peace, alongside a home issue.

2000: Network task groups are formed to look into the concerns of older people within the church and to raise awareness of violence against women and to challenge the church to address this issue.

2004: Annesley House was closed and sold with the money from the sale being used to aid projects around the UK working with vulnerable women.

2005: A Network task group was formed to raise awareness of the plight of women and children being trafficked across Europe.

2001: The first Helen Kim Memorial Scholars take part in the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women assembly in Loughborough.

2002: A Network task group was formed to look into racial justice with the aim to enable people of colour to be represented on decision making bodies. A resource pack entitled SANGAM was produced.



1906 1907 1908 1909 1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919 1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 1926 1927 1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934 1935 1936 1937 1938 1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945 1946 1947 1948 1949 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028

1909: Due to its success Girls' Medical League was made a permanent feature of The Methodist Church to support medical work in North India. It aimed "to help the girls of Methodism to share in the full missionary life of the Christian Church". The membership ranged from teenage to 30.

1914: The term 'medical' was dropped and the movement was now known simply as Girls' League. By this time there were 33 branches established around the country.

1927: The organisation became an integral part of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and changed its name to The Women's Department of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

1929: The first meeting of the World Federation of Methodist Women (WFMW) is held.

1932: The Methodist Deed of Union saw all branches of the women's missionary movement join together and become known simply as Women's Work. The various Girls' League branches also joined together giving them a membership of c.9000.

1939: The World Federation of Methodist Women is officially formed when the first charter was signed in Pasadena, USA. Twenty-seven countries were represented.

1945: The first Women's Fellowship training summer school was held at Cliff College, Derbyshire.

1947: The Garth, Highbury New Park opened as a hostel in London for young women.

1953: Girls' League amalgamated with the Young Men's League to form the Youth Missionary Association. Over the years Girls' League fulfilled their aim by providing a steady stream of candidates for service overseas and was to produce some of the most outstanding women leaders in British Methodism. Over 100 Young Wives and Mothers Clubs had been established thanks to funding from Women's Fellowship. These groups were vital in the setting up of playgroups and toddler groups. Thus they provided families with a contact point with the Church community.

1954: The World Federation of Methodist Women petitioned to become affiliated with the World Methodist Council making it a truly worldwide organisation.

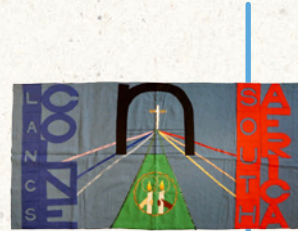
1948: The Women's Fellowship Mother and Baby Home opened at 10 Rutford Road. Girls were provided with safe, reasonably priced lodgings where they were taught mother craft and how to face the future afresh with Christian ideals.



1970: The beginning of a three year Young Wives fundraising project in aid of the Port Reitz School for the physically handicapped in Mombasa, Kenya.

1972: Annesley House was by now located in Wimbledon and was a hostel for students and women working in London. Hornabrook House, the former Mother and Baby Home, was converted into flatlets for the unsupported mother and a day nursery.

1982: Women's Fellowship launched the Princetown Project on Dartmoor. Women's Fellowship provided a £25,000 interest-free loan so that buildings could be renovated to create a worship area and community centre for the village, as well as private accommodation for women visiting their husbands in Dartmoor Prison.



1990: Network's first national event, 'Over the Rainbow', saw 4000 men, women and children descend on Kennington Park and Westminster Central Hall in London to stand in silent solidarity with their brothers and sisters in South Africa, both black and white. Inspired by the Black Sash Movement in South Africa, the women of Network made brightly coloured ribbons which displayed messages of love, hope and peace.

1996: The World Federation of Methodist Women has a change of name to the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW). Their logo is the tree of life, and their aim is "to know Christ and to make him known".

1997: The tenth anniversary of Network is celebrated around the country.



2011: Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) is launched at the annual Methodist Conference in Southport, bringing together Women's Network and the British Unit of the World Federation of British and Uniting Church Women. Jill Baker was appointed the first President and launched the new movement which combined spirituality and social action in a global context under the theme "For such a time as this" [Esther 4:14]. The movement took its aims from its parent organisations – to encourage, enable and equip women to know Christ and to make him known. MWiB committed to a five-year focus on caste discrimination and the treatment of millions of Dalit people around the world.



2013: Linda Crossley is commissioned as the second President of MWiB. The new MWiB logo is launched. The Dalit Solidarity resource pack is produced and made available to the public. New task groups are formed to look into the Dementia Friendly Church and the launch of the MWiB Heritage and Archives project.

2015: Anne Browse is commissioned as the third President of MWiB. The Grow Your Own Dementia Friendly Church resource pack is launched at the annual Methodist Conference. A Heritage and Archives researcher is appointed.

2016: The MWiB Heritage and Archives exhibition *Transforming the World from the kitchen? The story of women working together in British Methodism* is launched at Epworth Old Rectory.