



# A Shining light

Dear friends,

The start of a new year often inspires us to look forward with a sense of optimism. This feels particularly important given the events of the past 12 months.

Your unwavering support has been a shining light during this difficult time. The money you raised over the Christmas period, for example – including your support for our Secret Santa appeal – will make a huge difference to vulnerable children. This is so important right now, as many families struggle to cope with the devastating impact of the pandemic.

Looking ahead, we'll be holding Action for Children Sunday on 11 July this year. It's always a fantastic celebration of our partnership with the Methodist Church, and we hope you'll be part of it once again.

There are lots of other ways to support us, too. One of these is Count Your Blessings, which proves that little things can make a big difference. You can [download a poster](#) – which gives you an activity to do every day during Lent – from our website. Your friendly [local fundraiser](#) can send you some, too.

Thank you, once again, for your continued support. We're truly grateful for everything you do.

God bless,

**Jessica Taylor**  
Head of Community  
Fundraising

**Karis Kolawole**  
Head of Faith  
Partnerships

## Giving thanks

**Northallerton Methodist Church** held their annual 'Sing Carols' concert online, streaming the event on their YouTube channel.

**Christine Bell** couldn't hold her annual coffee morning this year, so she set up a JustGiving page instead. Christine raised an incredible £1,000.

**Loughton Methodist Church** tested their collective grey matter by hosting an online quiz that raised more than £1,000.

**Reverend Michael Newman**, who was the last ordained Principal of Action for Children when it was still National Children's Home (NCH), has sadly passed away aged 90. He was also our first Chief Executive. Our thoughts are with Reverend Michael's loved ones.

**Jim Godfrey**, Wesley Memorial Methodist Church's resident illustrator, recently published a book of cartoons, *Trying Times*. Proceeds from the book will support our work. You can order a copy for £5 from the [church's website](#) or email [churchoffice@wesleymem.org.uk](mailto:churchoffice@wesleymem.org.uk).

## Michelle's story

Michelle\* and her partner, who have two young daughters, are just one of the families who received support from our Coronavirus Emergency Fund.

"Before the pandemic, I was bringing in a steady income as a self-employed hairdresser," explains Michelle. "My partner's salary covered the mortgage and bills, but I would pay for extras like food, stuff for the girls, and other things.

***"It made sure I could put food on the table for my little girls."***

"But then coronavirus hit and I was no longer bringing any money in. My partner took on extra shifts but that meant he was working himself into the ground. I was so worried about him.

"I was being really careful with food, making sure the kids got fed first. I was eating smaller portions or tending not to eat."

Michelle reached out to an Action for Children family support worker she'd met through baby classes. She was offered immediate support through the Coronavirus Emergency Fund.

"I was given a £100 voucher to get food for the family," she says. "It made me feel so relieved. I was so stressed. It really makes you realise that, regardless of your circumstances, anyone could need help."

\*We've changed Michelle's name to protect her identity.

## Campaign for change

Join one of our campaigns and you could make a real difference to children and young people.

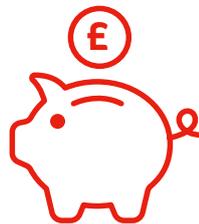
Our supporters have already helped us secure major changes to laws that affect children's rights. But we need to keep fighting. More children are at risk of harm, and more than 4 million children in the UK live in poverty. Young people are in crisis but vital support services are being cut.

You can help us to create lasting change by [supporting our campaigns](#) today.

## Paying in your donations

Thank you so much for your incredible support and generosity over the Christmas period.

You can send us your hard-earned donations in all sorts of ways. Find out more by calling our Supporter Care Team on **0300 123 2112** or [visit our website](#).



If you'd like to pay in your donations by cheque, please post them to our head office (our local fundraisers are still working at home). Make them payable to 'Action for Children' and – so that we can thank you properly – include a note that says, 'Community Fundraising Methodist', give your full name and postcode, and tell us how you raised the money. Our address is:

Action for Children Customer Service, 3 The Boulevard,  
Ascot Road, Watford, WD18 8AG

## Starry Night

Our virtual carol concert in December brought the magic of Christmas into thousands of living rooms.

Hosted by Channel 4's Jon Snow, the event featured live musical performances, classic carols, and appearances from some very special guests, including *Call the Midwife* star Jenny Agutter, Angellica Bell and Leona Lewis.

It was great to hear that so many of you tuned in. Thanks for sharing a fabulous evening with us!