



Christmas 2025

“...for you are dust and to dust you will return...all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died...all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died...all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died...and he died...and he died...” (Genesis 1:19b and Genesis 5)

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham...who will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1)

In December our Sunday meetings focused on Matthew 1-2. Genealogies don't always fire our faith, but getting to the one in Matthew 1 after Genesis 5's death and lack of comfort a few weeks earlier really helped us to see why Jesus had come: “♪ to make his blessings flow, far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found ♪”.

We enjoyed our slow read through those early chapters of Genesis over the autumn term, and were encouraged that people could see the seriousness of sin along with hints of promise that lead to Jesus. Please give thanks that we had slightly more people coming each week than this time last year, and we averaged 30 men, women and children.

Our Christmas event on the 21st was well attended with around 70-80 people, maybe more. It was great to see people from ESOL coming, as well as a dozen or so Sylheti ladies who Becky had met at Mile End's Park Run. Please pray that we follow-up everyone well, that some will come back to hear more about Jesus as the curse-breaker and serpent-crusher we need. Last Sunday we were in single figures, partly due to the holiday season. From this Sunday we restart a series in Acts, from chapter 8 onwards.

The ESOL term finished with a Christmas party as well. In addition to fun, games and good food, the story of the magi was told. Sadly, the ESOL men's group hasn't been well attended this term, but encouragingly women keep coming and 5-10 stay each week for the Bible story. The team of volunteers and teachers has also visited many of the women in their homes over this term. These often included opportunities for sharing the Gospel and praying for them. Please pray that these seeds sown will begin to bear fruit.

Give thanks that our intern and her husband and the Oak Hill placement student seem to have settled-in well. It's not easy joining an established team, but it has been great to have their energy, fresh eyes, and relative youthfulness. Please pray that they will continue to settle and be able to develop their own ministry opportunities with different people within and outside Asha.

Over this term we sent out a variety of Scripture video clips on Facebook along with a Sylheti believer's testimony. Up to 30,000 local people watched some of the 3-part testimony. As ever, it provoked some interesting online comments and abuse, but hopefully it showed Sylheti people that someone like them can follow Jesus and enjoy peace with God. Please pray some people will get in touch and want to find out more.

The weekly book table was hampered a bit by bad weather and ill-health since November, but we were encouraged by some good conversations as well as literature being taken. In January we will take a break from Fridays in Watney Market in anticipation of bad weather and will use those times for training. Please pray that it will equip us to speak of Jesus boldly to all kinds of people and be able to answer their questions robustly and humbly.

Give thanks that another random St Augustine discussion did take place. Please pray that we will follow up well one guy who was very happy to engage with the idea of a relationship with God. Within Islam it is generally understood that someone cannot have a relationship with Almighty God, beyond being a slave to a Master.

Pray too for an event on 15th January where we host a local Sylheti author to discuss his book “Muslim Europe” (available here, if you’re interested: [Muslim Europe: A Journey in Search of a Fourteen Hundred Year History: Amazon.co.uk: Hussain, Tharik: 9780241742822: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/9780241742822)). If you would like to come, let me know. Please pray for robust discussion, that many people will come and some will come on Sundays as a result.

Other things happening this term are some of our team are attending a children’s holiday club in Birmingham in the February half term break. The club usually attracts 100+ children from Muslim backgrounds. We’re hoping that we will learn good things from it and be equipped to put on something similar next year.

During that half-term is also Queen Mary University and Barts & the London Hospital Christian Unions’ events week. A couple of us are speaking and helping at the meetings particularly focused on Muslim people. Both CUs are very near to us and many of the universities’ students grew up in Tower Hamlets. So, these can be great ways to reach the local area as well as the students themselves. Slightly out of area, at SOAS university (where our intern was recently studying, and me, too, but less recently), we’re due to help out at Christian Union and Islamic Society event on 28th January looking at Jesus in the Bible and Qur’an. Please pray for boldness and ongoing interest.

We have a team awayday set for 27th February to envision, plan and pray together. Please pray for unity along with wise and bold outreach to result.

And, we’ll be joining in the Tower Hamlets “Believe in Jesus” campaign in the run-up to Easter. It was initiated by London City Mission but is now led by different churches and is a lot of book tables, walk-up-evangelism and door-knocking, in order to try to reach people that we do not ordinarily know or meet.

Finally, please give God great thanks for the Lord sustaining us and keeping us faithful over 2025. As with all kinds of ministries, there have been highs (eg more people coming to things, having a church day away, more people inching closer to faith in Jesus, and having new team members join us) as well as lows (eg some people not wanting to spend time with us or Jesus any more, translation issues and differences, and the weariness of people). We are very grateful, too, for the many generous givers who have enabled us to finish the year with a surplus and give us dreams for recruiting more team members. Even as we are also saddened for a couple of team members being less able to work due to health issues. Pray for them, and that the Lord would give us all the physical, mental and spiritual rest and comfort in Him that we need.

Many thanks for your support and prayer, Robert, on behalf of Asha.