

PARISH Magazine



Croydon
Minster

St George's Church

The Heart of Christ



The Heart of Waddon

October / November 2023

Minimum donation

£1.00

CELEBRATE
**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**
2023

Resilience, Presence and Challenge

Bishop Rosemarie

interviewed by Fr Andrew

Celebrating Black History Month

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Windrush 75 at Croydon Minster

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Regular service times

Croydon Minster

Morning Prayer, Monday – Friday 8.30am

Sunday

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Eucharist

5.30pm Evensong (Choral Evensong in term time)

Monday

11.00am Said Eucharist

Tuesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong sung by the Boys' Choir (term time only)

Wednesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong sung by the Girls' Choir (term time only)

Friday

11.00am Said Eucharist

St George's

Sunday

10.00am Eucharist

Thursday

10.30am Eucharist

Diary dates

Croydon Minster

October 2023

- Sat 07 Minster Choir sings at Black History Month Service at Southwark Cathedral, 11.00am
- Mon 09 Choral Evensong sung by Old Palace School Chapel Choir, 5.30pm
PCC meeting at St George's
- Sun 15 Minster Vision Day, 11.30am, with Choral Evensong at 3.00pm
- 17 – 27 October Half Term (no weekday Choral Evensongs)
- Sun 22 Separated Child Foundation Packing Day, 11.30am

November 2023

- Wed 01 Sung Eucharist for All Saints' Day, 5.30pm
- Thu 02 Requiem Mass for All Souls' Day, 6.00pm
- Sun 05 Service for the Bereaved, 5.30pm
- Wed 08 Minster DCC meeting
- Sat 11 Mozart Requiem Mass sung by the Minster Choral Foundation (ticketed event), 7.00pm
- Sun 12 Civic Service of Remembrance, 11.00am
Sung Eucharist, 5.30pm
- Mon 13 Choral Evensong sung by Old Palace School Chapel Choir, 5.30pm
- Sun 19 Separated Child Foundation Packing Day, 11.30am
- Mon 20 Old Palace School Autumn Concert, 7.00pm
- Wed 22 Sung Eucharist for St Cecilia's Day, 5.30pm
- Sun 26 Sung Eucharist with Baptism and Confirmation, 5.30pm

Lectio Divina (prayerful reflection on the Gospel text for the coming Sunday) takes place on Tuesdays at 12.00 noon on Zoom. For the Zoom link please contact a.bond@croydonminster.org

Lunchtime Recitals, Fridays at 1.10pm: Please see posters in church.

Faith. Legacy. Heritage.

*One generation shall
commend your works to
another, and shall declare
your mighty acts.*

Psalm 145 v4

Join us at our Black History
Month event for a day of
fellowship, learning and
celebration, exploring this
year's theme of Windrush 75
and its legacy.

Southwark Cathedral
Saturday 7 October, 11am–2pm

Find out more and register:
southwark.anglican.org/bhm



The Diocese of
Southwark

SOUTHWARK
◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

WINDRUSH
SQUARE SW2

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



One of the great delights of being the Priest in Charge of this parish is that in our churches, the Minster and St George's, there is a rich diversity of racial heritage represented among us. Black History Month gives us a chance together to consider, in thanksgiving, a significant aspect of that diversity and how we can always ensure that we are a church that reflects the vision of the New Testament rooted in a shared identity in Christ, irrespective of the distinctions and differences we create in our fallen human nature.

In my interview with the Bishop of Croydon for this edition, I asked Bishop Rosemarie what a church that embraces the intentions of the Diocesan Anti-Racism Charter looks like. You can read her vision of such a church. Are we such a church where all people can flourish and not feel belittled on account of their race? Perhaps this edition of the magazine can help us assess the answer to that question.

Sandra Craig helpfully asks why we still have a month focused on Black History and reminds us that the story of the experience of Black people in this country continues to need to be told and there are surprises along the way.

Sandra also describes the uplifting Windrush 75 service hosted at the Minster in partnership with the Croydon BME Forum. Arlene Esdaile gives a wonderful account of the service in which she sees celebration as so important given the sacrifices and experience of so many of those who came to the 'Motherland' over the past 75 years. Shelly Bardouille from the BME Forum also writes about the

service in the Minster and the services the Forum offers in support of people in its work.

Isabella Hunt asks some tough questions for British society, not sparing the Church of England and other institutions, in the ongoing legacy of slavery which is inextricably linked to Black history in the UK. Regrettably this is very much through the legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Yet even in that dreadful time there are chinks of light. David Morgan has traced a Croydon in Jamaica and tells us the remarkable story of the slave and Baptist preacher Sam Sharpe, the chief instigator of a passive resistance movement against slavery which developed into the largest slave uprising that Jamaica had seen, a milestone in the journey towards the abolition of slavery.

Another name associated forever with Croydon, UK is Bishop Wilfred Wood. He should be a noble figure in any account of Black history in the UK. He was the first Black bishop in the Church of England as Bishop of Croydon. Bishop Rosemarie refers to him as an inspirational figure, ahead of his time, as does Sandra Craig who also has the pleasure of knowing him.

It is great to learn more about Beresford Caramba-Coker in our 'Getting to Know...' column, picking up on his Anglican roots in Sierra Leone and reminding us of some of the positives of shared history and heritage of devotion through our Christian faith, not least in shared prayers and the legacy of poets such as George Herbert.

This is another excellent edition and the contributors are, as always, to be thanked for what they have written.

Fr Andrew

Resilience, Presence and Challenge

An interview with Bishop Rosemarie

Fr Andrew spoke with the Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon since 2022, on subjects relating to Black History Month and the experience and contribution of Black people in the Church of England. The discussion was wide-ranging, touching on some extremely significant and 'live' issues. This is an edited version.

Fr Andrew: Some churches were notoriously unwelcoming or hostile to Black people arriving in England after the Second World War. As you consider Black History Month, what would you say has been the greatest gift to the Church of England from Black people in that time?

Bishop Rosemarie: In the 1950s and '60s when Black people arrived in this country after the Second World War, there was such a sense of lack of welcome and hospitality. People were scared of difference, it would seem to me, and hadn't really understood or lived with Black people, and there were notorious stereotypes about Black people that existed in the country. I think that came out of the colonial history, perhaps seeing people as 'savages' and this got into popular culture. That was very difficult.

What I would say is that the greatest gift of Black people to the Church of England, in that time, was their *resilience*, because while a lot of people did break away and went to independent churches, a lot of people stayed. And I always say that it is by your *presence* that you will become more and more part of the gift of the Church. That generation brought diversity and they kept in there despite the challenges they faced. Christianity is something about persistence and resilience because we are a people of sacrifice, we follow a Lord who sacrificed himself for us.

I think of people like my mother, my family, people of colour at the Minster and churches in the Diocese of Southwark, their resilience and even their sacrificing of self where they didn't feel fully welcome: but they stayed. I think it is that that is now to a certain extent just flourishing and flowering in so many of our churches, where grandchildren and great-grandchildren are also now part of the story of the Church. They built their story and that is their gift to the Church of England.

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Fr Andrew: One of your predecessors as Bishop of Croydon was Bishop Wilfred Wood (*pictured opposite*). How would you measure the significance of his appointment, in 1985, as the first Black bishop in the Church of England?

Bishop Rosemarie: Bishop Wilfred was immeasurable in the significance of his appointment. There were previous bishops who were appointed to West Africa but he was the first Black bishop in the Church of England. For Croydon it was significant because he brought the Croydon Episcopal Area into the Diocese of Southwark [from Canterbury] in 1985. He was a gifted speaker, an advocate for justice, not just racial justice, and that is another important part of our Christian characteristics. He did it in such a way that engaged people.

I go around parishes now and people give me gifts to pass on to him. People were touched by him; they were blessed and loved by his pastoral care and presence. It wasn't just about a campaigning bishop; there was nothing tokenistic about him. He was appointed because of who he was, what he stood for and how he proclaimed the Gospel. That was telling for the Church and he challenged the Church for change and encouraged others to challenge too.

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Fr Andrew: That moves us on to the recently issued Church of England report *From Lament to Action*. What are the most important things you see coming from that report?



Bishop Rosemarie: In the 1980s Bishop Wilfred asked for commission for racial justice. *From Lament to Action* is now putting in place what Bishop Wood had seen was necessary for the Church of England all those years ago. We are now seeing his legacy played out in the national Church. In the Diocese of Southwark we are seeing in the Anti-Racism Charter work that reflects work that was instituted by Bishop Wood. Croydon should be so proud to have had his far-sightedness. Even if it wasn't met then, our faith tells us we can have hope, not with the expectation that it's going to be delivered immediately but that if we

believe and have hope in the Lord of justice and righteousness we will be delivered. That's where we are at this time now.

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Fr Andrew: That moves us on to the Diocese of Southwark Anti-Racism Charter. How do you rate its impact across the Diocese and what do you believe a church looks like that has really engaged with it?

Bishop Rosemarie: In such a church anti-racism will run through it like a stick of rock, because the ARC is that message of Jesus, Genesis and Paul that we are all made one in Christ, he made them male and female, not by race, and he made them one and they all reflected the image of God. And if in all that we do and how people see us, particularly in Croydon, where ethnicity is a real presence among the people, we need to see in our choir, congregation, ordained and lay leadership, and ministers, we need to see people who are diverse; but that does not mean a polarity of Black and White, although that is important because there are many people of colour who live in Croydon and are part of our congregation and schools. We have so many other diversities, and we need to see that gloriously reflected as well and that means all of us, Black and White, need to look beyond the polarities that society tells us 'that's what diversity means'. We need to look at our ages, abilities, genders and all the differences we human beings make to 'other' and marginalise, and we need to dissolve those. If the ARC is doing its work, people will naturally check their unconscious biases: 'Have I said or done something to make another person feel smaller, less than, not belonging?' We only know this when we ask; when we build relationships, and at the heart of that they belong, participate and can see themselves reflected. That's a church that's really engaging and looks like that image in Revelation (Revelation 7.9).

From Lament to Action <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf>



Minster Vision Day

Sunday 15th October

This Minster Vision Day will be a chance to share our vision of mission and ministry for the Minster as we look to the future.

Everyone – young and old, new to the Minster and longstanding here – is invited, encouraged and welcome.

10am Sung Eucharist

Celebrant and Preacher,
The Bishop of Croydon

Post-service refreshments

12 noon–12.45pm Session One

1–1.45pm Parish Lunch

2–2.45pm Session Two

3pm Evensong

www.croydonminster.org

Celebrating Black History Month

Sandra Craig

It is once again that time of year when we celebrate Black History Month. Some will ponder why we have a month for Black History. The idea is that it is an opportunity to highlight how people of colour participate(d) in a country's growth, nationally and internationally. Our contributions in Britain have been even further emphasised with the recent celebrations of the Windrush Era.

In Croydon we are fortunate to have a diverse community living and praising together, to an extent that many of our festivities at the Minster are multi-faith, recognising everyone's participation in success of a vibrant community. National Windrush Day was on 22 June (2023), to mark 75 years since the MV Empire Windrush arrived in the UK with passengers from the Caribbean. In Croydon, like many other boroughs, we marked the 75th anniversary with celebrations and testimonials. Father Andrew's warm welcome set the tone for what would be a momentous evening. Many testimonials at the Minster were from those with lived experiences of how they contributed, and continue to contribute, to the advancement of families and communities.

It was wonderful to hear young people sharing vignettes of wisdom and history from their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents. The young people were amazing orators and left us in awe of their families. There were elders who shared their achievements and how they continue to work with others for a unified community. Numerous discourses on the day were wonderfully imparted with Caribbean or African dialects. Continuing the theme, Bishop Rosemarie's mannerisms and delivery of a rousing sermon were at times in a strong Bajan dialect. The sermon (*printed at the end of this article*) made us in the congregation feel like we were in Barbados. All we needed was the sound of waves lapping against a church wall. As per the norm in the Minster, the singing was moving, reverberated off the walls and raised the Minster's roof.

Several of the histories on the day echoed my life experiences in Britain and the Caribbean. My parents, like numerous others, left the Caribbean to answer the call to help rebuild Britain. In the 1950s my father travelled by ship and my mother by aeroplane from Barbados. My father was recruited into the Royal Air Force (RAF) and my mother to become a nurse. Although Barbados is one of the smaller islands in the Caribbean, my parents did not meet until they were in England, when introduced through mutual friends and potential matchmakers; the matchmakers later became my godparents. Whilst in England, wherever possible my parents continued to follow their tradition of an Anglican faith. Like others of the time, who had travelled overseas, my parents developed lots of their friendship groups through church.

Numerous conversations demonstrated how faith helped them to remain strong, no matter what might have been unfolding around them. They were all resilient and much of their experiences were recurrent in the 75th Anniversary Windrush stories. I am fortunate through my childhood and adulthood to have eavesdropped on many vignettes of their life, be those of families and friends. Hence, on the 75th Anniversary, I felt honoured to have been a sidesperson, able to participate and observe some of the humongous effort that had gone into organising and coordinating such a major event. Be that, behind the scenes in the Minster and Croydon Council, it all flowed beautifully on the day. I was so happy to see others sharing in worship and the Christian bonhomie of the Minster, including the various activities outdoors in the car park, all the music, food, and stalls with information about forums available in Croydon.

Continuing the celebrations of Black History Month, we are blessed and can shout out from the mountain or the top of George Street that we had the first Black bishop in the Church of England, in Croydon, Bishop Wilfred Wood. Many of you will remember Bishop Wood, Lady Wood and their family when they worshipped at Croydon Minster. Bishop Wood's appointment was another one of those historical moments for our (Black) history in Croydon. I have had the pleasure of

meeting Bishop Wood and family whilst in Barbados. My parents returned to Barbados so they could retire there, and coincidentally when Bishop and Lady Wood retired to Barbados, they too attended St Lawrence Anglican Church. Occasionally when I visit, Bishop Wood might be giving the sermon.

I have been living in Croydon for over twenty years and attending the Minster for about five years. One day whilst shopping in the town centre I heard the Minster's bells ringing and I was lured in to have a look. I've never regretted that calling and have been attending the Minster since then. The welcome at the door means so much when entering a new environment and this is one of the reasons I became a sidesperson. I enjoy the sermons, the congregation and especially the refreshments (even better when there's cake) afterwards when we can get to know one another. What's nice about our congregation is that there are no cliques. Everyone socialises with one another and include new people in their conversations. The informal chats mean so much to me and others when we can share feelings and ideas with someone else. Our Church has an ethos of welcoming people from all backgrounds, I get to learn something new each week, from the children and adults and that's why I love attending the Minster.

* * *

Bishop Rosemarie's sermon

Revelation 7:9 – Celebrating successes

Every nation, every language – before the throne of God! A kingdom where all belong is to be continually strived for, for we know that we are not there yet.

I came to the UK in the late '60s as a child to join my family. That makes me a Windrusher too. We were of the generation where there were not many like us in school and we were taught to keep quiet about the cultural aspects of our lives – so that our difference didn't show us up – too much.

But at home, we delighted in leaning into what made us unique, food, dialect, music and so much more. And whenever someone who looked like us was

recognised for their talents and abilities – we all celebrated. Lenny Henry on ‘New Faces’, Moira Stewart reading the news, Bill Morris, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers’ Union. And how swell-chested we felt when the West Indies cricket team was touring and winning.

For the youth, it was the growth of reggae music that started to give us a sense of pride and identity, Peter Tosh’s ‘Equal Rights and Justice’ or Bob and Marcia’s ‘Young, Gifted and Black’.

A phrase often used to express the aspirational challenge that minoritised people can face in society is: “If I can’t see me, it can’t be me!” Not seeing yourself as a normative part of the wider society may limit or even determine a person’s or a group’s expectations and hopes.

Thankfully, not everyone was held back from envisioning a place for themselves in whatever aspect of society they wished to succeed in, and we now celebrate the achievements of the Windrush generation, who, with few if any role models, often worked harder than their peers, overcame prejudice and succeeded.

And today we can see the leadership and representation of those of Caribbean heritage and descent in all aspects of life in this country. But less so in the mainstream church, for unless you went to what was then the nascent black church you rarely saw yourself reflected in those leading and teaching, and certainly not in any images of Christ. Thankfully, despite the sometimes snail-like progress over these 75 years, things are changing.

Let me share two recent events, over this past week, which illustrate the changes. Sunday past, the visiting Bishop of Barbados and I participated in a church service, and those who came forward to receive communion from us were representative of every continent on earth, either by birth or heritage. The following day at a church school where over 26 non-English first languages are spoken, children of all nationalities read Bibles with visual representations from

all ethnicities, actively strive for justice and peace, and joyfully celebrate the wonderful diversity that is the people of God.

Like those children, may we continue to strive to bring in a kingdom where all belong, where uniqueness and unity are celebrated, and where that image of every nation, tribe, people and language coming before the throne is our aspirational and inspirational challenge and hope. Amen.



Windrush 75 at the Minster

Arlene Esdaile, Churchwarden

During a visit to my Dad during the 1990s, a lifelong friend of his (they had grown up together in St Kitts) remarked that he didn't think younger people had respect for his generation's achievements. My response was that I believed they had achieved much more with their lives than I had. I had been given the benefit of an education which meant that I didn't leave school until I was 18. They, on the other hand, had grown up during the Depression, left their homeland as young people and travelled thousands of miles to a country which many of

them had been led to believe was the 'Motherland'. On their arrival they encountered coldness, hostility and prejudice. Despite this they had found work, made homes and raised their families. My Dad and his friend were both quite emotional at my response. It was a source of pride for my Dad that it was me, his daughter, who made the comments.

In later years, it was only at funerals that I discovered the full extent of the sacrifices that my parents' generation made to give their families a better life.

Added to this, for too many people there has been what is known as the Windrush Scandal to contend with. It is therefore fitting that we now **celebrate** the Windrush generation and show them our appreciation and gratitude. The Windrush 75 event was a fabulous opportunity to do just that!

The event had been meticulously planned by Shelly Bardouille and the team at the BME Forum. The invited VIP guests included the Bishop of Croydon, the Civic Mayor, the Executive Mayor and a deputy High Commissioner. Outside the church there was a musician playing steel pans and stalls selling food, clothing or giving advice etc., and this is how the timetable of activities turned out to be 'somewhat' optimistic. I had reached this conclusion at precisely 5.39 pm, the moment I saw the length of the queue forming for the Jerk Chicken stall!



The service did eventually get underway and only half an hour late! It was a truly delightful occasion consisting of music (with some dancing!), hymns, speeches from local community leaders and advice from different agencies. It was a joy to hear the expressions of gratitude for what the Windrush generation have contributed: helping to rebuild the country after WWII, filling job shortages in various industries and adding so much to the culture of the UK. However, one of the most moving contributions came from a group of pupils from Old Palace of John Whitgift School, each describing what the Windrush generation meant to them personally. At the end of the service the celebration concluded with the gifting of beautiful bouquets of flowers and the presentation of celebratory cake.

Celebration and Thanksgiving with the Croydon BME Forum

Shelly Bardouille

The Croydon BME Forum's Windrush Celebration and Thanksgiving Service held at the historic Croydon Minster Church was a remarkable event that marked a significant milestone in honouring the 75th anniversary of the Windrush generation's arrival in the United Kingdom. This event not only brought together the local community but also exemplified the power of intergenerational collaboration in commemorating an era that has had a profound impact on British history and society.

The Windrush generation, named after the ship MV Empire Windrush that arrived in 1948 carrying the first wave of Caribbean migrants, has left an indelible mark on the cultural, social and economic fabric of the UK. The Croydon BME Forum's event in collaboration with Croydon Minster Church was a heartfelt tribute to these pioneers, celebrating their contributions while acknowledging the challenges they faced.



*Fr Alan, Bishop Rosemarie and Fr Andrew
enjoying the celebrations!*

At the heart of this celebration was the Croydon Minster Church, an iconic and historically significant venue that provided the perfect backdrop for this commemorative event. Father Andrew, the guiding light of the Minster Church, played a pivotal role in extending warm hospitality, guidance and support to the organisers and attendees. His dedication to making the event a success was evident in the meticulous planning and attention to

detail that went into creating an atmosphere of reverence and celebration.



The Windrush Celebration and Thanksgiving Service was not just a momentary gathering but a bridge between generations, thanks to pupils of Old Palace of John Whitgift School who researched and presented their grandparents' stories so beautifully and bravely on stage in front of over 300 attendees. The girls also showcased their talents through cultural steel pan music. The event provided a platform for the older members of the community, who had firsthand experiences or connections to the Windrush generation, to share their stories, struggles and triumphs with the younger generation. This intergenerational approach helped to foster a deeper understanding of history, heritage and the challenges that the Windrush generation overcame.

The event's success was a testament to the power of unity and the rich diversity that defines the Croydon community. People from various backgrounds came together to pay tribute to the Windrush generation, recognising their resilience and the lasting impact they have had on British society. The festivities included cultural performances, art exhibitions and discussions that shed light on the journey of the Windrush pioneers and their descendants.

In the end, the collaboration between the Croydon BME Forum, the Croydon Minster Church and the dedicated individuals who organised and participated in the event showcased the community's commitment to preserving history and shaping a future that values every voice and heritage. The Windrush Celebration and Thanksgiving Service will undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy, reminding us of the importance of unity, respect and celebration in the ongoing journey towards a more inclusive society.

The Croydon BME Forum offers a diverse range of essential services catering to various needs within the community:

Young at Heart Group: This programme focuses on fostering companionship and engagement for individuals aged 60 and above. It provides a platform for social interactions, activities and support tailored to the needs of seniors.

The Reader Poetry Group: This creative initiative brings people together to explore literature and express their interpretations of poetry. Through group discussions, participants delve into the authors' words and their personal reflections, fostering a deeper connection with literature and each other.

Well-being Support: The Forum offers a holistic approach to well-being, providing resources and guidance to help individuals navigate challenges and maintain positive mental health.

Pensions and Benefits Advice: Navigating the intricacies of pensions and benefits can be daunting. The BME Forum offers expert advice and assistance to ensure that individuals are aware of their entitlements and can access necessary support.

Long-Term Health Conditions: Dedicated support for those with health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, chronic kidney disease (CKD) and

COPD helps them to manage their well-being effectively, providing information, resources and a supportive community.

Maternal Health: From conception to five years after childbirth, the Forum supports maternal health with information, resources and guidance, ensuring the well-being of both mothers and their children.

Cancer Awareness Project: This initiative raises awareness about cancer prevention, early detection, and access to relevant resources. It plays a vital role in promoting health and well-being within the community.

Compassionate Chats: Dealing with bereavement, grief and loss can be isolating. The Compassionate Chats programme offers a safe space for open discussions, allowing individuals to share their experiences and find support from others who have gone through similar challenges.

Chat with The Chaps: Offers men a safe space to share their feelings and emotions due to life experiences, helping to support those in challenging situations.

Core 20 Plus: Raising awareness within the community on key health issues impacting the BME population through fun and engaging events throughout the Borough.

Club One Love: Weekly dominoes club held within the Wellness Centre within the Whitgift Centre.

The Croydon BME Forum's array of services reflects its commitment to addressing the diverse needs of the community, fostering well-being, resilience and unity among its members. Through these initiatives, the Forum serves as a vital hub for support, education and connection, enriching the lives of many.

Reflections on Black History Month

Isabella Hunt

So many organisations, including churches, are re-examining their approach and attitude to their historic role in issues such as Empire, colonialism and, above all, slavery. At Croydon Minster we have the final resting place of Archbishop John Whitgift who endowed various charitable institutions in 1596. For over 200 years, from about 1600 to 1800, the Foundation thrived. How? What is known about the investments they made, at a time when slave-owning was normalised? (indeed around 100 Church of England priests were compensated for loss of property under the 1833 Slavery Abolition Act (<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/26-june/news/uk/clergy-gained-compensation-equivalent-to-46-million-today-at-abolition-of-slavery>)). Does the Foundation have “clean hands” – what do we know?

Also, on the walls of the church are many memorials to soldiers who fought in battles of conquest in far-flung corners of the Empire. Many members of our congregation hail from nations who fought in defence of their sovereignty against the British forces.

In considering the effects of the slave trade, it is important to remember that there were significant social, economic, political and psychological effects, that linger to this day, on both the enslaved peoples, transported to the West Indies, and the populations left behind. The Ghanaian poet Kofi Awoonor writes in his *Songs of Sorrow*:

Something has happened to me
The things so great that I cannot weep;
I have no sons to fire the gun when I die
And no daughters to wail when I close my mouth

The recent preaching by the Bishop of Barbados was very moving, raising feelings of separation, loss and the pain of injustice that Africans have endured. Knowledge and understanding is central to the healing process.

Fr Andrew, a Governor of the Court of the Whitgift Foundation, writes:

Bella's article raises important questions about the transatlantic slave trade and the links that many British institutions, including the Church of England, have had with it. In the 16th to early 19th centuries some institutions, and families, clearly and directly benefitted financially. Others benefitted financially through the wider economy that had income from slavery. It is understood that the Whitgift Foundation's income was largely derived from property income in Croydon, which is why for much of its history it was not a wealthy charity but benefitted from the redevelopment of Croydon post-Second World War. It is possible in the past that other investments were related to slavery, but that is not known. Working with the Bishop of Croydon, also a Court Governor, the Whitgift Foundation is researching its own potential links, just as the Minster did in the research undertaken in 2020. The history of institutions such as ours is a significant element of Black history in the UK and Commonwealth.

Packing Sessions with the Separated Child Foundation

We are putting together bags of essential clothing and toiletries for unaccompanied refugee children arriving in Dover. Please join us in the Church Hall at Croydon Minster after the 10am Eucharist on:

Sunday 22 October, 11.30am – 1.30pm

Sunday 19 November, 11.30am – 1.30pm





C O Leong / Shutterstock.com

Croydon in the Mountains

David Morgan

One of the popular destinations for tourists today in Jamaica is the Croydon Estate. A two-hour drive from Montego Bay up into the foothills of the Catadupa Mountains, it proudly advertises itself as an eco-friendly site where you can connect with nature. As you tour the grounds, you can see 19 different varieties of pineapple trees, together with coffee plants and areas of wild flowers. There are panoramic views and trickling waterfalls, with the tour concluding with a buffet feast which celebrates traditional Jamaican cooking.

The history of the Estate is very much grimmer than the modern day idyll, though. Set up in the late 18th century, the first crop was sugar which was grown, harvested and sent for export from Montego Bay with slave labour. The extensive Legacy of British Slavery database compiled by University College London allows us to look at the early history of the Estate.

Jamaica is an island divided up into three counties, Cornwall, Surrey and Middlesex, with these subdivided into 14 parishes. Croydon is in the county of Cornwall and the parish of St James. A list of the sugar plantations in the parish of St James, issued in 1774, does not contain the word 'Croydon' as it was then a part of the Estate. The owner of the Estate back then was named as Thomas Joseph Grey. The 1774 data shows that Easthams was one of the smaller plantations in St James, producing 80 hogsheads of sugar. Blocks of sugar were

packed into large wooden barrels known as hogsheads. Each barrel would weigh between 80 and 150 lbs (pounds). Grey was described in the 1774 data as a pen, someone who provided the necessary supplies and equipment to keep the sugar works operating and then transporting the barrels to a port for export. 82 people were enslaved at the Estate that year.

Thomas Joseph Grey is listed in the LBS records as a resident slave-owner and in 1826 described as a merchant of Jamaica.

One of the national heroes of Jamaica, celebrated today with a statue and a square named after him, had a particular link with the Croydon Estate. The changes in attitudes in this country which led to the eventual abolition of slavery encouraged protests by the slaves. One of these protests was the Christmas Rebellion of December 1831. What began as a peaceful protest with a withdrawal of people's labour, escalated into a full scale rebellion. This resulted in the burning of the Kensington Estate, before the violence spread to other areas, eventually engulfing the entire western end of the island. The Estate owners and the Colonial authorities were so fearful for their lives that they took a terrible retribution after the rebellion was over. Over 300 slaves were hanged for their part in the uprising. One of them was a Baptist preacher, Sam Sharpe, and it is his statue which stands today in a town square which is named after him in Montego Bay (*pictured right*).

Sharpe was born into slavery in the parish of St James in 1801. He taught



himself to read and write and became a deacon in the Baptist Church whilst still a young man. He acknowledged the rise of the Abolitionist movement in London and, through the meetings at his Baptist church, organised a peaceful general strike which was to begin on Christmas Day 1831. He demanded freedom for the thousands of slaves and a proper wage to be paid to them, and informed the estate managers and owners that their labour would be withheld until their demands were met. News of Sharpe's plan spread quickly and many more slaves planned to join in than he probably envisaged at first.

The planters and managers got wind of what Sharpe was doing and British warships were dispatched to Montego Bay. Once the Kensington Estate was set alight on Boxing Day there was no chance that the protest would remain peaceful. There were several bloody confrontations and over 200 slaves and 14 planters were killed.

Sharpe was eventually arrested in May 1832, put on trial and hanged. In 1975, he was posthumously named as a National Hero of Jamaica with his face appearing on Jamaican \$50 bills.

The Gazette newspaper, reporting on the uprising, printed the following;

“Samuel Sharpe was the active person in this scene who seemed to have command of them, belonging, I was told, to T J Grey Esq of Croydon in St James and who is, so I understand, a ruler, so called, of the sect of Baptists.”

The year after Sharpe was hanged, the Slavery Abolition Act was passed in London in 1833, coming into force on 1 August 1834, and in 1838 slavery was fully abolished.

We need to continue to foster Sharpe's vision for a future of faith, justice and equality.

Getting to Know...

Beresford Caramba-Coker

Tiffany Willmer

Beresford has been attending Croydon Minster intermittently for the past seven years, having first discovered the church as a result of his granddaughter Tahlyah being in the girls' choir.

He and his wife are originally from Freetown, Sierra Leone, from a strong Christian communion. One of his paternal ancestors, Revd John Peters, worked alongside Revd Ajayi Crowther, the first Black Anglican bishop of West Africa. Beresford has tracked down letters from the 1880s and '90s written by Revd Peters to the UK-based Secretary of the Church Mission Society (CMS) which are now kept in the CMS archives of the University of Birmingham. In the archives Beresford has also found articles about the 19th century Anglican church in West Africa (where Revd Peters worked as a priest) written in the Church Times of the day. He would be happy to show these to any members of the congregation who might be interested.

Beresford lost both his parents by the age of 15 and became a ward of his elder cousin, a senior Maths teacher, and her husband, who was both a priest and Principal of an Anglican school. Their home was in the Bishop's Court complex, the same as the Archbishop of West Africa. Beresford had useful interactions with Christian youth organisations within the Anglican Church.

Beresford's career started at Barclays Bank in Freetown. After a few years he went on a scholarship to the UK to study banking for three years, followed by a



postgraduate management course in Kingston. His career was in banking, finance, insurance and international trade.

As well as business, Beresford has always loved writing, stretching right back into his childhood when he managed to get paid for generating comedy sketches for a local radio station from the age of just 13! As an adult, he writes both poetry and online articles, recently editing an online economics journal.

Beresford's philosophy of life comes from his mother's saying – 'you have a God to serve and a name to preserve.'

For him faith is 'a journey of trials and tests', and coming to church provides the chance to capture one moment when he 'gets it' – a moment of stillness, which creates in him a feeling of connection to the Almighty. This moment is for him captured in George Herbert's words from verse 2 of hymn 456 in The New English Hymnal:

'A man may look on glass,
And on it stay his eye,
Or if he pleaseth, through it pass,
And then the heaven espy.'

Minster Records

R.I.P.

Alison Jones, Bishop Karowei (Bishop of Woolwich),

Edward Fegrado, Jeanne Outred, Graeme Mayhead,

Sarah Horwood, Ian Gray, Bridget Murphy,

Maureen Seymour, Wayne Daniel

Nonetheless Beresford's favourite hymn is 'In Christ Alone', by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend.

Beresford has been attending Croydon Minster more regularly recently as a result of the "high church" ritual which reminds him of his childhood place of worship. His strongly Anglican family used to have daily morning prayers, attended two church services every Sunday and expected the collect of the day to be committed to memory. At Croydon Minster he loves Evensong and the final prayer at the end of the morning Eucharist, preferably accompanied by some sunshine streaming through the stained-glass windows, which reminds him of the George Herbert hymn mentioned above.

In his free time, Beresford enjoys badminton, swimming, walking and going to the gym, as well as being very active around his grandchildren, all of which helps to keep him fit!

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Deadline for the December 2023 / January 2024 issue:

Thursday 16 November

Please email contributions to magazine@croydonminster.org

Please note: The views in the articles of the magazine reflect the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the editorial board.

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Celebrating diversity: 'Diverse-City', part of the 'Croydon Stands Tall' sculpture trail, was created by Becky James. Taking inspiration from the diverse cultures and traditions that are represented in the population of Croydon, the giraffe is decorated with patterns inspired by traditional designs from Jamaican, Polish, Kurdish, Pakistani, Ukrainian, Afghan and Iranian culture. Messages of inclusivity and positivity add to the celebration of diversity.

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Printed by Solopress