



Railway Mission

RM Issue 3 2024
News



Support on life's journey



Railway Mission

Support on life's journey

railwaymission.org

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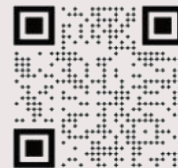
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Scan to find a chaplain in your area



Railway Mission

Remembrance services: fostering unity and respect

Each November, the UK railway industry plays an important role in commemorating Remembrance and Armistice services, honouring the contributions and sacrifices made during the First and Second World Wars. The significance of this participation extends beyond simple tradition; it acknowledges the unique and critical role the railways played in these historic conflicts.

During both World Wars, Britain's railways were pivotal to the war effort. Trains transported troops to the front lines, evacuated children from bomb-threatened cities, and delivered vital supplies such as munitions, food, and medical equipment. Railway workers themselves were heavily involved in the war, with thousands enlisting to serve in the armed forces. Many of these men and women never returned, and the railway industry lost a significant number of its workforce to the wars.

By actively participating in Remembrance and Armistice services, the railway industry preserves the memory of those employees who sacrificed their lives for their country. These acts of remembrance help ensure that

the stories of railway workers and the broader impact of rail transport during the wars are not forgotten. They highlight the interconnection between industry and national service, emphasising the role civilian sectors can play in times of crisis.

Additionally, participating in these services fosters a sense of unity and respect within the railway community today, linking past and present generations. It also serves as a reminder to the public of the importance of the railway industry in the nation's history, not only as a backbone of the British economy but also as a critical element in the nation's wartime resilience.

In taking part in these services, the UK railway industry shows respect for its past, while continuing to shape its future with the same spirit of service and dedication.

See page four for a list of Remembrance Services involving Railway Mission chaplains and ministers.

Liam Johnston
Railway Mission
Executive Director



Remembrance Service Locations

Location	November	Time	Chaplain/Minister
Preston Railway Station	Friday 8	10.45am	Mike Roberts
Crewe Railway Station	Friday 8	14.00pm	Mike Roberts
Barrow-in-Furness Station	Saturday 9	10.45am	Mike Roberts
Manchester Victoria Station	Sunday 10	10.45am	Mike Roberts
Manchester Piccadilly Station	Monday 11	10.45am	Mike Roberts
Liverpool James Street	Monday 11	10.45am	Karen Schofield
ALSTOM Crewe Works	Thursday 7	10.45am	Mike Roberts
Longsight ALSTOM Depot	Tuesday 12	10.45am	Mike Roberts
London Euston Station	Monday 11	10.50am	Stephen Rowe
London Liverpool St Station	Monday 11	10.50am	Michele Ashton
York (NER War Memorial)	Monday 11	10.45am	H Bartlett & T Hanham
London Waterloo Station	Monday 11	10.50am	Christopher Henley
Edinburgh Waverley	Monday 11	10.50am	Dereck Grant
Bristol Temple Meads	Monday 11	10.50am	Rev Alan Thorpe
Reading	Sunday 10	10.45am	John Roe
London Paddington	Monday 11	10.45am	John Roe
Cardiff	Friday 8	10.48am	David Hardy & Phil Tucker
London Marylebone	Friday 8	10.30am	Andrea Smyth
Hoxton Station Memorial	Monday 18	10.50am	Andrea Smyth
Glasgow Central	Monday 11	10.40am	Graham Whitehead
London Kings Cross	Monday 11	10.45am	Dylis George
Dover Western Docks	Wednesday 6	10.00am	Dylis George
London St Pancras Int.	Monday 11	10.45am	Ray Porter
Derby Station	Monday 11	10.45am	Colin Fraser
Sheffield Station	Monday 11	14.00pm	Colin Fraser
Crowne Plaza Sheffield Royal Victoria	Sunday 10	10.45am	Colin Fraser
Birmingham Moor Street	Friday 8	10.50am	Andrew Hall
Severn Valley Railway	Sunday 10	10.50am	Andrew Hall
Birmingham New Street	Monday 11	10.50am	Andrew Hall
Ayr Station	Monday 11	10.45am	Rev John Carrick





Underground shelter from the Blitz

During World War II, the London Underground played a crucial role beyond its function as a transport system, becoming a lifeline for Londoners during the Blitz.

As German bombers targeted the city in 1940 and 1941, many Londoners sought refuge in the deep tunnels of the Underground, which provided shelter from air raids.

Although initially reluctant, the British government allowed civilians to use the stations after realising their protective potential.

Thousands of people would crowd into stations like Aldwych and Bethnal Green each night, bringing bedding, food, and personal belongings.

Some stations were even modified to accommodate the influx of people, with bunks, first aid stations, and even libraries and

entertainment services set up to maintain morale. Around 177,000 people were reported to have sheltered in the Tube on the worst night of the Blitz.

During the Blitz, London Underground staff played a key role in ensuring safety and order for those sheltering from bombings.

They managed crowds, guided people to deeper sections, and maintained clear walkways. Staff helped set up bunk beds, distributed blankets, and oversaw cleaning to maintain hygiene.

They worked with volunteers to provide basic services like first aid and helped organise entertainment to boost morale, offering a sense of safety amidst the bombings. These are the unsung heroes of the London Blitz.



Highgate House- used by permission

Not just another conference

Chair Alex Volossevich reflects on our recent gathering

Another year, another conference, but this was not just another conference. For me it was the best Railway Mission Conference of the four I have attended. Let me tell you why.

Last year we piloted the concept of having the greater Railway Mission fraternity together to see how it worked. This year, we honed what we had learned last year, but essentially repeated the successful formula.

We had, in parallel, the chaplains, the Trustees and the Railway Mission Advisory Panel [RMAP] each having its own sessions, but then coming together for worship and for social time.

The prayer times and out-of-meeting conversations I thought were both warm and constructive and I felt supported by all those who were present at Highgate House, near Northampton.

As Trustees, we said goodbye to two long-serving and hardworking members—Jon Smith and Steve Hailes—who have held the Governance & Legal and Finance Committees together for many more years than I have been at Railway Mission. We all owe them a great debt of thanks.

New Trustees

We also welcomed three new Trustees, two of whom had already cut their teeth on Railway Mission business. Paul Verghese takes over Governance & Legal from Jon Smith, Steve Wheeler takes over Finance from Steve Hailes and Phil Smith takes on the Pastoral Personnel & Training Committee.

Apart from the usual formal meetings, the Trustees had discussion sessions in which we looked at Finance & Funding in the Future, Organisational Risk, and





Newcastle Chaplain Helen Bartlett announced her retirement during the conference and had a great time sharing her farewell cake.

Structures & Systems. High level stuff, but necessary for us to think about.

Andy Castledine stepped down as RMAP chair after guiding it through its tumultuous and highly successful first year and Chris Brown took over as Interim Chair. RMAP discussed how we approach the celebrations at Rail200 and the new political landscape that we have at Westminster.

Notwithstanding the changes, we have a letter of appreciation from the highest echelons which gives us confidence that we can continue to work with the new political structure as we have done with the old.

Thank you all for the parts each of you played in making the RM Conference 2024 a success. May God continue to guide and bless your work.

Conference speakers bring insight

Railway Mission chaplains met at Highgate House near Northampton for our annual Conference with speakers from different disciplines bringing enlightening sessions.

Byron Chamberlain of BTP SOCO brought us some eye-opening information on CSI (Crime Scene Investigation) which was worthy of Sherlock Holmes.

Dr Hilary Norman and Cat Stringer presented facts on railway suicide, but also a welcoming report on the excellent work of railway chaplains (see report page 8).

Gary Jones and Richard Godwin of Network Rail talked to us about initiatives for intervention when there is a risk of a person taking their own life on the railways.

Colin Fraser gave insights into his thesis on taking care of the carers, how to support railway chaplains when they are in need following incidents.

Along with talks by chaplains on the spiritual aspects of 'Preparation, Purpose and Progress,' the Conference theme, our sessions ramped up the talking points for everyone.

A study in railway chaplaincy



Recently, Catherine Stringer, a student researcher at Goldsmiths, University of London, under the supervision of Dr Hilary Norman, interviewed six staff members from Railway Mission as part of a dissertation project focusing on the impact of witnessing a suicide or attempted suicide on the railway service and witnesses' support needs.

This research highlighted that many witnesses of railway suicide or attempted suicide experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress including distressing memories, flashbacks, and triggers that significantly disrupt their lives.

These symptoms can persist for years, often accompanied by behavioural changes such as hypervigilance, irritability, and

social withdrawal. Witnesses might also grapple with feelings of personal responsibility and self-blame, particularly those who were near the victim, questioning their actions, and seeking to understand the reasons behind the suicide to make sense of the event.

Railway staff, emergency responders, and sometimes chaplains were reported to suppress their emotions as a coping mechanism, driven by the demands of their professional roles or environments which promote stoicism and dark humour.

Crucially, working towards acceptance emerged as a vital aspect of processing trauma. This involves recognising the event's irreversibility, moving away from





Catherine Stringer (left) and Dr Hilary Norman of Goldsmiths

self-blame, and finding space to process emotions. Supportive listening and personalised care are essential in helping individuals navigate this path to acceptance.

These findings underscore the need for comprehensive, tailored support for witnesses, reinforcing the importance of organisations like Railway Mission in providing specialised support.

Catherine extends her heartfelt thanks to the Railway Mission staff who participated in the interviews and expresses deep appreciation for their dedicated and invaluable work.

For more about Goldsmiths, University of London, go to gold.ac.uk

Emotional wellbeing matters

There is a growing awareness in the rail industry of the need of wellbeing support for all workers.

Emotional wellbeing matters in the workplace because everyone should feel safe and cared for when in their working environment.

MHFA England share that there is higher staff satisfaction when we feel that we are cared for by our employer. There is also improved performance amongst those who are appreciated.

This can lead to improved staff retention and fewer hours lost. MHFA England say there is a correlation between feeling emotionally well and reduced sickness days.

Railway Mission chaplains, trained in Mental Health First Aid, are increasingly being called upon to talk to the rail industry on these issues, and, of course, have their own access to Employee Assistance Programs.

More at mhfaengland.org.



Lilian Greenwood MP (left) is pictured with Chaplain Colin Fraser (centre) and EMR MD Will Rogers (right) at Nottingham Station

A Parliamentary visit

Lillian Greenwood MP visits Nottingham Railway Station to meet with the local Railway Mission chaplaincy team and key rail staff

Lilian Greenwood MP, Member of Parliament for Nottingham South and Under-Secretary of State for Transport, visited Nottingham Railway Station in August to meet with members of the Railway Mission chaplaincy team, as well as key figures from East Midlands Railway (EMR) and British Transport Police (BTP).

The visit highlighted the crucial support provided by Railway Mission and the collaborative efforts of rail industry professionals in ensuring the well-being and safety of railway staff and passengers.

During her visit, Lilian was introduced to Colin, Railway Mission chaplain for the Nottingham area, who plays a vital role in supporting the mental,

emotional, and spiritual well-being of railway staff.

Ms. Greenwood also had the opportunity to engage with Will Rogers, the Managing Director of East Midlands Railway (EMR), as well as Chief Inspector Gill and officers from BTP at Nottingham Station.

The visit underscored the importance of Railway Mission's work in providing pastoral care to those working within the railway industry, often dealing with challenging and high-stress situations. The chaplaincy service is a key resource for staff, offering a listening ear and practical support when needed.

Lilian took to the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to

“

...their vital work...
makes a difference

share her experience, saying she was, "At Nottingham Railway station to hear more about the work of **@RailwayMission**. Lovely to meet Colin, the RM chaplain who supports all rail staff in our area and to hear from **@BTP** officers and **@EastMidRailway** staff about their vital work and how Colin's support makes a difference."

Will Rogers expressed his appreciation for EMRs ongoing partnership with Railway Mission, acknowledging the positive impact of their support on the well-being of the railway community.

CI Gill also highlighted the collaborative efforts between police, Railway Mission and the railway (EMR) in maintaining a safe and supportive environment at Nottingham Railway Station.

Railway Mission remains committed to providing dedicated support to the railway industry, recognising the unique pressures faced by those who work within it.

The visit by Lilian Greenwood MP is a testament to the value of the work being done and the difference it makes to the lives of railway staff and the wider community.



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here**

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Your donation of £6.50 or more helps us support staff and gives you a full colour railway calendar for 2025

Help is at hand

Andrew Hall gives some of his impressions and thoughts on this year's Emergency Services Show

The Emergency Services Show is fascinating.

Where else could you buy anything from a sticking plaster to a fire engine or be shown how to do CPR followed by instruction on how to strip, build, load and fire a Glock?

The whole show represents wonderful, dedicated people. There are areas of expertise in rescuing people from situations you could never imagine happening.

Cliff rescue, swamp rescue, underground rescue, fire rescue, water rescue. There are police cars, vans, helicopters, drones, all terrain vehicles, ambulances, heavy lift trucks, riot trucks, specialised clothing, and many, many things you would rather not have need of in everyday life.

But amongst this plethora of equipment and training designed to deal with disaster, chaos and

carnage there are those who bring a touch of peace.

There is the Christian Police Association, Street Pastors, Fire Chaplaincy, Beachy Head chaplaincy, the Salvation Army with their mobile emergency support canteen trucks and many, many more who are ready and poised to prepare a table of peace in the presence of the enemy of tragedy.

This is the reason that little old Railway Mission, whose role is the support of rail staff, have a presence at the show.

We celebrate and support those who deliver emergency response into our environment: BTP, NHS, Fire Service and many others who touch the lives of those we care for. Alongside that we also celebrate all those who dedicate their time and often put their own safety at risk to bring a touch of hope to the suffering.



Liam Johnston and Andrea Smyth pictured at Railway Mission's stand at the Emergency Services Show at the NEC

It's an exhibition, it is great for networking and making new contacts and where else could we get all those free pens from?

Spiritual thought bubbles from the ESS

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."
Psalm 46:1

Scripture assures us that God is always with us, always ready to help us, and always accessible to us when we face difficulties and challenges in life. He is our source of protection, power, and peace in the midst of trouble.

Scripture also indicates the unlimited ways in which His help is manifested: from being scooped up by a fish and regurgitated on a beach, to miraculous reproduction of bread and fish and then the story of the person with whom we might disagree on religious

grounds but still invests his time, money and care in our welfare.

The above is just one of the random thoughts that rattled round between my two brain cells at the Emergency Services Show this year.

Railway Mission has had a presence at the show for about 10 years and we align ourselves with British Transport Police at this event. Our small stand is staffed by a number of chaplains and RM staff for the two days of the show.

This year I was on the stand for the whole show - my legs still ache.



Andrew Hall

Area Manager North



2025 will mark the 200th year since the birth of the modern railway, inspired by the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) on 27 September 1825 when George Stephenson's Locomotion No.1 carried over 400 people along the 26-mile route.

Railway200 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to celebrate the railway's far-reaching impact on how we live our lives and how it's shaping a more sustainable future encompassing a programme of activities and events across the UK, supported by the rail industry.

The 200th anniversary will kick-off with a 'Whistle-Off' of vintage locomotives at 12 noon on 1

January 2025 at sites across the UK, spearheaded by the Heritage Railway Association. Plans are also afoot to mark this historic milestone and explore rail's past, present and future role in national life in a myriad of ways around the country.

There will also be a national Railway 200 seat sale in early 2025, offering heavily discounted train travel for great days out, as announced this month by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Rail Minister Lord Hendy said: "Since the first passenger train entered service almost two hundred years ago, our railways have become integral to millions of lives, bringing communities closer together, opening up new





Railway 200 celebrations

opportunities for business and driving economic growth across the country.

“Railway 200 presents an exciting opportunity to unite the wider public in recognition of our rail network and the brilliant people who keep it running. I hope this year-long series of events and celebration encourages the next generation to consider a career in rail.”

Other highlights of the yearlong celebration include an interactive touring exhibition train, named ‘Inspiration’, to criss-cross Britain, creating a buzz at mainline stations, heritage railways and rail freight depots, aimed at young people and their families.

Railway Mission is one of five Charity partners, that Railway200 will be raising funds to support including Alzheimer’s Research, Railway Benefit Fund, Transport Benevolent Fund and Railway Children. Four of the charities are rail focused so that this rail centred celebration has a lasting legacy and supports the railway family beyond the year of activities.

To mark its involvement Railway Mission is launching a special commemorative calendar this year, to request your copy turn to page eleven for full details.

Painting page 14 by JMW Turner, ‘Rain, Steam and Speed’, National Gallery, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Chaplains' news & info

Alan Thorpe

Bristol Area

A group of thirty young Asian Christians were looking forward to their National weekend Bible Conference at an Outdoor Activity Centre near Ilfracombe.



Kayaking and canoeing were the main activities, and the subject was 'Bible Gardens and Trees.' (Eden, Gethsemane, and Eden restored Tree of Life).

The Conference Speaker had a family bereavement that same week, so was unable to participate. The Conference organiser, a train driver with GWR, contacted Railway Mission for possible assistance.

What a privilege to share three (hastily prepared) messages with enthusiastic young Christians. The weather was so good that two of the messages were delivered on Putsbrough Beach, with holidaymakers listening in too.

Although my performance in the beach cricket match was disastrous, it was a real delight to share ministry, prayer and fellowship with young Christians keen for God.

David Hardy

Gloucester Area

A few weeks ago, Liam wrote of the importance of listening properly.



It reminded me of an occasion when I was asked to visit a family of a railwayman whom I had known well and whose funeral I had previously conducted.

I confess that I had not properly followed them up, apart from occasional phone calls asking if they were alright. They gave the impression that they were.

However, they were really struggling with their grief, and doubts about the truth of the Gospel, but did not like to admit it over the phone. It taught me that, that face to face visits are so much better as it is possible to pick up signs that can be missed on the phone or email.

Approaching a visit prayerfully and asking God to guide our thought and conversation, can truly be a blessing, not only to the people in need but to ourselves as well.



Chaplains' news & info

Bernadette Cendrowska-Salt

North Scotland



The new role as Chaplain for the North has seen me being involved on many levels and enjoying my new role.

I have been busy with my colleagues, who have been amazing mentors, in bringing awareness of mental health and wellbeing on the Railway. This has coincided with Worldwide suicide and suicide prevention week, Andy's Mans Club and Men's Shed.

I have been helping alongside persons of many backgrounds and have seen and heard much being shared on this subject.

John Roe

Southwest & Paddington



I am grateful for the increasing opportunities and invitations into many sectors of the Railway Industry, to spread the word of the Railway Mission and to be a presence for support and pastoral care.

Several companies have in recent years introduced welfare and wellbeing initiatives and teams dedicated to the support of their fellow workers.

Railway Mission chaplains are increasingly being approached for our expert knowledge in this area, and invited to participate in seminars, presentations, workshops and Wellbeing Fairs.

My most recent was an overnight Wellbeing Fair at a Network Rail depot, where most of the staff work permanent nights, and with whom otherwise I would have had little opportunity for engagement.

Mike Roberts

Northwest & Manchester



I'm writing this with a cup of tea on a train to Manchester.

Six years into being a chaplain, I realise the boundaries of chaplaincy are more blurred than ever before.

Friendships grow out of shared time and shared experiences, and awareness of our work seems greater than it has been. Sometimes you achieve more in a

Chaplains' news & info



passing two-minute conversation than you do in a formal hour scheduled appointment.

I am thankful for these regular reminders that life is about shared living - and chaplaincy works best in these situations.

You do not “do” chaplaincy or support to people, but you share life and support alongside them. Pray for each of us, as we walk alongside speaking words of compassion, justice, hope and peace into a broken world.

Helen Bartlett

Newcastle Area

It's so hard trying to retire when there's so much going on in life on the railway.



When December 31 arrives, I will have to go. My train passes run out then, and there is another life ahead of me. Chaplaincy is not something you can give up easily; it involves people and their lives which are ever changing.

Our jobs are so full – difficult, privileged, joyful – a complete and utter mix. But God is there too, and He sustains us all.

Andrea Smyth

London North & Marylebone



The rail industry continues to have challenges.

You may be familiar with the support chaplains give to people in our care. There are many things I could talk about, that I suspect chaplains are helping with up and down the country.

But who looks after chaplains? Whether we're full or part time, our hours are often consumed by upsetting, or hurtful, or sad events, that our staff have experienced, and then broached with us.

Chaplains can have things going on in our personal lives too. So, my request today is for your prayers for all of us - that we can set boundaries, prioritise tasks in every situation, and take our own advice to look after ourselves.

**Support us with your giving:
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donate-online](https://railwaymission.org/donate/donate-online)**



Chaplains' news & info

Stephen Rowe

Area Manager London & South



During a very busy period our chaplains have maintained a high standard of support work for rail staff and BTP officers.

In the midst of this we were requested to check in on the wellbeing of BTP staff following the recent unrest and protests and I was amazed at their resilience and positive attitude towards the situations they faced, which did include verbal and physical abuse for some.

Talking to officers, it was clear that they did manage to diffuse a few potentially difficult situations.

We don't always see or hear what happens on the ground in the media, but these officers put their lives on the line in often threatening circumstances, and deserve our thanks and support for protecting the community in more ways than one.

Dereck Grant

East Scotland & Edinburg



As a Railway Chaplain it is nice to feel valued and appreciated for the work we do.

Well, in June I was asked to travel to London to receive an award from BTP which was very humbling. In July it was great to take some annual leave, and I discover that Chicago has a station called Montrose on its Blue Line! In August we had a very poignant moment at the fourth memorial service in Aberdeen as we came together to remember those who tragically lost their lives when the train derailed near Stonehaven in 2020.

In September it was great to work with Bernadette Cendrowska-Salt, the new railway chaplain for the north of Scotland, at a suicide prevention event at Inverness Station. I just want to thank all those who pray for the work we do because we are supporting many people in so many ways.



Christmas card orders: p23

Chaplains' news & info

Karen Schofield

North West

Can we pray for folk affected by deaths amongst staff and by suicide on the track?



We pray for healing and wholeness for all folk suffering shock and grief, for those bereft by loss and bewilderment. We pray for in the railway family and amongst the nations. We ask for Christ's presence to be felt amongst all whom we work with and walk alongside.

The third quarter of the year has been busy as I have attended to more fatalities. I have had meaningful support engagement with team leaders and station managers about their own personal lives.

Pray that my life and ministry will manifest the love of Christ which is so needed in the network.

Dylis George

Southeast & London Bridge

I'm pleased to say my role continues to be interesting, with great interactions and engagements with both old and new staff.



My relationships with station managers and senior management across my patch have grown. I am grateful for the opportunity to sit in area management meetings to share about my role and to be able to answer questions that are useful to the managers.

Michele Ashton

Anglia & Liverpool Street

There is never a dull moment on the railway.



In Anglia we faced a large group of cows on the track that needed support from the farmer to guide them back to their field. After crossing the track and going up and down the embankment several times they were safely lead home. Not only cows, we had nine peacocks also in the wrong place on the track.

The mobile operations manager, with a fear of birds was sent to guide them home and inform the owner they had found an escape route to the railway. When I call the Network rail teams to find out how they are getting along, there can be lots of surprises.



Chaplains' news & info

Graham Whitehead

West Scotland & Glasgow



There has been a collective sigh of relief as pay disputes have been settled, and the railway can return to normal relations and timetables.

As timetables are restored, please give thanks, and pray that the relationships between politicians, operators and workforces will return to normal.

Alas, as I write I have heard that someone has been struck by a train on our railway. Please pray for everyone involved: the staff who have to deal with the incident, the family, friends and colleagues of the person.

Each incident is a wide-reaching tragedy. Chaplains try to offer support to as many of those involved as we can. Please pray for God's compassion and love for those we cannot reach but who need his healing touch.

Andrew Hall

Area Manager North



It has been an interesting, exciting and tiring time, recently.

We have had our annual conference and the Emergency Services Show. We have held interviews for someone to follow in Helen Bartlett's footsteps in the North East.

Now we turn our thoughts to calendars, Remembrance and Christmas (and my 70th birthday, but I won't mention that).

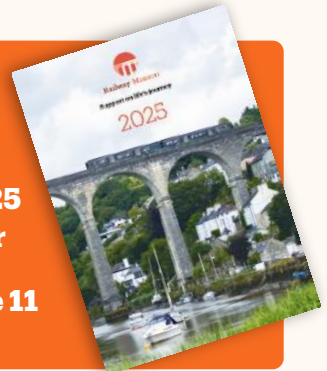
We have seen God's blessing and provision as we have quietly sown the seeds of the Gospel. We now look for the first fruits of Harvest in the coming months.

**Your donation really helps:
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It's time!

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See page 11



Be in it to win it!

The Railway Family Prize Draw returns with a chance to support Railway Mission

Have you ever fancied a ride in the cab of a Class 37? Or perhaps you'd prefer a trip over the stunning Settle to Carlisle line or a behind-the-scenes tour of Siemens Mobility's Chippenham facility?

These were just a few of the amazing experiences up for grabs in the 2024 Railway Family Prize Draw, the largest rail industry prize draw in history.

This annual event, founded in 2021 by Freightliner driver Heather Waugh and former HR Director of Direct Rail Services Natasha Hanson, brings together more than 40 rail companies to offer over 50 unique prizes.

For just £10, you can enter the draw and be in with a chance to win one of these rare



opportunities, such as a vintage Routemaster bus tour of London with Lord Hendy, Minister for Rail, as your driver.

Beyond the excitement of the prizes, the event serves a greater purpose. Each year, it raises money for charity, and this year, Railway Mission is proud to be one of the chosen partners.

For over 140 years, Railway Mission chaplains have supported staff across the network, offering guidance through personal and professional challenges, including those affected by suicide or tragic incidents on the railway. So, it is wonderful that the railway family is giving back to us in this way.

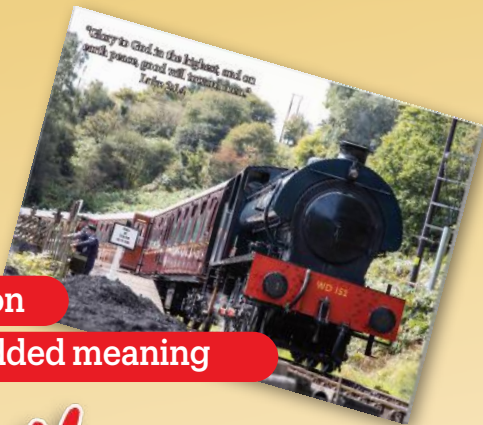
Visit railwayfamily.charityhive.co.uk for more information.





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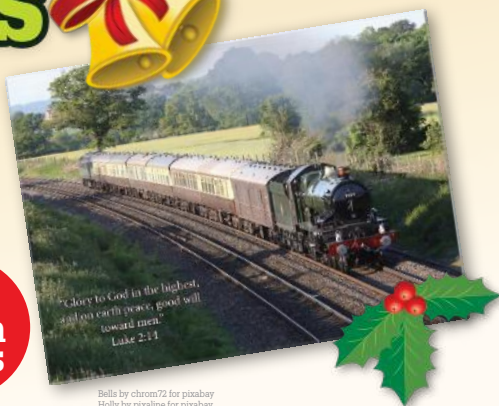
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Jingle all the way... Christmas Cards



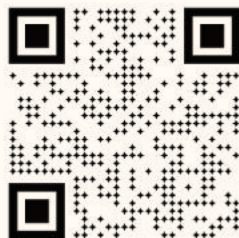
pack
of ten
cards



Bells by chrom72 for pixabay
Holly by pixaline for pixabay

Help support us with a donation of £6.50 or more and request a pack of ten Christmas Cards with a selection of four designs featuring trains and railways.

Simply scan the qr-code, or visit our website at railwaymission.org to discover how.



Extracts from the

RAILWAY SIGNAL

No. 17

Good News for Railway People



Compiled by Railway Mission Historian Dudley Clark

Pt 1

August 1882 saw the publication of the *Railway Signal*, to provide information, encouragement and challenge. It continued monthly until the mid-1950s when with rising printing costs and declining circulation it became quarterly. By 1963, apart from the cover, it was no longer typeset.

In 1983, a century after it began, the *Railway Signal* was restarted as a tabloid, published by Challenge Literature Fellowship Ltd. with the subtitle 'Good News for Railway People.'

The *Signal* in its new format incorporated peoples' stories, many telling of how they became Christians; 'Memory Lane' a continuing series that challenged readers to identify the location of a railway scene; cartoons and health advice; news from the Mission and railway industry. The main aim was, as before, to share the Good News of God's love shown through Jesus Christ.

Some extracts

Under the heading 'Trivia and Truth' Alan Bird reviewed recent TV output. One snippet from Arena on BBC2 was entitled 'It's All True.' 'It talked of the soul vaporising 36 hours after death. Whether this was supposed to be a rather sick joke or a seriously held view was unclear. In 1980s America, it claimed, immortality could be achieved by having a video of yourself inset into your headstone so that for five cents anyone could see you 'live'.'

'St Paul would have had something to say about that. And did. He said: "If we have hope in this life only, we are of all men most miserable."'

Former Mission chaplain Jim Strachan was born in Glasgow. After tasting alcohol at 13 it became his master and threatened to destroy his life. In an attempt to control this addiction, he joined the Armed Forces.



Sent to Germany, instead of channelling his energy into his new career, he let cheap alcohol and bad company further ruin his life. Now married with a child he decided on another change and left the Forces; only to sink deeper into debauchery.

But all was to change: “On 20 January 1979 this miracle took place in a car park on the South side of Glasgow. It was there that I was to meet my risen Lord who spoke to me in a very clear way. He showed me through His messenger (my brother) that I was on the road to death and hell and made it quite clear that I had a decision to make.”

That decision was to change his whole life beyond what friends and family thought possible. “I found out that in accepting Jesus as my Saviour deliverance was only a cry away.”

God transformed his life as he studied the Bible and realised how wonderful a Saviour He was. He went to Bible college becoming a pastor at the first of several mission churches before joining Railway Mission in 1996.

Keith Griffiths of the London City Mission (LCM), speaking forty years ago described the degrading influence of ‘video nasties’ on young children; children of six to eight years old who swore at him for showing them Tom and Jerry

rather than the Texas Chain Saw Massacre.

After 25 years with the LCM, he ‘found that London was getting harder, and the video nasties were contributing.’ “Once you could talk to people about Jesus because they had been to Sunday school. Now they think he plays inside right for Real Madrid.”

What’s new?



Cartoon that accompanied an article on meditation: “He says that if he meditates for a few minutes the resultant morale boost will improve his performance in placing the parcels on the 11:10!”

Dudley Clark



Photo by wai_172619 for Pixabay

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Together, we can lift up the concerns of the railway community, pray for safety, and ask for God's guidance in their lives and ours.



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